

Roger H. Hull

A twenty-seven year-old New York attorney in 1970, Roger Hull was the youngest member ever appointed to the Board of Visitors at William and Mary. When nominated by his friend Governor Linwood Holton he had had no ties with the college, yet from his experiences from 1970 to 1974 on the Board of Visitors he decided to go into college administration. At the time of this interview he was a lawyer with the State Department.

Mr. Hull read the transcript and made a few minor changes.

INDEX SHEET

Interviewee Roger H. Hull

Date of interview March 5, 1976

Place State Department, Washington, D.C.

Interviewer Emily Williams

Session number 1

Length of tape 43 mins.

Contents:

Approximate time:

appointment to Board of Visitors, 1970	5 mins.
viewpoints on Board of Visitors, 1970-1974	5 mins.
own view of board actions	7 mins.
- in general	
- regarding students	
Paschall's retirement	3 mins.
selection of Graves as president.	6 mins.
general impressions	12 mins.

Roger H. Hull

March 5, 1976

Washington, D.C.

Williams: Let me ask you first, Mr. Hull, why was it Governor Holton appointed you to the Board of Visitors in 1970?

Hull: I expect the answer to that is that during the campaign in 1969 a lot of college students asked ^{the} then governor-designate that, when he became governor, ~~that~~ he appoint young people to boards of visitors. ~~and~~ in 1970 he appointed J. Harvie Wilkinson III to the ~~Board of Trustees~~ Board of Visitors at the University of Virginia, and he appointed me to the William and Mary board.

Williams: Were you considered one of Holton's liberal appointees that I've heard about?

Hull: I suspect the answer to that in a word is "yes."

Williams: I've often wondered -- it is no secret that Dr. Paschall and Governor Holton did not see eye-to-eye. I wondered if Dr. Paschall made his wishes known at this point on appointing members to the board because there were several ^{appointments} ~~appointees~~ to be made the year you were appointed. Do you know?

Hull: I don't know anything about the people who were recommended for appointment. I'm sure, however, that I was not one because no one at William and Mary knew of me. My only connection with William and Mary was that in 1963, during our spring trip south, the Dartmouth tennis team played at William and Mary, or stopped off at William and Mary; we didn't play there. that was my sole connection with William

and Mary prior to my appointment. At the time of the appointment, precisely because I had no connections with the school, I've been told, although I did not see any records of the reported events, that reports of the minutes ~~that~~ there was a good deal of opposition to the appointment.

Williams: Mr. Goodrich was uncertain, so I'll just ask you this as an aside. He said he thought you were in law school at U.Va. at the time. Maybe I should clear up that biographical fact.

Hull: No, I ended up going to the University of Virginia law school as a result of my appointment. The reason that came about was that I was a graduate of Yale law school, and at the time of my appointment I was practicing law in New York City. The day after my appointment -- the day after my first meeting, I should say -- I made the decision, after listening to people talk about the state of education, that what I was going to do "when I grew up" was to go into college administration. I rationalized for about a year about the fact that I ~~do~~ ^{did} not have a doctorate and concluded, after ~~a~~ ^{that} year of rationalization, that I ^d better get one. At that time I called up a friend of mine who was the director of the graduate program at the University of Virginia and told him I was applying. I then called up another friend of mine, Governor Holton, and told him I needed a job since ~~since~~ I was unwilling just to become a student again. At that point I ~~then~~ went to Charlottesville and spent two and a

half years getting my masters' and doctorate and commuting to Richmond, where I was ^{the} a governor's lawyer.

Williams: As the youngest member of the board did you feel that you were in a position of being spokesman or ombudsman for the students?

Hull: No. I think it would have been a big mistake if anyone had at any time, or if anyone does at any time, think of himself as a spokesman for any particular group. That, as an aside, is one reason why I've always opposed the idea of student members on boards of visitors. I felt very strongly about the fact that the student viewpoint should always be presented, but I did not consciously try to be a spokesman for ~~any~~ ^{that} group. What I did try to do was to familiarize myself as much as I could with what students were concerned about. In that connection, I tried when I came down there (and I came down at least once a month in the course of the four years I was there to live in dormitories and fraternity houses) ~~and~~ to familiarize myself as much as I could with what was going on.

Williams: ~~you~~ you were probably the only board member who did this.

Hull: Well, I don't know how many board members came down for meetings with students other than the four scheduled meetings ~~we had each year~~ and the additional committee meetings we may have had. I think ~~one~~ ^{that one} or conceivably two other occasions, one or two ~~other~~ board members did come down to stay in dormi-

tories. That was just one of the things that I felt I could do since I was fairly young, ^{and I} didn't mind dormitories or fraternity houses, ^I and really felt an obligation to get to know as many students as I could.

Williams: And was your response from them good, or they did they think, "Oh, he's one of them. He's a board member."

Hull: I don't suspect ^I I've ever looked like a board member, so that probably helped a little bit as to what their response was. I can't really answer that; I know I enjoyed it.

Williams: At William and Mary a number of protests occurred, not necessarily because of national events, but because of events on campus: curfews, visitation rights. Why would you say, having been on the Board of Visitors during a time when new policy was beginning to come out, why was it so hard at William and Mary to hammer out new policy concerning student life?

Hull: Well, I don't think it really was that hard to hammer out new policies. I think that one of the big differences ~~that~~ ^{between} ~~may have been the case with~~ the board that I served on and previous boards was that we had a more representative group of people on the board. We had all ~~political~~ ^(and) viewpoints and all ages represented ~~and~~ I think that enabled us to come up with decisions which were probably a little more representative and a little more widespread in their appeal than had ^{been} the case prior to ^[the appointment of] 1974 ^{the} 1970 board.

Williams: And you attribute this, then, I guess, to some of the help that came from the new appointees?

Hull: Yes. I feel very strongly that ^{the} new appointees (excluding myself) were pretty good. ~~I know that I'm still not in constant contact but~~ ⁱⁿ with regular contact with many of the people on the board, and I feel that they're some of the most capable people that I've come across.

Williams: Mr. Goodrich said that he would characterize the board when he came on and when he went off as well as ^{basically} a conservative body ~~basically~~. Would you agree with that or disagree with that?

Hull: I would say from what I've been told that the board that Mr. Goodrich served on before I got there was a good deal more conservative than the board that I served on myself. It's fair to say that the board took some positions that could be characterized as conservative, and it's fair to say that there were a good number of people on the board that would have labeled themselves as conservatives, but I found in terms of particular decisions that were made, ^{board} members reacted as I like to think I react, ~~that~~ that is, they looked at the issue as it developed and didn't just say "this was liberal" and "this was conservative" and therefore they had to be for it or against it.

Williams: That first meeting that you went to -- and I know you haven't looked at the minutes in some time; I got to look at them yesterday. You went to your first meeting in May of 1970.

Hull: I would guess May 20, 1970.

Williams: May of 1970 was right after Cambodia and Kent State, and you spoke in that first meeting of "sitting on top of a powder keg." I know among students (because I was a student at the time -- not at William and Mary, but I was a student) ~~of~~ there was something of a crisis mentality at this point. Was there on the Board of Visitors?

Hull: Did I use the words "powder keg?"

Williams: You used the words "powder keg."

Hull: If I used them then I would still use them today, even though probably no one else would use those words. My feeling is that in a sense we're on a constant powder keg. It's one in which the powder is sometimes a little wet, and other times it's very dry. In May of 1970 the powder was very dry, ~~and~~ now the pendulum has swung back a little bit and that powder is a little wetter than it was at that time. I think, though, that ~~in a sense~~ we're on a constant powder keg just because we're dealing with problems which are of tremendous importance. I personally can't think of any problem which is more important to the nation as a whole than the state of education. And the powder keg analogy may be more appropriate or less appropriate depending on what the situation is in the country at a particular time. When I use the term ^{though,} I use it because we tend to ~~think of crises and~~ ~~we tend to~~ react to crises, and I think that the only way one seems to be able to get people to really focus on something is

when a situation develops into a crisis, or when the powder in that proverbial powder keg is in fact dry. I personally think that's one of the real tragedies ^{that} we have, not just in education, but in many other things that we face today. We seem only to be able to react during a crisis, and that, in my opinion, is a very unfortunate thing. That's a very long-winded way of saying I used [#] the term then ^{and I'd} I use it today, although quite obviously it's a little less true today than it ~~would have been~~ ^{was} then.

Williams: Would you say that the Board of Visitors was realistic about the situation, about the powder being dry ~~than~~ in May of '70 . Did they realize this?

Hull: I think it's fair to say that everyone on the board realized that there were problems. I think it's also fair to say that, in Virginia, people felt a little more insulated against problems than they might have been in Ohio or in Mississippi. I think, too, that the board members as a whole reacted quite well to ~~pretty much~~ ^{almost} every situation as it developed. There was not unanimity, ~~in my opinion,~~ on most of the issues that we dealt with. That, in my opinion, ^{was} ~~is~~ one of the strengths of the board. I can remember my very first meeting being told ~~that~~ -- I may be wrong ^{when} ~~in what I say that~~ very first meeting -- ~~but I can remember being told at~~ ~~meeting~~ when I cast a negative vote that that was one of the very few negative votes that had ever been cast at a board meeting. And I remarked to the person who

told me that, that probably wasn't going to be the last time, and it was not in fact, the last time that negative votes were cast. But I'm glad that's the way the situation was because when you have unanimity at all times, you do not have a very healthy situation. The best way for a process to function as far as I'm concerned is for different views to be expressed for consensus to be attained when possible, but for individuals to stick to their guns when they happen to think the majority view is not the correct one.

Williams: Did you find that the majority backed Dr. Paschall's handling of students during this period? This is not something that really comes out; you get an undercurrent of opinion, but as a board member what would you say?

Hull: I'd say that the board in all instances always backed the president. That's the way it should be. The board as far as I'm concerned -- and I know most people disagree with me -- has but two functions: one is to hire and fire a president, and the other is to help set policy. The function of a board, though, with respect to president after he is hired (and if he in fact is not fired) is to support him, and that is something we all tried to do with respect to Dr. Paschall.

Williams: You do not find then as I found has happened in the case of many presidents at William and Mary -- actually by the time the board that appointed them has retired they have lost some of their support. Did you find this to be true?

Hull: I don't really know how to answer the question because I

don't know what the support for Dr. Paschall was before. I know that he had support on the board when I was there, although I believe I only served with him one year but I ^{know} think, too, that there ^{were} ~~may have been more~~ decisions ~~and~~ (as a result of what I said earlier about negative votes being cast) ~~there were in fact decisions that had~~ ^{with} dissenting members involved in the vote and I think that may have been the first time that Dr. Paschall had been associated with ~~that type of a~~ negative votes. I may be wrong; I don't know. I don't know what took place before I got there.

Williams: Could you give an example of an instance like this?

Hull: No, I can't because I don't remember the things I dissented from. I am unaware of the specifics; I just cannot recall. What I do know is that whenever there was a dissenting vote it was simply a vote that was cast after a healthy discussion, ~~and~~ ^{the} it was a type of process that I'm always happy to be associated with ~~where~~ after the vote was cast, the individual or individuals went right on with the other members to the next item. There was never any harshness or any bitter taste as the result of a win or a loss.

Williams: And that's not always been the case on the boards ~~so it's~~ How then as a board member would you account for the factors that led to Dr. Paschall's retirement? you said one of the things that a board does is hire and fire a president. Well, in a minute I want to talk about hiring but the retirement of Dr. Paschall was announced shortly

after you got on the board in the fall of 1970 . I know you had only been associated with the college for a short while, but what factors did you observe ~~were~~ going into that decision?

Hull: I don't really know all of Dr. Paschall's reasons for retiring. A very good reason, as I seem to recall, ^{was that} he was about 60 years old at the time. 1970, as you've pointed out, was a time of upheaval ~~and~~ Dr. Paschall had made his contribution and put a great deal of time and effort into William and Mary, among other things. It didn't strike me as ^uunusual that he would chose to retire at age 60 and in 1970.

Williams: Some of the students that I've talked to from that period say that they take some credit for it, that they very definitely had a feeling that, yes, they had something to do with this decision. So ~~what~~ you're saying is that could be true, too.

Hull: Well, I think that probably was true in the sense that there ^{were} many students who were involved in campus activities which people viewed as being disruptive ~~(and~~ disruption to most people -- I suspect to all people -- is not particularly pleasant) ^{have} when you are 60 years old and spent a good deal of time building something up, [^] you do not feel particularly happy, I suspect, when people for whom you apparently were working or for whose good you were working [?] decide that what you did or what was being done in your presence was not something they liked ~~and~~ I'm sure that was a factor in his

Does this make
better sense
before "decide" ?
OK

decision, but again I do not know what really went into his thinking and why he retired; ^{and} I ^{think} hypothesize. I think it was a combination of the fact that the man had spent a good many years working, ^{he} was 60 years old, and there was a good deal of upheaval at the time.

Williams: Did you know that he was going to make this decision before he announced it to the board? Can you remember that, or ^{was} ~~is~~ his announcement at the board meeting the first you knew about it?

Hull: The best answer I can give you is I just don't know. I'm assuming that I ^{for the first time} knew about it when he announced it. I don't really recall.

Williams: Do you recall if any of the members tried to persuade him not to retire?

Hull: I don't know the answer to that question either. I suspect there must well have been board members who did so.

Williams: I'm not certain that it was at that meeting -- it's really immaterial -- but soon there was set up a ^[college-wide] search committee for the new president. This was the first time this had been done at William and Mary. Did this have widespread support on the board?

Hull: That was clearly one of the decisions that there was unanimity on. We all felt -- and I would hope that board members not only at William and Mary but at all educational institutions at all times will always feel ^{that} in order to have a man selected who is going to do a job and be able to do the job

to the best of his ability, ^{should be} he ~~is~~ selected as a result of a search ~~and~~ by a committee that represents the administration, students, the alumni, and the board.

Williams: What kind of an impression did Tom Graves make when he came? I know he came before the board after he was recommended. He was a very different man, say, from Dr. Paschall. What kind of an impression did he make?

Hull: He ~~made an~~ ^{very} obviously good impression or he wouldn't have been selected as president. Tom's a very pleasant guy. He's obviously a good administrator and obviously, too, a good college president. I think that's one of the decisions we made that we're all pretty proud about.

Williams: Then after he became president he continued this favorable administrative impression.

Hull: That's correct.

Williams: Was there any chance -- you made a statement when the board was considering the appointment that the board should take the committees' report [⊕] there must have been a chance then that the board would not accept the search committee's report.

Hull: I'm not really following the question.

Williams: Okay. The day that President Graves was elected as president by the board the search committee came in with its recommendations. It's recorded that you said the board should accept the search committee's report. This implies there must have been some consideration not to accept the report.

Hull: No, I think what that implies is what the fact of the case was: that there were other people who were being considered for the presidency ~~and~~ when a report comes forward which says that a committee recommends X, ^{and} what I believe that would be phrased in ^{the} minutes ~~would be~~ that the board ^{shall generally} accepted the committee's report, but that doesn't mean, I believe, what you're implying.

I tried to make some sense out of my fiddlers.

Williams: No, what I meant was if the report was to recommend that Dr. Graves be elected president, then for there to be some question must have meant that there was some doubt whether or not to go on and select him or to select the other candidate.

Hull: Well, going on memory there were some five people who made the last round of that selection process.

Williams: Yes, they kept cutting them down.

Hull: And from that it was reduced to a couple of individuals. From those two the board made its decision.

Williams: Another person I went to interview said it's a real shame that ~~every~~[#] time a new president is selected at William and Mary there has to be a pitched battle. He was speaking of an earlier presidency. Was this the case then?

Hull: If that was a pitched battle, then I would not mind being a fulltime soldier because ~~that~~^{it} was a bloodless battle. Again, there were different views expressed, but those views were always expressed in ~~an impassionate~~^{a dispassionate} way and after the views were expressed ~~the~~^{the} vote was taken ~~and~~^{and} the decision was made.

I don't believe ~~any~~[#] of the people that cast votes that day feels that the decision was anything but a good decision.

*1942
Williams: What I'm trying to establish is that the presidential selection in 1970 was very different from the presidential selection of 1941^{*}, the presidential selection of 1934, and the presidential selection of 1919--all of which were pitched battles that challenged different views of what the college was and was to be. So that's what I'm driving at at this point.

Hull: There was no pitched battle in that sense (the 1970 one). The prior battles surprise me quite frankly. I didn't realize there was any dissension in any of the selection processes that took place ^(prior) to my coming on the board. I'm not trying to say that my coming on the board led to all kinds of problems (although I [#] suspect there ^{may be} ~~are~~ some who believed that) but I'm surprised that there was anything but unanimity at all board meetings prior to 1970. I stand corrected.

Williams: After the new president was selected, after the powder keg was somewhat settled, what would you cite ~~as~~ for the rest of your term on the Board of Visitors as the major issue facing the board?

Hull: I may be heming and hawing when I give you this answer because I'm not really sure what the answer is. As far as I'm concerned the [#] main thing that I tried to do and I think one of the things that we did do (and, by the way, one of the things I believe quite strongly has to be done at all

[decision-making]
 times) is to try and bring as many people as possible into the process. There's no question legally or in my mind that the Board of Visitors is the final decision-making body. There is also no question in my mind that a board would be acting irresponsibly if it just made decisions in either a rubber stamp fashion or without trying to get different viewpoints. That was not the case, in my opinion, ^{from} in 1970 to 1974. In those four years we strove to get as many viewpoints as possible before us, and ~~I think~~ we made changes in the rules of the Board of Visitors with respect to ~~the~~ student participation in meetings, ^[and] ^{liaison} with the student body. In my opinion, that's one of the important things that we did. ~~It's~~ only if you get before you differing viewpoints can you end up making intelligent decisions.

Williams: When you went onto the board how do you think you were viewed by the other board members?

Hull: My guess with respect to that question is that I don't think they really knew what they were getting; ~~they had~~ certainly had no reason to know what they were getting. I was a 27 year-old New York attorney with no ties to the college. I suspect their questions, which I'm sure ~~was~~ ^{were} phrased in different ways, ~~was~~ ^{were}: is he a political hack? What contribution can he conceivably make? What is he going to say? How is he going to act? ~~And~~ that's my guess as to what they must have been thinking. I suspect that they probably didn't give a great

deal of thought to ^{those} ~~the~~ questions. There's no reason why they should have; they would find out soon enough.

Williams: In the four years, then, did their perception change, do you think?

Hull: I don't know because I don't know what their perception was before.

Williams: If you had to answer each of those that you just mentioned -- "political hack," "New York attorney" -- "how would you act?"

Hull: Well, I was not a political hack in my opinion, although I obviously was closely associated with the governor. I was a New York attorney when I was appointed. (I can't remember the other two questions.) But I honestly can't speak for what others thought of my four years on the board. I can only speak of my view of my four years on the board, which I personally consider as interesting as any I've had and I consider the appointment to that board as a turning point in my life. It changed my career goals totally.

Williams: Similarly let me ^{turn} ~~change~~ the question around: how did you view the board when you ^{went} ~~went~~ on ^{one?} ~~one?~~

Hull: I had known William and Mary to be a fairly conservative school when I was appointed and when I had been there ~~X~~ years previously. I also had great faith in Lin Holton, and I knew he was going to select people with whom I'd be proud to serve. I think both of those perceptions were correct. I think the school was a conservative school in 1970

in the traditional view of what a conservative school is;
~~and~~ I think the people with whom I served were very able
 individuals; and I think they served the college well.

Williams: Did your perception change then in the four years' experience?

Hull: My perception of William and Mary?

Williams: Your perception of William and Mary and the board, yes, both.

Hull: My perception ^{of the} board, just to clarify that point -- the day I
 met the individuals in May of 1970 ^{was} a positive one. My
 perception of the board when I left it in March of 1974
 was an equally positive one. Equally is probably the wrong
 word; I suspect I felt even more strongly about the people
 because I knew more about them after four years than when I
 first met them. With respect to the school itself, William
 and Mary was not then and is not now an Antioch. It is, how-
 ever, I think a progressive school under Tom's leadership,
 and I think it's a school ~~at~~ which everyone associated with
 it should be proud of.

Williams: You've already usurped my question about the role of the
 Board of Visitors; let me ask you what you think is the
 proper role of the rector. Now I ^{'ve} asked this of various
 rectors I talked to, and the way I ^{'ve} phrased it to each of them
 is: "Did you see your job as rector as being a leader of the
 board, the moderator of the board, or no opinion?" How
 would you answer that with the rectors
 you were associated with?

Hull: I think that the style of both Ernest Goodrich and Harvey

Chappell was somewhat similar. I think both of them did much of the homework for the board. They kept in constant contact with Dr. Paschall and Tom Graves. I believe that they did precisely what I would have done in a similar situation in terms of coordinating things for the board, ^[and] presenting a constant point of contact between the board and the president. Now I don't know what they've told you their view of the board is or what they viewed their role as, but I viewed them really as the chairman of the board of directors, ~~really~~ of a corporation, ~~and~~ they did the day-to-day work for the board, and, although they did not represent the board in any decision process, they were ~~the~~ constant point of contact between the board and the president.

Williams: Similarly what would you say is the president's role in the board meetings? What is his responsibility?

Hull: Well, there'd be those who say the president should run the board meetings. We didn't feel and I certainly don't feel that should be the case; I think the rector really runs the board meetings. I think that the president has to come ~~to~~ to board meetings both with a plan or set of ideas which he would like to have adopted by the board and with the ability to answer any and all questions that the board might have for him. In that connection, I go back to what I said in the beginning: that I think it's incumbent upon board members at all times to be as familiar with the school as possible so they can ask the probing questions which they have to ask.)

if they're going to do the job which they are assigned by law to do.

Williams: Is it possible for a dozen or so people who come to campus at least four times a year -- ~~some of them~~ you said you came more often -- some of them more often -- to effectively govern an institution, and if so, how; if not, why not?

Hull: In a word, the answer to that is "yes." I think that any board of any corporation and that ~~is~~ ^{is} point of fact is what an educational institution is -- has to bear the legal responsibility for what ~~they do~~ ^{it does} and for the operation of the corporation. I think, too, ~~they have~~ ^{it has} to recognize -- and that's why I say ~~their~~ ^{it} two functions are to hire and fire presidents and set policy -- that ~~they~~ ^{it} cannot conceivably conduct the day-to-day operations of that institution. In that connection I think that the selection process that we had and the decision we made with respect to Tom Graves was a good one because I think he ~~is~~ ^{in fact} runs that institution well. The Board of Visitors has the ultimate legal responsibility for running the institution, and, for that reason, the individual members have to be as familiar with that institution as possible in order to fulfill their responsibilities. That does not mean, however, that the board itself runs the institution in any day-to-day or management sense; ^{and} it simply does not ~~cannot~~.

Williams: This four-year period was a very important four-year period, but then I can't think of a four-year period at William and

Mary that hasn't been.

Hull: Oh no. Every four-year period in every student's life ~~was~~ is obviously an important one, ~~and~~ with respect to the years 1970 to 1974 I think that I would be wrong to say that that was a particularly important period. An individual associated with the school for that period of time might say it was a particularly important period, but in the history of the school, ^{I think that} one cannot pick that four-year period out. I can just speak for myself and say, ~~that~~ as I have, that my association with the school was totally pleasant, and ~~that~~ ^{to} ~~in terms of~~ what it did ~~to~~ me in terms of perspective ~~it~~ could not have been better.