Elizabeth Tyler Miles

Mrs. Miles is the only living child of the late Lyon G. Tyler, president of William and Mary from 1888 to 1919. She now lives in Charlottesville. Although somewhat apprehensive about being tape-recorded, she was pleased to recall her days in the President's House. Her letters are also filed with this transcript, as they, too, are descriptive of the era.

* No - Lyon G. Tyler, Jr. is alive & well.
Interviewee: Elizabeth Tyler Miles

Date of interview: Oct. 15, 1975

Place: Raleigh Court, University Circle, Charlottesville, Va.

Interviewer: Emily Williams

Session number: 1

Length of tape: 45 mins.

Contents:
- Tyler's becoming president
- Description of President's House
- College finances
- Physical layout of campus
- Role of W&M in education
- Description of Tyler, Phillips
- Entertainment, life in President's House
- Tyler's retirement
- Entire speech

Approximate time:
- 2 mins.
- 5 mins
- 2 mins.
- 8 mins.
- 4 mins.
- 8 mins.
- 17 mins.
- 2 mins.
- 6 mins.

See back of sheet for names and places mentioned in interview.
Elizabeth Tyler Miles

October 15, 1975 Charlottesville, Virginia

Williams: Why would your father, Lyon G. Tyler, have taken over this struggling institution that has been closed?

Miles: Because he was so intensely interested in history. His father attended William and Mary, and he was a student and later professor of belles-lettres, as well. He was just so interested in the college, he felt that it might be destroyed entirely, and he just couldn't bear to think of that. He was in the state legislature, and he urged them to appropriate some money; it was only a pittance: $10,000. I don't see how they ever opened the college on that! (Well, they did have a little money. I don't know where that came from, but at one time it had amounted to $60,000, but after the war it was only about $30,000. Now this is what I've always heard.) So it was opened on that.

He came to William and Mary, and the President's House was in a terrible state of repairs. The walls had been whitewashed; they hadn't been painted or papered.
Colonel Ewell, who was such a grand old man and grand president, had come in and rung the bell, but he'd always bring his hunting dogs with him, and the dogs would sleep in the room that he used as his library and so when my father arrived he said the house was just alive with fleas. But they soon got rid of them because he loved dogs, too, and we always had animals of every description — two saddle horses and buggy horses, a cow and a calf, turkeys.

Williams: Right there on the president's house grounds?

Miles: Yes, on the campus. He got a flock of turkeys; he said he thought it would be much more profitable than peacocks, who were just beautiful, but turkeys — you could eat turkeys, too.

And he always kept corn in his pockets and when he walked over to the college, the turkeys would follow him. So the students would be standing or sitting on the college steps would say, "Gobble, gobble, gobble," — to his amusement. And the turkeys roosted in the trees around the buildings at night, but finally they were all gone because at Thanksgiving and Christmas the students would go out and catch them by the tail and pull them out of the trees and take them down to this little restaurant that was owned by a man — he said he was Indian — Jim Galt. And Jim Galt would cook the turkeys for the students. Then they had a club called the Wish Bone Club, and they'd wear the turkey wishbone on their lapel of their coat. Well, so the turkeys didn't last too long. But we had rabbits and

The Main Building was then called "the College."
guinea pigs and all kinds of birds, and he really was a lover of animals.

Williams: In one of your letters to me you spoke of these as "the poverty years of the college."

Miles: Well, the poverty years were when he first started there. His salary was $1,800; the professors' salaries were $1,500. Imagine that today. Of course, we did have the house but little by little the Board of Visitors would have a little money and help to restore the house -- paint it and paper it. My mother just made it charming (she was a real interior decorator) and with all the lovely old furniture, they came from Charlottesville. She inherited from her mother and father.

Williams: Well, did he see the state financial support -- you said he pleaded before the General Assembly or for the General Assembly to give the college money. Did he see this as the only way to reopen the college?

Miles: Yes, no one had any money. It had been too long after the War between the States and everyone was poor. Oh, goodness, the only source of revenue would be from the state and they already had the University of Virginia as a state college, so they were reluctant to have another state college on their hands, but when my father just pleaded for it, the history of it, the great men that had been students there, had taught there, I suppose they couldn't resist and did appropriate the $10,000, and that's what the college was opened on with the "Seven Wise Men." Then later on I think -- I'm not sure of the year --
but I think it was 1890 or 1895 that the state was induced to take the college over as a state college.

Williams: Your father worked for this, I assume.

Miles: Oh, yes, he worked for that hard because there was no way of getting any money. No one had any money to give. But when they wanted to build a library, he did go up north. The Carnegie Foundation would appropriate so much (around $30,000) if they would raise $30,000, so he went up in the North, and some of his friends became interested and they donated money, and he raised the $30,000, and that was the library, which I don't know that it's still there. Is it?

Williams: Yes, it's now part of the law school. They added to the building.

Miles: Of course, the library when he first went there was back in the chapel, the rooms back of the chapel in the Wren Building was the library. I have a picture of that.

Williams: Everything was in what was called the Main Building, or I think you referred to it as 'the College.' It was also called 'the College.'

Miles: We never called it the Wren Building. We, of course, knew that the architect was Sir Christopher Wren, but it was 'the College' or 'the Main Building, usually 'the College.'

Williams: And everything was in there?

Miles: Everything took place in there -- except the dances. During that early period the dances were held down at the Colonial Inn, in their dining room, which they would turn into a ballroom. Then when the gymnasium was built -- I don't know how
they got the money for that first gymnasium -- then that would be turned into a ballroom, and they would have entertainment there. But when he first went to the college, the Board of Visitors always were entertained in the president's house and all the guests.

Williams: The advertisements for William and Mary at the time -- they advertised it as a teacher training school. Was that his concept of the role of the college, was to train teachers?

Miles: Yes, to teach young men to be able to teach in the public schools of Virginia and they would get a discount on their expenses while there. Also theological students (those who were going to be ministers) would come at a much lower rate.

Williams: Judge Spratley was telling me about this; he was trained as a teacher. What then did Dr. Tyler think went in to making up an educated man? Now this is sort of a hypothetical question I realize.

Miles: A man with liberal arts and I don't believe that included science at that time -- the liberal arts. I'm not sure, it may have. I know that Dr. Van Garret was the professor of chemistry and his laboratory, over what is now called the Great Hall, and it was two stories.

Williams: That's right, it was only two stories.

Miles: And he was one of the sweetest men I've ever known, Dr. Garrett. I guess he was wonderful and he married Miss Michele, the daughter of New Orleans who was the governor of Louisiana, didn't she mean?
and of course, Cara and Suzanne and Ray and Van, the sen.

Mrs. Garrett always had a little Bible class Sunday afternoon. She said she did that to keep herself out of trouble on Sunday afternoon. And she would see me coming across the Court House green and she said I always climbed in the window; I never went through the door.

Williams: I asked a question about the educated man; it was during your father's administration that women were first admitted to the college.

Miles: He was enthusiastic about that; he really was. He really was responsible for that. He fought for that and I think that was the year '13, wasn't it? As I remember, the first girl that matriculated in coeducation was from Newport News and her name was Faith—I don't know her last name—but Faith—and my father said that was a good omen.

Williams: Did he have a hard time getting the alumni and the General Assembly to agree?

Miles: Oh, some of the alumni — one of the alumni asked to have his name taken off of the rolls of the college.

Williams: What arguments, then, did he use in favor of making William and Mary coeducational? Do you know that?

Miles: He always felt that a woman should have all the privileges and rights that a man had that she should be as well educated as her husband. Oh, he worked hard for that.

Williams: Would you say that he was ahead of his time or were his critics behind their time?
Miles: I think he was a little ahead of his time, wouldn't you say so?

Williams: I would think. In his relationship with students, many of the people that I have spoken with who knew your father remember him very fondly as being rather absentminded.

Miles: He was very absentminded, which I think they say of most college professors that they are absentminded. But he would do some very absentminded things. The students would have a number of jokes and his absentminded things he did.

Williams: Can you think of some examples?

Miles: Well, let's see. I remember one. He was holding class (at that time, he was teaching, besides being president) and it was a warm spring day and the students had spring fever, I guess. So when they went over to the classroom my father said, "Mr. Jones, will you answer the question?" And Mr. Jones said, "Doctor, I don't think I know anything about that question." "Well, Mr. Brown, will you answer the question?" "Well, Doctor, I don't know what the question is." My father said, "Well, I don't know what it is either. Class dismissed." That was one of the jokes they told on him. And another one was -- they told Henry Billups, the janitor, one evening at night when it was quite dark, "Go out to the sundial, Henry, and tell me what time it is." Henry said, "Dr. Tyler, it's dark out there. I can't see what time it is." "Well, light a match and you'll see," was the answer.

Williams: Did you know Henry Billups personally?
Miles: Oh, goodness, course I did. He came there when my father came; he hired him when he was about fifteen years old to wait on the tables over in the Ewell Building, where the dining hall was. And I remember his old father who was working there at the college then. He really was the janitor and his father was old and not well, so they had to get someone in his place, and my father appointed Henry as the janitor to ring the bell, which he did -- well, he was there for about sixty-five years when he rang it.

Williams: He apparently was a very legendary character as well.

Miles: Oh, he was. He was a real character and a real gentleman. When he died, I went to his funeral, and I was so sorry. I think it was during the summer, so the college was more or less closed and they didn't toll the bell. I wanted them to toll the college bell at his funeral.

Williams: What kind of a person was Henry Billups?

Miles: Well, he was just a fine gentleman, I would say, and he was always agreeable; always cheerful, and would do anything that he possibly could for either the students or the faculty, and when they'd send him to look for a student that the faculty wanted to talk to, he would never find him. He just couldn't find him, whether he could or not.

Williams: He was very close to the students, I've heard.

Miles: Oh, yes. He knew all their troubles and joys. He always called himself a Kappa Sigma and wore a Kappa Sigma pin on his lapel. But he was a Kappa Sigma and a professor of Zoology.
had him over to wait on the table when we had guests.

Williams: I'm not giving you a chance to refer to your notes. Maybe I should pause there.

Miles: I've got here that you've got ("the aspirations when he became president.") It was to make it a first-class liberal arts college.

Williams: He had taught at William and Mary, you were telling me at lunch.

Miles: Just for a year.

Williams: But his education was at the University of Virginia?

Miles: Well, his higher education, yes. He, of course, studied law here and had many stories about the students' pranks at the university that I loved to listen to.

Williams: Was he a good story-teller?

Miles: Oh, excellent. He would tell wonderful stories.

Williams: Of course, he is known primarily as a scholar because of the history that he wrote. Would you say that he was more of a scholar, say, than a disciplinarian?

Miles: Well, his main theme, of course, was honor and William and Mary was the first college to establish the honor system, I think; and that was just beyond the pale of anything that wasn't honorable. But he was most friendly with the students and always called them, "my boys." It's a wonder that Judge Spratley didn't say that he was one of Dr. Tyler's "boys." I heard Governor Tuck the other day and I remember he was speaking at William and Mary when he was governor and he said, "Oh, I couldn't believe anything else because I was
one of Dr. Tyler's 'boys.' I've just forgotten what it was about, but anyhow, that's the way he expressed it.

Williams: Would students be in your home? I knew Judge Spratley spoke of how delighted the boys were that Dr. Tyler had two such lovely daughters.

Miles: Well, my mother was lovely and she would have a group of them over for supper very often.

Williams: The college was much, much smaller.

Miles: Of course, in those days, all the entertainment was in the house and the students -- oh, we'd have as many as twenty callers over there in the evening and we had to play games and make fudge. We didn't have all the things the young people have now -- radio and television -- we just had to have our own amusement, which we certainly enjoyed. We had all kinds of games we played. Made candy down in the kitchen.

Williams: I think you said when you first moved into the president's house, they didn't even have electricity.

Miles: No, we had lamps and I know the lamps were the first things in the morning that had to be cleaned. I don't know what year it was that we got electricity and a bathroom. We had no bathroom and my mother's friends would come up bring a towel. Dear Mrs. Hall, her dearest friend, and Mrs. Geddy would all'd come up and say, "Mrs. Tyler, can we take a bath?" We would be delighted -- there were no bathrooms in Williamsburg at that time.
Williams: Was the president's house one of the first to get one?  

Miles: Yes. They'd come up there to get a bath.

Williams: I have heard, too, that your father was one of the first people in Williamsburg to get a car.

Miles: He was. He got a Ford. And you should have seen our horses! They were always pastured out there in back of the campus, where the buildings are right there now, but the horses were out there. And when they saw this automobile, they kicked up their heels and ran around in the pasture -- which was the campus. Oh, their day of freedom had come, they felt. I always rode horseback. I know all the woods; we'd ride through the woods around there on horseback. As far as Jamestown and Kingsmill.

Williams: And you were telling me before lunch when you would go down to Jamestown, you would go down in a wagon.

Miles: Yes. We called it hayride. We'd go on a hayride to Jamestown to celebrate the fifteenth of May, I think it was the landing, you know. Oh, goodness, that was a big day. We'd take the most wonderful picnic lunches: fried chicken and deviled eggs and chocolate cake and have a perfectly wonderful time. Filled the wagon with our friends -- boy students, boys and girls.

Williams: Was that the biggest day of the year?

Miles: That was really a big day.

Williams: Maybe second to finals. Would you say finals were even bigger?

Miles: Yes, second to finals. Japanese lanterns and the bunting.
Williams: You were describing earlier the Japanese lanterns being strung --

Miles: All around the campus. They'd be lighted at five o'clock in the afternoon when the orchestra from Washington would arrive and would play on the campus from five until seven, and they would usually sit between the president's house and the college and everybody in town would come up there, and it would be just like a big festival with the lanterns and the music and all the students and the girls that had come for the dances.

Williams: You were telling me earlier about the dances.

Miles: Oh, they were just wonderful. We always had a house full of young people for the finals -- girls coming down from Richmond, and the Booths from Carter's Grove would always come to our house and stay the night, and we would have to sleep on a pallet.

Williams: You must have looked forward to finals every year.

Miles: I don't see how my mother ever did the housekeeping for so many people, but she did, and we always had a wonderful cook and a little housemaid that helped.

Williams: I didn't get you to go into detail at lunch about you were talking about the Germans, the dances?

Miles: The Germans were given by the four fraternities: Kappa Sigma, Kappa Alpha, Pi Kappa Alpha, and Theta Delta Chi. They would usually start off with a march of the chaperones and all the
young people would line up for a march around — I remember that mostly in the gymnasium. And then we would waltz and polka. They were beautiful dances. They were usually led by Jeff Stubbs, who was the son of Professor of Thomas Jefferson Stubbs; he was there at the college later on and he would lead the German. He was a beautiful waltzer.

Williams: I think you said that the fraternities vied with each other.

Miles: Oh, yes, they would vie with each other to see who could put on the most charming, delightful dance, which would have the most beautiful dances. Then the last dance would be the final ball, and that was so sad that we were going to say goodbye the next day, you know, and when they'd play "Auld Lang Syne" that was very sad. We'd all cry and the college would close.

Williams: Because the next day would be commencement?

Miles: Well, the next day the college would be over, you see. That would be the ending — the night of the final ball. They would have delivered the degrees and medals that morning in the chapel.

Williams: Yes, you were telling me that the degrees were granted in the chapel. On the subject of the social life, would you say that at the time that we're talking about, which is basically 1888 to 1919, that the college and the town -- could you have separated the two in your mind, as far as social life was concerned?
Miles: No, because the townspeople always were with the social life of the college.

Williams: One thing I think was in the *Sage of the Lion's Den* that I found rather interesting. It said something about your father "desiring to spread the temperance sentiment." I wondered what was meant exactly by this.

Miles: I don't understand that either. Where did you see that?

Williams: I think it was *Sage of the Lion's Den* that I read that.

Miles: Well, I know that sometimes we'd call him the "peacemaker." He would always, sometimes I would say, "You're taking all the romance out of history, out of things that have a lot of romance." He would always say, "I want the truth. I like romance and sentiment but I want the truth."

Williams: So, temperance was not something he preached? That was an idea I got from reading...

Miles: Temperance? Oh, he didn't preach that. Where alcohol is concerned, Oh, he didn't preach it, but the town had so many barrooms and... you know that when local option came, he was for local option because of the college students. He said that the students had the influence of all these barrooms that were there in Williamsburg. He used to say that some of the old gentlemen that had known of the War Between the States, that these who did drink too much, it was their only solace because they had lost everything else -- their homes, their money, many of their sons and family -- so if anyone imbued too much, he would say, "Well, you can't blame him too much because that's his..."
colace, after all he's suffered." But he was certainly no teetotaler, but he believed in not drinking too much.

William: That's how historical misinformation can get started. When I read that, I assumed perhaps he was a teetotaler.

Miles: Oh, no. Why, when the Board of Visitors came over to have dinner at our house, the first thing they would be served would be a cigar and a little mint julep. That was the custom in those days. And I would always want the sugar left in the glass of the mint julep. No, he was no teetotaler, but he believed in moderation.

William: If you had to identify the greatest influences on his character, the things that went into making him the way he was, what influences would you cite?

Miles: Well, as he would always say when he was writing, "I want the truth. No matter what it is, if I am recording history, if it's bitter or not, I want the truth." And he felt a great sense of honor at the college about everything was to be honorable.

William: One more thing I thought of I wanted to ask you was about famous or special guests that you had at the president's house. Can you recall?

Miles: Well, I think I wrote you a number, I know that we entertained President Taft — this was in the president's house. President and Mrs. Wilson — my mother had known Mrs. Wilson all her life. She was visiting the Bollings who lived in Wytheville,
when my father wrote her that they could be married because he'd gotten a job down in Memphis, Tennessee. So she came and they were married at a cousin's in Pulaski County.

The Reverend George Gilmer was her cousin, were married there, then went down to Memphis. Pierpoint Morgan, French Prince, Ambassador Juchan and -- oh, we entertained so many.

These are just a few that I can remember. My uncle Judge D. Harding, always stayed at my house in the hotel. My mother wouldn't know ahead of time at all. So she saw him once with a gentleman, and she'd say, "I know I'm going to have a guest for dinner, so I better add something." And the only thing that she had that she could add was a dish of scrambled eggs and she added that, and the guest was Pierpoint Morgan, who was always known as a gourmet, you know, but he told my mother, "You couldn't have had anything better or that I like more than scrambled eggs." I don't think she told him that she'd added it.

Williams: When she saw him coming to the walk

Miles: Yes. But I do recall once we had a guest. I think it was Professor Hart from Harvard, and we had oyster soup, and so many people came in that day to have dinner with us that she hastily had to get the cook to add more milk to the oyster soup. So Dr. Hart said, "Oh, this soup is delicious, Mrs.
Tyler, may I have some more?" And she said, "Certainly."
By that time there was only about one oyster left, and the little maid leaning over my mother's shoulder to look while she was ladling out the oyster soup, said to my father, "Dar he is; dar he is passing at the one and only oyster."
That was very embarrassing.

Williams: You had written to me that the days you spent in the president's house were very happy ones.

Miles: I don't remember a single day that wasn't happy -- except when my mother was ill once or twice, then I was unhappy because of her, not of anything else. We were all very happy, and my father would join in at Christmas. We always had fireworks at Christmas instead of at the Fourth of July. We'd have them at Christmas and he'd always come out on the porch and help us fire off the fireworks and the Roman candles and celebrate Christmas with us. Hanging up stockings, helping to fill them.

Williams: Your father enjoyed being president of the college?

Miles: Oh, very much. He loved it. It was a challenge and he just --
The college really, really had no money to speak of until just recently, in the last -- now it's been left a lot of money, hasn't it? We were so happy that Mr. Johns left --

Williams: Oh, yes, Mr. Johns left some money to it, yes, you're right. (Discussion about Ashlaw and Williams and Mary.)

When your father retired, was it because of his health or his age or he just felt it was time for a new president?
Miles: No, he just felt that the period had changed and that some younger person should be president of the college and he wanted to write, too. He spent the summers after he retired at a little cottage we had on the James River, which my mother named "the Lion's Den," and in the winter they lived in Richmond and he had an office in Richmond.

Williams: But he did want to pursue his work when he retired?

Miles: And he did a great deal of writing after he retired.

Williams: What did he see as his greatest accomplishment at the college?

Miles: You mean in writing? I think he would say letters and times of the Tidewater as far as writing is concerned.

Williams: No, as president.

Miles: You mean at the college? He did so many things. The greatest accomplishment -- I think he should be considered the second founder of William and Mary because if it hadn't been for him, probably the buildings as the legislature had spoken of, would have been sold -- since the college would have been finished with his love of history, that he just couldn't bear that and I think he would say that and then he added a number of buildings. Of course, the buildings then were certainly not the large and handsome buildings of today but they did the best they could with the funds they had.

Williams: Did he have friends in the legislature that he could contact?

Miles: Oh, yes. But he had a number of friends in the north that contributed to William and Mary. Well, of course, his William and Mary Quarterly which he founded and published until he re-
tired as his own and then he retired he wrote under the name of Tyler's Genealogical and Historical Magazine.

Williams: After he retired, he lived for a number of years afterwards in which the college grew rapidly, both in students and in buildings. How did he view this?

Miles: Well, he viewed it with great pleasure. When he retired, it was just around World War I, you see, and so many of the students had left to join the armed forces and he thought that it would be wonderful-- I'm sure he looked forward to what the college is today.

Williams: You think he'd approve of the college as it is today?

Miles: Oh, yes, of course, he would.

Williams: Dr. Kimbrough made the comment when I interviewed her that she's very sure that he would be very pleased at a project like this-- of getting down the history of the college.

Miles: Yes, oh, he would be. That was his really, his life. I can just always picture him sitting at his desk writing some historical article because so much of it so many of the old records were burned and that's another thing he did. He got the legislature to appropriate a very small sum -- as much as he could get, certainly not over $1,000 -- to have the records at Yorktown and in Gloucester and all around in the old courthouses written and so many of the ladies in Williamsburg did it. He would get the records and bring them to their houses, and they would copy them and he had them all set up to the library in Richmond and they're there. My mother copied
one. Of course, all the ladies were paid something for doing it -- maybe just fifty dollars, but they were glad to get that in those days. They were all written in different handwritings, though. Each lady would have a different handwriting.

* Mrs. Miles' letters (to be filed with this) contain additional stories of life in the President's House during her father's term, 1880-1919.

President Emeritus, 1919-1935
Until his death.
Letters
Elizabeth Tyler Miles to Emily Williams

June 27, 1975

The Wren Building, in my day, was always called "The College," though of course, we knew the main building, the President's House and Brafferton (first school for Indians) were designed by Sir Christopher Wren.

It was indeed "The College" -- the chapel, library, gymnasium, burser's office, classrooms where the two literary societies and faculty met, graduating exercises held in the chapel -- everything took place in that main building, "The College." I think you can find my father's farewell address (June 1919) in the library, also. He tells of accomplishments made during the lean years while president, 1888-1919, president emeritus, 1919-1935, until his death, February 1935. While president emeritus he was often called upon to speak and take part in ceremonies. When President Coolidge visited The College, my husband was stationed at "The Navy Mine Depot," Yorktown, Virginia (Capt. Alfred Hart Miles, U.S. Navy). My husband met the president aboard his yacht "Mayflower" at the docks in Yorktown, and in full uniform regalia escorted President Coolidge to The College in Williamsburg. My father and President Chandler were there to greet him. It was an interesting and beautiful ceremony, presenting the president with an honorary degree.

I thought my father looked very handsome wearing his collegiate cap and gown -- the gold tassel on his cap swinging as he strode into "The College." He was a tall, striking-looking man with a merry twinkle in his eye.
July 1975

There is so much I would like to talk to you about those "Golden Days."

I made a list of a few of the distinguished guests that were entertained in the President's House. During that period the Board of Visitors and guests of the college were entertained there. There were usually cigars and mint juleps before dinner. Henry Billups, the janitor, was called in to wait on the table, which he did with great eclat.

I remember well the Bishop of London's visit (1907) bringing a handsome Bible as a gift from the king to Bruton Parish Church. President Theodore Roosevelt presented the lectern on which it rests. The Bishop of London, wearing short satin trunks and long black stockings, stood on the steps of the Wren Building and spoke to the college students, ending his speech by saying, "Gentlemen, if you do not have a sense of humor, pray for it. You will need it in your journey through life."

One more thing I will mention which made a great impression on me. When he retired (1919), Dr. James Dillard of Charlottesville was rector of the college board. He delivered an address and presented my father with the honorary degree of L.L.D., also President Emeritus of William and Mary; this was in 1919. My mother and I sat in the front seat in the chapel where the ceremonies took place. Dr. Dillard, standing in front of my father who stood tall in his cap and gown, looking directly at him said, "Lyon Gardiner Tyler, gentleman by birth and education,
historian, author, educator, I present to you the honorary
degree of L.L.D. and declare you president emeritus of the
College of William and Mary." He also spoke of him as
"Restorer of paths," the "soul of service." It was a moving
occasion; my mother's and my eyes were filled with tears.

January 9, 1976

Dear Miss Williams,

You have asked me what my father's relationship was with
the faculty. I would certainly say most friendly.

The faculty presented him with a medal, 1906, studded with
a diamond. I enclose my sister-in-law's, Mrs. Harrison
Ruffies Tyler, letter describing the medal. Also, when my
father retired in 1919 the faculty presented him with a beauti-
ful large silver pitcher, goblet, and tray. Mrs. John Tyler,
my brother John Tyler's wife, has it now, and is very proud of it.

A number of students he knew well gave him a very fine
hammock to use and relax in at "The Lion's Den," his summer house
on the James River. It is impossible for me to mention all
of the close and friendly relationships he had with the faculty
and students. The faculty presented my brother, John Tyler,
student and professors, with a medal for his high scholarship
in mathematics, and when I was married they gave me a beautiful
large silver bowl.
January 5, 1976

A few of the admonitions my father, Dr. Lyon Gardiner Tyler, gave to his students, and to me:

"Never reply to a letter without rereading it. You may forget to answer questions, etc."

"Never write a letter or reply to one of any consequence without sleeping on it. In the morning you may change your mind."

"Never cut a clipping from a newspaper without the line, name, place, and date of paper. Otherwise, little good to anyone, especially historians."

"Never answer the door or phone without a welcome voice."

"Be temperate or moderate in all things."

"Regardless of all else, search and want the truth."

"Honor above all."

Advice to "my boys", the students at the College of William and Mary.

Elizabeth Tyler Miles
Mrs. Alfred Hart Miles

January 5th, 1976
Letter from Mrs. Miles' sister-in-law, Frances Payne Boatwright Tyler.

The inscription on the medal -- across the top, starting at the left is "Pres. Lyon G. Tyler, LL.D." Across the bottom: "College of William and Mary." In the center it is like this:

Mar. 5, 1888

from
THE FACULTY

Mar. 5, 1906

On the other side inprange enamel on gold across the top (making \( \frac{1}{2} \) of a circle) is Guelielmi et mariae and across the bottom in while enamel on gold is "virginia · sig. collegii." In the center of a circle with a hole for the diamond on the top (I had it replaced and it fell out again) is a four columned Greek revival building with three oval windows on the side and three windows on the front for 2 stories, total of 12 windows with the date 1693.

I took the medal to Schwartzchilds and it is made of copper with gold plate and white and orange enamel in two sections on the gold. When Harrison and Lyon divided their mother's jewelry (there was very little), Lyon took first choice and chose a diamond pin with 5 diamonds and 5 sapphires. Then Harrison chose this medal. Then Lyon chose his mother's diamond ring and wedding band, and Harrison took what was left: a cameo pin surrounded by seed pearls.