

S: trying to arrange that

T: Well this is herese

? You haven't started yet have you?

S: No

L: Bill why don't you just say it in the microphone.

S: Test test

L: Ah, Col., interview with Col. Tutweiller, you know

S: Interview with Col. Tutweiller at Virginia Military Institute.

L: Give us a date

S: What is the date? May

T: 25

S: 25 is it already

L: 1989

S: 1989

L: We're all set

S: okay

L: Looks good

S: Okay, I was just going to begin by asking you what you taught at VMI during this period when Jonathan was here?

T: Well I thought of that. Well Virginia, VMI was a much smaller place, in a way, than it is today. The number of cadets was not smaller. It actually, at that time, I was serving part-time as director of admissions and this was a period before buruacracy set in when the entire admissions system could be handled by one person half time as compared to the staff that now occupies Smith Hall. Ah, that I found to be a lot of fun. Then I taught the other half time the ah, in other respects VMI was very much as it is today. Now strictly military, it has relaxed since then to some extent. I think if Jonathan Daniels were here today, he would find it pleasanter than when he was here before. The cadets for example now walk to class, they do not have to march, they own cars, the idea of cadets owning cars would have been impossible at that time. So I think on the whole he would have been happier than he was when he was here.

In his validictory remarks he did indicate that he had had some reservations about his VMI experience and I can easily understand that, but fortunately for Jon and a few of his classmates, the english department was really a place of refuge at that time. Ah, there were 3 of us, obviously Col. Dillard, and Col. Gentry and Col. Roth and me, who ah, were particularly interested, I think, in setting up a situation in that english department where cadets whho were not exactly the military type, would feel at home and find some relaxation from the absolute military regime. I don't mean that it was a haven for um, gays or anything of that kind and perhaps, I hope that you would exude, excise that remark when you get to it, but ah, cadets who were on the whole quieter and more interested in religious and thoughtful persuits than in the military advocation and ah, the teaching in that department I think was on a more personal basis then it was in the other departments at the institute. I was, although technically I was a professor of english, my PhD was in that area, I found early on that my real interest was literature and translation and this is what I did during the period that jon was here and I loved my whole year

course that started the first semester from Homer to the Renaissance, the second semester from Renaissance to present day and I loved that and I think the cadets did too. Of course in my opinion, the materials that were included in that course were far superior to materials included in any other ah, though I'm sure that other faculty members would dispute that. Ah, as you know from his record, which I'm sure you have seen, Jon was an outstanding student. I don't believe that he ever received a grade less than A in any english course that he took. It was quite demanding ah, in ah, 3 courses in which I, my 3 faculty members which I mentioned, ah we demanded stiff papers, required 2 long papers each semester and ah, at one point we developed an arrangement by which music and the fine arts were integrated with the literary content. In fact we developed such a course for freshman ah, which we thought was very successful and which Col. Dillard, who was responsible for say a musical third, Col. Gentry perhaps or Col. Beyers was responsible for the art third and perhaps I was responsible for the literary third and ah, we aimed this at students who had, incoming freshman who had no contact really with the arts what so ever. Who had never been to an art gallery in their life, who didn't know what it was all about, who had never heard anything other than rock or what was the equivalent in 1961 and ah, I think it was an immensely rewarding idea and um, perhaps other colleges have tried the same thing. Ah, that's about all that I can say about VMI at that particualr time unless you have some questions.

S: No um, what courses did Jonathan take with you? Did he take this year long...?

T: Yes he did, He took Process of Translation with me ah, that probably was the only course that he had with me unless he had freshman english. Frankly I don't remember whether he had. There were so many freshman english sections, I don't remember whether he had them with me or ith somebody else, perhaps Julia would no that but I can't recall. But the Literal Translation was one which I would have had him,

S: Do you remember any texts of his or any incidents in the classroom?

T: Ah, I don't remember any ah, special incidents in the classroom, um, Jonathan was a very quiet type ah, he was an introvert I would say, kept his thoughts very much to himself, I would not have guessed that he would have gone into the ministry when he graduated. The question which was in my mind as I walked over here this morning was why he came to VMI in the first place and I have no clue as to the answer of that, whether it was parental pressure, I don't know anything about his parents at all ah, whether they felt that there was some reason why he should come here I've never heard. Perhaps someone else that you talk to can throw in light on that.

S: Well, he was not the, according to his own standards and for awhile his parent's standards, the best behaved high school student, tended to get into a few prankish kinds of things ah, some feel that he felt the need for discipline and ah, and so thought that would be good for him in terms of developing a more self controled maturity.

T: You think this was his choice?

S: I think it might be and then, I don't know if he ever talked about being in the south but, his father was a doctor during WW2, um, was an army doctor and part of his tour of duty was to serve in the south um, and bases preparing troops to go over seas and Jonathan remembered those years or at least conjured up some kind of constructive,

T: Is his father still alive?

S: No he died, in fact he died when Jonathan was a junior here in 1959.

T: How about his mother?

S: His mother's now dead, she now died 4 years ago.

T: Does he have any close relatives?

S: He has a sister still surviving, we're going to interview her later ah, So we had that question too and that's the only thing that we've come up with so far that there might have been a sense, maybe his father's military experience ah, that little turn toward the south that he had a fondness for in this feeling for discipline maybe.

T: It's very unusual, I think the number of cadets who have come from New Hampshire we could count on the fingers of 2 hands.

S: Now how would he fit in in such a situation?

T: Ah, so far as I know he fit in very well. Of course one thing about VMI that you've discovered is that there is no other college that has such complete records and such complete files as VMI does um, Julia had no difficulty in finding his complete transcripts and ah any correspondence about him, but the only correspondence that she found was one letter of recommendation from the dean ah, that does mean that there really was none and ah, so far as disciplinary activities go, there was no record of that. So to the best of my knowledge, he was never in any disciplinary trouble here.

S: Did he come and speak to you after,

T: THE only clue to that is, you may have noticed from his transcript, that he graduated with the same rank that he entered, a cadet private, which indicates that he did not, he was not regarded as fitting in with the military system ah, I think usually, it's almost automatic for a freshman, as you would call them, to ah, become at least a corporal by their second class year but he never rose above a freshman rank. I would like to ask Julia about that and see if she remembers anything on that point.

S: Would that be his choice or?

T: No that would not be his choice I suppose ah, but I think that he was not regarded as the sort of person who had exercised command potential.

S: Well that's kind of interesting because some other people have told us, when he came into a room with his fellow classmates, that he would have a certain kind of presence that they would recognize, that's kind of interesting.

T: But his later career does suggest that he was certainly capable of making important choices on his own um, have you have any contact with his professors at Harvard?

S: Not yet, we will.

T: Um, it would be interesting to know, they probably wouldn't remember him because he was only there for one year apparently.

S: Two

T: Two?

S: Yes, he would have been coming back for his third and final year if he could.

T: He would have been taking graduate courses, at that time they were small so it's possible that if I could remember who was alive then they would remember him.

S: Yes, did he ever talk to you outside of the class?

T: Outside of the class?

S: Yes

T: Oh yes, ah, of course we all had regular and irregular office hours and ah, he could have dropped in any time he wanted to. He certainly would have done that to discuss his work and his papers that he was working on. But I regret at my age, and I'm 80 years old, that my memory, just for details, is not what you would want.

S: Ahha, well we have trouble ourselves with that so we understand that. Um, and in terms of text in that, you can't recall a kind of, some,

T: The texts we used?

S: Anything within his readings that might have really interested,

T: Well one of the things I did in that course was to avoid use of any textbook what so ever and to use actual paperback copies instead which ah, the ah, there was some protest from the bookstore about that because it meant a considerable out lay from the students that they were not accustomed to making but I never used an english text, for example, ??? a translation, I would have them by individual paperbacks, translations of Homer or Virgil or Plato as the case might be and use those with the hope that they would keep them after the graduated and I think that many of them did.

S: We noticed in his valedictorian speech that there were illusions to Marlow and Elliot, just trying to pick them up and, who else Larry?

L: Wordsworth

S: Wordsworth.

L: You recognized Wordsworth, well I hope I recognized it because,

T: Did his education have any influence into his going into the ministry? Um, I can't say that it did, at least to my knowledge but one can never be sure that one sees all the factors involved um, VMI of course, is completely free of um, orthidox, religious attitudes ah, as you can possibly find and ah, I think that well, after I've been teaching for 2 or 3 years classes in translation, it suddenly dawned on me and the students that there was one subject that the students were absolutely ignorant and that is anything pertaining to the bible what so ever. So I thought that what I would do, after all this is literature and translation, so I put in 3 weeks on the bible, completely objectively, I used the ??????bible, have you ever come across that? I'm sorry to say that I think it's out of print now but it was well edited, available in paperback at

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that time and ah, completely neutral so far as ah, orthodoxy is concerned and ah, we went through that and, as I say, it was a revelation to me and a great deal of fun because the environment to which we approached it was so different from that of a church environment. For one thing, the students were a mixed lot. The ah, you would have it so, have you ever taught such a course?

S: No I haven't, I've used the bible in class but not as a single,

T: Ahha, if you had a mixture such as we had, you would find that um, you would have an, in the ordinary section of class, a range from the arrogant atheist, who resented any reference to the bible what so ever, to the um, deep southern fundamentalist who would say any suggestion that it should not be taken literally um, to the roman catholics who had their own special view of it and who did know a little more about it than the others did, but the ones who appreciated it, who were the most interesting and the most intelligent, the best students, were the jewish students. At that time, we had a number of them came down from New York and they were a joy to teach. But um, what made it fascinating was that there was no problem of stirring up class discussion and controversy among the students of the class, you could expect anything um, if you have an opportunity to teach a course in that way, I think you'd enjoy it.

S: He was very fond of Messiah.

T: I think that JOn Daniels probably kept rather quiet during those things, who was not the sort of person who would take a positive stand. He was certainly not a fundamentalist in religious beliefs at that time and ah, it would be very difficult to tell what his ideas were.

S: He did write that editorial?

T: Yes, he was registered as an episcopalian and ah, the cadets had the option of going to the episcopal church and I'm sure he did.

L: Can I throw in a question here Bill?

S: Sure

L: Ah, Col. Tutweiller, did he ever come into your office and talk with you about anything at all that you can recall? Was he that kind of a student?

T: In the office?

L: Yeh during office hours and,

T: Oh yes regularly, of course he came in the office frquently, we'd discuss academic matters and what he was writing and so forth. So far as personal discussions, I'm sorry to say I honestly can't remember them.

L: I couldn't remember any from just a few years ago. We have, so many students have passed through our lives when we,

T: Ahha

L: So I can sympathize with that. I'm sorry Bill, go ahead.

S: Well he did, I don't know if you remember that editorial he wrote um, I don't know if it was the first,

T: The valedictory?

S: About freedom to go to chapel and not go to chapel?

T: I don't remember that. Is that in print?

S: Yes

T: Oh um, Julia sent me a copy of his valedictory but she didn't send me the editorial. I'm sorry I missed that.

S: It was,

T: They were required to either attend the institute chapel or to go to a church of their own church unless they had some official explanation for not doing them.

S: Yeh, his position was you should have that freedom but also the freedom not to attend.

T: I'm sorry that Col. Dillard is not alive because he lived on the post and his house was a regular resort for the cadets um, my wife and I never lived on the post. We lived about 2 miles outside and consequently the cadets did not drop in as they would have on other faculty members.

S: What was the reputation of Col. Dillard um, in terms of being an available figure for students?

T: Oh he was extremely available and ah took the greatest personal interest in the cadets and I think they all were delighted in his Shakespeare course which became famous. In fact he died the ideal death for a college professor, you've heard that story of course?

S: No

T: You haven't heard that story? He was teaching Shakespeare, I'm not sure whether it was Lear or not, but he came to a certian point in the discussion of the play and had a heart attack and dropped dead in front of the class and um, this is the way to go obviously and to drop dead, particularly while teaching Shakespeare and perhaps at a monent of peak tension ah, when he could have wound up with an appropriate quotation ah, "the rest of silence" or something like that and then drop dead (laughing) ah, would have been the ideal culmination of any academic career.

L: You know, I heard Leo Kurshbaum, the Renaissance teacher at Wayne Stae University, was found dead in his office slumped over a group of freshman papers he was correcting. That would seem like the more likely way to go.

S: That's worse than death though. (laughing)

L: There;s something noble about that.

T: Well there are not many professors that die in action as it were but ah,

S: How old a man was he at that point?

T: I don't know of anything else that I could say that would be helpful. I hope you pick up some leavings from the others and um, but 25 years is ah, is a considerable time.

S: Yes it is

L: Well Bill, maybe we should focus on one part of that and ah, do some filming.

S: Okay, would you mind if we just repeated just a couple of questions and filmed your response?

T: Ah, sure. One of my weaknesses at the present moment is that I'm getting a little deaf and um, so I'm going to ah

S: I would like you to ah, do the question of ah, Col. Dillard's death and then your memory of Jonathan. MAYbe those 2 questions.

T: Right, if I'm doing this, I'm going to do this for the record. Of course I recognize this is for the record and I like to be sure that I've got the facts. The facts that I

told you about and the circumstances of his death are absolutely correct. Um, I can't say that I remember the name of the play that was under discussion or the exact point he had reached but perhaps at that point a little artistic, creative activity. Did you ever read the story by Henry James.....it not The Beast of the Jungle, it was a short story. I think it was called, about a young man just of the post of The Curator at the Shakespeare birth place. Have you read that?

S: A long time ago yes

T: Well I often think of that because he was a Shakespearian scholar and a very learned one and when he was made curator he was an absolute failure because he would dispell all the legends of where Shakespeare kissed Ann Hathaway and things like that you know and the trustees were about to dismiss him because the tenants were so calling off but he played it for another chance, they gave him another chance and he came back and completely reversed himself and he told the most wonderful story and he pointed out the exact spot where Shakespeare and Ann Hathaway first kissed, the visitors and the tourists were perfectly delighted ah, but the point is more that he found out how to make a success but that he had actually succumbed to the spirit of Shakespeare and in that environment had developed in him a creative ability which over shadowed the environment in which he was. I think that was the real point that Henry James was making. SO I think that if you want to embellish the story of Shakespearea's death, of Col. Dillard's death bed, ah, Henry James and probably Jon Daniels would appreciate it.

S: That's right

L: Well I'm almost ready

S: Well you just tell us.

L: Okay, let me just take a light reading. It was very nice of you to come over and give us a hand like this, we really appreciate it.

T: Well it's a pleasure and I'm sorry that,

L: Oh no, these recollections are very important.

T: More over I'm very much interested in watching your technique in doing this because I do the same thing in another context.

L: What do you do?

T: I'm the editor of the public library newsletter and doing courses like that I get interviews with the events that are scheduled with people putting on events that are scheduled in the library and things of that kind, but I don't have all of your technique. (Tape goes off)

S: Test Test Test

T: Now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of the country.

S: We've just got to switch channels

T: experience had a course in american literature, nor have I ever taught it. It would not be possible today but I remember when I was at Princeton, where I did my graduate work, ah, there was one semester of american literature

offered on the undergraduate level and when I got out of graduate school, I became worried about the fact that I knew nothing about American Literature. So I went around to one of the professors and said, "Shouldn't I know something about American literature?" He looked at me coldly and said Why? Things have come a long way since then.

S: Yes it has, well were you ah, where would you have been with Edmond Wilson and that, when were,

T: He was before my day if that seems possible, but I ah admired him tremendously. My group was, my class was the theatrical crowd and included Josh Logan and ah, Pretain Windust and so many of that group who were in the theater team and then went on to work in the theater in New York.

S: I just saw, well Larry just showed ah, South Pacific.

L: Well we're all set. What we can do is, I think I'll do the clapper, this things all set to go so um, just take your time, don't worry about it, we've got 6 minutes of film and I'll just get things rolling, I'll come around and slate it off and then I'll come back here.

S: Okay

L: Col. Tutweiller take 1 (Clap)

S: Well maybe you can um, reconstruct for us once again the ah, theatrical um,

T: Well this has nothing to do with Jon Daniels of course but um, Norris Houghton was another one, he had a ah, grant for grant to study the theater in Russia at that time but ah, Logan of course was a, one who recently emerged, at that time emerged on Broadway.

S: All set now Larry?

L: No All set, we're going

S: Okay, so you can give us a little background on Col Dillard and ah, you were saying that Col. Dillard,

T: Well you want me to go over everything that I said before?

S: No, just that moment.

T: Oh that particualr moment. Ah, as a matter of fact it was very possible that Jon Daniels was in the class at the time...no it would not have been possible because this was years after Daniel left obviously but ah, Col. Dillard was one of the most brilliant members of the department, perhaps the most brilliant. He got his graduate degree from Harvard, he was away for some time in the navy and he came back, he was a somewhat erratic teacher but an inspiring one and his Shakespeare course was certainly famous not only in the department but I think with many of the english majors who had found it the most pleasurable thing that they had encountered at VMI. It was certainly appropriate in every sense of the word that ah, Herbert should meet his end in action, as it were, it was one day that he was teaching Shakespeare and I regret that I cannot remember the play that was the subject of discussion, but a critical point arrived, um, Herbert loved to read aloud and could do so theatrically and with gestures and with a resonant voice and it came undoubtedly to a high point in the declamation when suddenly he suffered a massive heart attack and dropped dead before the astounded class of his students. It has always seemed to be the ideal exit for an english professor and ah,



I regret that I couldn't have emulated it myself but he did and it created a posthumous fame for him I think that almost equaled that which he had during his lifetime.

L: Cut it for a second here. Good um, let's see how much film we have left and I think we can um

S: We'll just ask you about Jonathan as a student, you're memories of Jonathan as a student.

T: Well Jonathan of course was one of the best students that we ever had,

S: Well if you could wait just a second.

L: Well I've got 3 minutes still left so you can just let her roll and I'll think that'll be, so let me just slate it again and ah, where's my slate. I figure if I'm not nervous, nobody should be.....So what's the question you want to ask Bill?

S: His memories of Jonathan as a student. If you could talk about the class you taught a little bit in world literature or literature translation.

T: Yeh

S: Your memories of Jonathan in that class, what he might have read in that class.

L: Yeh, what he might have read would be interesting. Okay. I'll slate you up again and then I'll duck out of the way and then you can just start it up....Col. Tutweiler take 2

S: So we were asking you Col. about what ah, Jonathan might have read in that class and how he behaved in that class, you're memories of him. If you could begin.

T: Jonathan was of course an outstanding ah, student in English and in fact in every other subject too, particularly after his freshman year. I don't believe that he ever received a grade of less than A in English, French, philosophy or any other liberal arts subjects that he might have taken and very rarely in any other subject ah, I did not have him in class for many, for all the years that he was here but he did take the ah course which I developed and principally was enthusiastic about, the Literature and Translation, a 4 year class that started with Homer and wound with Prust or his equivalent and ah, Jonathan I know was an enthusiastic student in that. It was a rather tough class I hope because we did require 2 long papers each semester. There was a great deal of discussion involved in it but on the other hand I think the students enjoyed it because they, the subject matter was literally what I believed to have been the best material available from European sources ah, that were ever written and ah, eventually it was required of all English majors. Jonathan did outstanding work in it. I know that he never received a grade of less than A. I don't recall what his particular area of interest was at this time but ah, he was a pleasure to have in class I remember him as rather quiet rather reserved. I don't think that he was the type of student who would voluntarily speak up or raise issues in class but ah, subsequently, in office hours for example or other times when we would meet in private, I know that he would always enjoy discussing any of the matters that rose of that time ah, frankly after 25 years, that's about all that I can say.

S: Cut

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L: Great,

S: Let's turn these lights off so you don't have to suffer

T: Is that all? Well I've enjoyed seeing a professional demonstration of how this should be done.

L: We'll see how the results are

T: yes

L: We can't guarantee anything here.

END OF INTERVIEW