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Southern Research Report #4

**Two Hundred Years
of Student Life at Chapel Hill:**

**Selected Letters
and Diaries**



Fall 1993

**Center for the Study of the American South
IRSS Faculty Working Group in Southern Studies**

The silhouette on the cover is one of the earliest representations of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Cut by Mrs. William Hooper in 1814, it is a part of the Graves Papers in the Southern Historical Collection. The original silhouette is on display in the Manuscripts Department, Wilson Library, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The Department houses not only the Southern Historical Collection, but also the University Archives.

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Southern Research Report #4

Two Hundred Years
of Student Life at Chapel Hill:
Selected Letters and Diaries

Edited by Lisa Tolbert
with Assistance from Julia Smith and
Helen Wolfe Evans

and an
Introduction by James Leloudis

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Preface

Staff of the Southern Historical Collection agreed early on that there was no better way for the Collection to contribute to the Bicentennial Observance of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill than to help students share their reflections on and experiences of their times at Chapel Hill over the two hundred years since the University began to build. We knew how rich, funny, or startling the letters and diaries of these students are. Among our more than ten million manuscripts and nearly four million records in the University Archives, there are thousands upon thousands of these documents together with at least as many more recording the perspectives of faculty, staff, administrators, and townspeople.

To select from this overwhelming wealth was daunting. Lisa Tolbert did a wonderful job with the counsel of Helen Wolfe Evans and the assistance of Julia Smith. Even more difficult was finding in the midst of our riches telling documentation of recent student experiences. We have much more on early coeducation than on racial integration and much more on student life in the 1880s than on student life in the 1980s. We want to fill the gap so are issuing this call for recent student diaries and letters. One doesn't have to be dead to have lived historically.

Not only is this volume a reflection of the riches as well as the inadequacies of the documentation from students at Chapel Hill in the Southern Historical Collection, it is the result of generous support. The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Bicentennial Observance Committee, The Randleigh Foundation Trust, the Center for the Study of the American South, the Southern Historical Collection, the Friends of the Library, and the Institute for Research in Social Science, each significantly. Special thanks go to Alecia Holland, John White, and Marcella Grendler.

Setting the letters and diaries in context is the recent talk to the Friends of the Library of the University given by James Leloudis. The introduction that follows is a slightly revised version of that sweeping, telling, and graceful talk. Clearly, the book in progress from which the talk comes is something to which to look forward.

Now an assistant professor, Jim Leloudis was, and Lisa Tolbert is, a graduate student in the History Department of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Julia Smith, an undergraduate, like Lisa has been working in the Southern Historical Collection during most of her time at the University. These three illustrate every bit as much as the diaries and letters chosen by them the caliber of students at Chapel Hill. It is such students who justify the two hundred years of investment in Chapel Hill by friends and alumni as well as the State of North Carolina.

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What Should a University Be? Students, Curriculum, and Campus Life at the University of North Carolina

*James Leloudis, Assistant Professor
Department of History*

In the fall of 1878, Edwin Anderson Alderman journeyed from Wilmington to begin his studies at the University of North Carolina. He found here a campus that seemed to pulse with challenge and possibility. There was, he later recalled, "no better place for the training of leaders."¹ That sense of promise and excitement grew largely from arguments then raging over the character of campus life, the content of the curriculum, and the University's proper role in a society unsettled by the twin shocks of civil war and emancipation. In many ways, Alderman's time was not unlike our own. For we, too, are caught up in a great debate over Carolina's future, and, indeed, the future of American higher education in general. Oftentimes, that debate is cast in terms that suggest that such questions have never been asked before. But there is, in fact, much that links the present to the past. That is one of the most striking lessons of this Bicentennial look at student life. The diaries, letters, and photographs exhibited in Wilson Library and now included here invite us to stroll through the classrooms and campus groves of other ages. Along the way, we can wonder at methods of teaching and learning that are now long forgotten; we can witness the creation of the modern University in the years immediately after the Civil War; and, by learning about those who preceded us here, we can also learn about ourselves.

We should begin our excursion through the historic campus with awareness that this University was born of both revolution and reaction. The college was, at its founding, an institution created to serve a radical experiment in democracy, and, accordingly, it embraced a radical experiment in curriculum. When the first students arrived here in the spring of 1795, they encountered a course of study shaped by the philosophy of French and English radicals, and by an Enlightenment faith in the power of human reason to create a more perfect world. That curriculum was the handiwork of William Richardson Davie, himself a deist and a Freemason. Under Davie's plan, science, history, and modern languages stood on an equal footing with the classics of Greece and Rome, and students were free to pursue their choice of two diplomas. One was in Latin, for young men who wished to master an ancient tongue; the other was in English, for those who concentrated on science and literature and read the classics only in translation. Bemused by those offerings, one observer quipped that in Chapel Hill, "*the age of reason*" had surely dawned. The University was a child of new freedoms, both social and intellectual.²

But Chapel Hill's experiment with an Enlightenment curriculum survived less than a decade. By the opening years of the 19th century, it had been swallowed up in the tide of reaction that swept across both Europe and America in the wake of the French Revolution. The troubles began in 1799, when students defied the disciplinary authority of the faculty. A sparse archival record makes details hard to come by, but the rebellion seems to have started with the expulsion of an especially popular young man for misconduct. Other students rallied to his defense, and in the week of rioting that followed, they horsewhipped the president, "waylaid and stoned" one of the professors, and harassed the others with threats of similar harm. Samuel Eusebius McCorkle, a Presbyterian minister and one of William Davie's harshest critics among the University's founders, blamed the unrest on what he described as Chapel Hill's "French Jacobine system of education." With its emphasis on the contemporary world and elective studies, the University's Enlightenment curriculum seemed to cultivate an excess of liberty along with disrespect for tradition and all forms of established authority. McCorkle warned that unless abandoned, Davie's plan of college studies would soon perpetuate in America the same forces of infidelity, freethinking, and moral decay that had corrupted France's revolution and had ignited the Reign of Terror. Shaken by those words, and fearful of campus anarchy, the University's trustees beat a hasty retreat to the classics. By 1804, they had abolished

the English diploma together with Davie's system of electives and had restored Greek and Latin as the twin pillars of instruction.³

At first glance, Chapel Hill's return to the classical fold seems to have placed it well within the mainstream of American higher education. The student riot of 1799 was one of many such upheavals that rocked campuses across the nation as sons of the American Revolution tested the limits of a democratic society. From Harvard and Yale to tiny Transylvania University in the backwoods of Kentucky, college leaders responded with a common antidote. They administered heavy doses of classical learning and evangelical piety—one to discipline the mind, the other to tame the passions.⁴ But first glances can be deceptive. While events at Chapel Hill fit into broad, national patterns of college development, it is also true that, before the Civil War, classical studies claimed a unique pride of place at many southern colleges, this University first among them.

Leaders of the antebellum University had no doubt about their mission: it was to make young men into masters. Sons of the slaveholding elite ventured to Chapel Hill from every corner of the South. By the 1850s, thirty-five percent of the student body came from out-of-state, and with an enrollment approaching 500, this college ranked second only to Yale in size. The University, in the words of its promoters, stood at "the very head and heart of . . . Southern civilization," preserving and passing on to the next generation the culture of a slaveholders' world. As defenders of human inequality in an age of natural rights, its patrons felt uneasy with the ideas of perfection and reform that were spreading throughout much of the western world. Parents sought for their sons an education that affirmed the fixity of human relations and instilled a habit of command. Young men came to Chapel Hill to confirm their place in society, not to discover a prescription for remaking their world.⁵

That purpose was reflected in the routines of both the classroom and student life. Faculty at the antebellum University viewed knowledge as a body of fixed and final truths, rather than as methods of inquiry and investigation. For that reason, students followed a prescribed course of study grounded in Greek, Latin, and mathematics. They also studied constitutional law, moral philosophy, and literature, but those subjects received only cursory attention, and were generally set apart as a capstone in the senior year. In similar fashion, science teaching was more often didactic than experimental. As one student explained, he and his classmates valued the study of natural philosophy less for its practical uses than as a means of discerning God's plan for humanity. "Science," he observed, "exhibits man as he is—a poor worm in the dust."⁶

That kind of education was aimed at propagating, but not necessarily enlarging, the existing store of learning. The faculty, for example, sometimes lectured to their students, but on most occasions they preferred the recitation as a means of imparting knowledge. Members of each class—freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors—gathered for instruction three times a day. The students sat on straight-backed benches and rose in turn to recount the lessons that they had committed to memory the night before. By the time of graduation, college men had stored away the poetry of Horace, the orations of Cicero and Demosthenes, and the epic tales of Homer and Virgil. They had also learned from the ritual of recitation to seek knowledge in authoritative texts before their own interrogation of the world.⁷

By all accounts, students seem to have treasured the fruits of classical learning. But they held the etiquette of the classroom itself in rather low regard. Many cheated with impunity, especially during commencement week when final examinations took written form. Student lore told of answers hidden in plugs of tobacco or delivered through classroom windows wrapped around heavy stones. But "working the telegraph" was perhaps the most ingenious scheme. During the dead of night students would "cut a hole in the floor of the recitation room . . . beneath the benches," then once the exam was underway they would "lower the questions by a string, and haul up the answers worked out by a number of good scholars beneath."⁸

Cheating flourished, in part, because the cramped routines of the recitation hall failed to provide college men with a satisfactory field for honor and distinction. Antebellum students read the classics less as literature than as handbooks of virtuous manhood. "Our object in coming to college," explained William Lafayette Scott, "is to . . . acquire pungency and sprightliness from reading the keen sarcasm of Juvenal and the courtly wit of Horace—to polish and enrich our styles by poring over the tragic beauty of Sophocles and the stately and splendid numbers of Homer." But the ability to "*speak and act as a man*" could not be acquired through study alone. In fact, most students were convinced that a single-minded obsession with textbooks would make them into nothing more than dictionary rats and would leave them impotent "on the great battlefield of life." For lessons in "manly dignity," they turned away from their professors to a "separate world" of their own making.⁹

At the center of that world stood the student debating clubs, the Dialectic and Philanthropic Societies. Each society maintained its own library and lavish chambers hung with the portraits of distinguished alumni. Chapel Hill was a tiny village in the days before the Civil War,

a place where hogs and cattle roamed muddy streets and grazed on campus lawns. But when the societies met for their weekly exercises, the campus took on an air of self-conscious refinement. By performing the speeches of history's great orators, students mastered the skills necessary to "thrill a crowd with a glance . . . a smile or a gesture." And in public disputation, they forged their learning into "weapons of intellectual warfare." Within the safe confines of a "band of brothers," young men donned the "toga virilis" and prepared themselves for "great and masterly struggles of mind with mind in the court, in the pulpit, and in the council chamber[s]" of government.¹⁰

But all of student life was not so high-minded. Violence, too, figured prominently in this male world. College men armed themselves with pistols and knives and were quick to draw their weapons at the slightest affront to personal honor. They regularly awoke the faculty and the town with drunken marches through campus, and pulled pranks that sometimes threatened life and limb. But that disorder had its purpose. Through such acts, even the worst scholar proved himself to be a man among men. Alfred Moore Waddell, a student from 1850 to 1853, explained that the rowdy student "may not have been an 'honor' man while here—he may not have tried to be—he may even have neglected his studies, and sometimes engaged in the riots and rebellions which occurred; but he realized that even these riots and rebellions, like the Athenian mobs, produced men." The degree that students received at the end of four years was, for many graduates, less a certificate of scholarly achievement than a sign that a young man had learned to be a leader. He knew the rules of debating and parliamentary procedure, which would take him far in the county courthouse or in the halls of the state legislature. And he had developed confidence in himself and his ability to manage others. In short, the University diploma confirmed a young man's claim to a place of honor, respect, and power in a rigidly hierarchical society.¹¹

This pattern of instruction and student culture served the University well during the antebellum era. By the late 1850s, Carolina could claim among its alumni a President and Vice-President of the United States, twenty governors, eight Senators, forty-one members of the House of Representatives, and innumerable judges, state legislators, and justices of the peace. But in the New South born of the aftermath of civil war, both the classical curriculum and the "jovial, roistering company" of campus life seemed increasingly out of place. The Civil War destroyed slavery, and in doing so freed North Carolina's considerable wealth for a host of new entrepreneurial investments. During the 1870s and 80s, the state was literally remade by the growth of new towns, the establishment

of cotton mills and tobacco factories, and the construction of thousands of miles of railroad track that snaked across the state, connecting even the smallest communities to the outside world of commerce. The Civil War, in the words of Edwin Alderman, had brought forth a new society dominated by "the manufacturer, the producer, the industrial man." A "new State [had] been born," one consumed by what Alderman called the "frenzy and fever of accumulation."¹²

In the late 19th century, the University remade itself in the image of that economic and social revolution. Or, to put the point more accurately, the University remade itself as both product and promoter of change. There had been attempts at curriculum reform at Chapel Hill as early as the 1850s, but little had come of them. In fact, students had openly resisted efforts to add new courses in the sciences. Science, they conceded, had its uses, primarily as a means of discerning the hand of God in the universe. But science was also dangerous, especially in its capacity to unfetter the intellect and to encourage skepticism and abstraction. In a series of remarkable debates in the halls of the Dialectic Society, James McNabb, Thomas Cowan, and David Worth made the point bluntly. The same powers of inventiveness and imagination responsible for the railway, the steamship, and the "Magnetic Telegraph," they exclaimed, also stood accountable for the "wild dreams and dangerous speculations" of the "Hell hounds of abolitionism." Unfettered minds had loosed the demons of anarchy—not only abolitionism, but also free-lovism, feminism, Mormonism, spiritualism, and socialism—all of which threatened to destroy the antebellum world. Those young men spoke with urgency, in part, because they had recently witnessed evidence of science's pernicious influence within their own institution. In 1856, Benjamin Sherwood Hedrick, an honor graduate of the University and Professor of Agricultural Chemistry, had been driven from campus after admitting his opposition to slavery and his support for John C. Fremont, the Republican candidate for President of the United States.¹³

Reform of the University, then, would await the devastating shocks of Civil War and military defeat. The campus was boarded up in 1871, after the college fell into the hands of Republican lawmakers and was abandoned by its Democratic alumni. When the collapse of Reconstruction brought Democrats back to power within the state and region four years later, the school's trustees took advantage of an obvious opportunity to scuttle the antebellum curriculum, to wipe the slate clean, and to institute a course of study more suited to the demands of a changing society.¹⁴

They were encouraged in that work by supporters from across the state. Perhaps the most vocal was Daniel Harvey Hill, a former lieutenant general in the Confederate army. Hill published a blistering series of articles in which he blamed the South's defeat on a system of higher education that had produced "orators and statesmen," but had done "nothing to enrich us, nothing to promote material greatness." Venom flowed from his pen. "The educated man of the [Old] South was like the hero of the fairy tale," Hill insisted. "In the legislative chamber he was a mail-clad warrior . . . but as soon as he recrossed the portal of the enchanted hall, his armor fell off, his sword crumbled to dust, his tough and cord-like sinews became [as] soft and flexible as those of a delicate woman. The invincible champion was changed into the feeble imbecile." In a new age of commerce, industry, and free labor, Hill concluded, any effort to preserve antebellum ways would be "worse than folly"—it would be "absolute madness."¹⁵

Under the leadership of Kemp Plummer Battle, a member of the class of 1849 and later the University's president, college leaders heeded Hill's advice, and, in doing so, created the institution that we inhabit today. The board of trustees divided the University into six degree-granting colleges, each made up of departments that offered a variety of electives in history, modern languages, the sciences, agriculture, commerce, and engineering. They embraced that arrangement so that the school might "keep step" with the 19th century's "march of knowledge, invention, and discovery." The reformers' metaphors bore witness to a radically new vision of education and society. The University, they insisted, would serve no longer as a mere storehouse of knowledge; it would operate instead as "a great metropolis of thought whose ships [would] bravely sail the oceans of life and even explore unknown seas." Just as the world's bustling seaports sustained the flow of commerce, the University's mission was to sustain the flow of ideas. By "gathering, creating and distributing knowledge," it would become "a potent force in the world's progress," a dynamo of change.¹⁶

This new conception of the University's mission sent ripples through every aspect of campus life, altering both the composition of the faculty and methods of instruction. The faculty grew rapidly from a handful of ministers who had served as academic jacks-of-all-trades to include a dozen or more men who were trained as specialists and were certified by a degree new to America, the Doctorate of Philosophy. In their classrooms, those new professors abandoned the traditional practice of recitation and began lecturing to their students, so that they might share up-to-date knowledge from their own reading and research. The change

was perhaps most dramatic in the teaching of Greek and Latin, the new University's inheritance from the old. Eben Alexander, Professor of Greek, and Karl Pomeroy Harrington, Professor of Latin, brought to Chapel Hill the methods of German philology. Under their tutelage, students began to examine the classics not as timeless texts, but as historical products shaped by particular social and cultural circumstances. Young men read the ancients in order to gain leverage over the moral, political, and aesthetic issues of their own day rather than to master classical style and figures of speech.¹⁷

Laboratory and library work also began to figure prominently in class assignments, as the faculty sought to make their students into "reader[s], think[ers], and critic[s]." In the antebellum University, the library had served more of a decorative than an instructional purpose. Between 1835 and the time of the Civil War, University officials made no new acquisitions, even as books became more accessible and less expensive. And what books the college did own were, as one faculty member recalled, "carefully guarded under lock and key," well beyond students' reach. But all of that changed in 1886, when the University and the student debating societies merged their separate holding into a real college library. By the end of the decade, more than 4,700 volumes a year were circulating among fewer than 200 students. The library now played a central role in campus life; in fact, as one professor exclaimed, the University itself could be thought of as "great collection of books."¹⁸

The faculty could have achieved none of these reforms without student cooperation. In 1875, the University opened its doors to a student body that seemed to tell "the whole story of the passing of an old order and the birth of a new." Statistics gathered in the 1890s revealed a fundamental shift in campus demographics. The University no longer served a regional elite; North Carolina alone now provided more than 90 percent of the college's matriculates, the largest proportion of native students claimed by any state college in the country. Half of those young men were the first in their families to attend college, and more than a quarter worked their way through school or financed their education with borrowed money. Those students came to Chapel Hill to find their place in a changing society rather than acquire the mantle of gentility. An institution that had once educated the sons of slaveholders now ministered to the children of a budding middle class.¹⁹

These new collegians embraced the University's reformed curriculum for the chance it offered to play out the drama of their individual lives. They thought of their years in Chapel Hill as a "period of preparation." Whatever pleasures the campus offered came second to the

pursuit of academic achievement and worldly advancement. That attitude reshaped the ways in which young men learned, and even the ways in which they played. Students no longer experienced college life as distinct classes of freshmen, sophomores, juniors, or seniors. Instead, they selected a course of electives suited to their individual "tastes [and] talents" and charted their own paths through the undergraduate curriculum. Their behavior in the classroom also changed. Once pices where young men had recited together and shared their answers, the lecture hall and the laboratory now became arenas in which students competed for academic honors. And in that contest, winners and losers were set apart not by the traditional marks of "good," "bad," and "tolerable" performance, but by the cold calculus of numerical grades.²⁰

The effects of those changes in campus life could even be seen in the rising popularity of intercollegiate sports, most especially football. Sports became a source of common identity on a campus comprised of individuals rather than classes. Young men might view themselves as chemists, historians, economists, or philosophers during most of the week, but on game day they were all "Tar Heels." Athletic competition also recapitulated the lessons of the classroom. The victorious athlete, like the triumphant scholar, was the man who applied himself constantly to self-improvement, knowing that at any moment he might confront a rival who had been more resolute in his preparation.²¹

Of course, not all students shared these new sensibilities. In fact, a significant minority defied the reorganization of campus life. They refused to acknowledge the faculty's standards of success and clung to an older view of college as a training ground for gentleman. But the new collegians were different. They stood apart because they modeled themselves after the faculty and actively sought professorial approval. In return, they won assurances that they held the keys to a new age, that they—in the words of one commencement speaker—were "destined to write [their] creed on other men's souls."²²

Such affirmations encouraged the acting out of a peculiarly adolescent blend of self-sacrifice and egocentrism. In the privacy of his diary, Charles Duncan McIver, one of Edwin Alderman's closest friends, compared himself to Julius Caesar, Napoleon Bonaparte, George Washington, Patrick Henry, and even Jesus Christ—all of whom, he said, "were young men when they first became great." McIver and his classmates never questioned their fate; they had been chosen as "missionaries of the gospel of progress." Unlike students of an earlier era,

they had come to Chapel Hill to discover the tools for remaking the world, for changing it into something new.²³

By the early 20th century, that reformed sense of mission had begun to carry the University and its graduates once again to positions of national and regional prominence. In 1912, the U.S. Bureau of Education included Chapel Hill in its list of the country's leading research universities, along with Harvard and Yale. In the decades that followed, the University also won distinction for efforts to apply the resources of its classrooms and laboratories to solving the South's persistent problems of economic underdevelopment, poverty, racism, and disease. But even as campus leaders gloried in those accomplishments, they couldn't help but feel that something of value had also been lost. In his presidential report for 1923, Harry Woodburn Chase noted that "the very conception of what a University is *for* has altered and broadened to an immense degree." Academic departments had proliferated, "the common culture of the past" had been broken up into innumerable "specialties," and students, set adrift in a sea of electives, had no means of "gain[ing] a coherent idea of [their] world." For all of its triumphs, the modern university seemed to face a moral crisis, what Chase described as the specter of "intellectual disintegration."²⁴

That lament rings with familiarity in a time when the University is again re-examining its curriculum and its purpose. The challenges of our day spring, in large part, from efforts over the last thirty years to open the University to new constituencies—women, racial and ethnic minorities, and the host of foreign students who now link us to a shrinking and increasingly interconnected globe. At first, it seemed that such diversity could be achieved by merely sprinkling new ingredients into an old educational recipe. But, as our predecessors knew so well, the work of reform is never that simple. The shifting demographics of the campus have demanded that we ask once more what rightfully counts for knowledge and learning. As we work to prepare a new generation for leadership in a tumultuous world, we can hardly avoid the difficult question of what a university should be. Our past offers no easy answers, but it does provide a reminder that we have visited these issues before. In the light of that history, today's controversies appear to be less an omen of our demise than a sign of our vitality, and of the promise of the next 200 years. William Davie would be pleased.²⁵

Notes

1 Edwin Anderson Alderman, "Life and Work of Dr. Charles D. Melver," *North Carolina Journal of Education* 1 (December 15, 1906): 4. Alderman was named president of the University in 1896, and later served as president of both Tulane University and the University of Virginia. See Dumas Malone, *Edwin A. Alderman: A Biography* (New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company, 1940)

2 On the early history of the University and its curriculum, see William E. Drake, *Higher Education in North Carolina Before 1860* (New York: Carlton Press, 1964), pp. 35-71; R. D. W. Connor, comp., *A Documentary History of the University of North Carolina, 1776-1799* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1953), I:375-79; Steven J. Novak, *The Rights of Youth: American Colleges and Student Revolt, 1798-1815* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1977), pp. 106-15; and Blackwell P. Robinson, *William R. Davie* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1957), Appendix C, pp. 406-410. The quotation is from John H. Hobart to Joseph Caldwell, November 30, 1796, in Connor, comp., *Documentary History of the University of North Carolina*, II:79. For a long view of the place of the classics in European and American higher education, see Bruce A. Kimball, *Orators and Philosophers: A History of the Idea of Liberal Education* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1986), pp. 43-113.

3 For accounts of the riot and its aftermath, see Kemp Plummer Battle, *History of the University of North Carolina* (Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton, 1907 and 1912) I:155-80; Kemp Plummer Battle, *Sketches of the History of the University of North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1889), pp. 42-43; and Novak, *Rights of Youth*, pp. 18, 110-13. For McCorkle's views on the University's curriculum and the French Revolution, see Samuel E. McCorkle to Ernest Haywood, December 20, 1799, Ernest Haywood Papers, Southern Historical Collection, Louis Round Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and McCorkle, *The Work of God for the French Revolution* (Salisbury: Francis Coupee, 1798).

4 On student rebellions at other American colleges, see Novak, *Rights of Youth*.

5 *University Record* 2 (January 1898): 21; Robin Brabham, "Defining the American University: The University of North Carolina, 1865-1875," *North Carolina Historical Review* 57 (October 1980), p. 429. and Alfred M. Waddell, *The Ante-Bellum University, An Oration Delivered at the Celebration of the Centennial of the University of North Carolina, June 5th, 1895* (Wilmington: Jackson and Bell, 1895), p. 11.

6 Battle, *History of the University of North Carolina*, I:98, 255-57, 462-64, 552-54; Brabham, "Defining the American University," p. 431; and address of Thomas J. Robinson, July 21, 1848, Dialectic Society Records, University Archives, Louis Round Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. For a comparison to the classical curriculum at other American universities before 1870, see Laurence R. Veysey, *The Emergence of the Ameri-*

can University (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), pp. 21-56.

7 Address of Marshall Polk, 1824, Dialectic Society Records; Battle, *History of the University of North Carolina*, I:554-55, 661, 782; and Kemp Plummer Battle, "Recollections of the University of North Carolina of 1844," *University Magazine* 13 (March-April 1896): 296, 308-9. For more on the use of the recitation in Chapel Hill, see George P. Bryan to John Bryan, October 7, 1856, John Heritage Bryan Papers, North Carolina Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina.

8 Battle, *History of the University of North Carolina*, I:563-64. Compare Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, *Campus Life: Undergraduate Cultures from the End of the Eighteenth Century to the Present* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1987), pp. 32-34, and Veysey, *Emergence of the American University*, pp. 299-300.

9 Presidential address of William Lafayette Scott, July 22, 1853; address of William Hill, October 25, 1843; speech of W. F. Foster, Junior Debate, 1858, "Are the Ancient Languages Worthy of the Place Which They Now Hold in the Course of Education?"; presidential address of W. F. Foster, n.d. (ca. 1859); address of Ivesan L. Brooks, September 1818; and address of Samuel F. Phillips, January 1841, Dialectic Society Records. See also presidential address of John I. Morehead, December 1852, and debater's speech of Lee M. McAfee, June 2, 1857, Dialectic Society Records.

10 Inaugural address of A. Haywood Merritt, October 18, 1855; valedictory address of Jno. W. Cameron, n.d.; presidential address of Sion Rogers, Wake Co., n.d. (ca. 1846); valedictory address of A. C. McNeill, June 26, 1839; and presidential address of William Lafayette Scott, July 22, 1853, Dialectic Society Records. For a general history of the Dialectic and Philanthropic Societies, see Albert Coates and Gladys Hall Coates, *The Story of Student Government in the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill* (Chapel Hill: President Emeritus Fund, 1985), pp. 42-91. On student societies at Princeton and other antebellum colleges, see James McLachlan, "The Choice of Hercules: American Student Societies in the Early 19th Century," in Lawrence Stone, ed., *The University in Society: Europe, Scotland, and the United States from the 16th to the 20th Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), II:449-93, and Jon L. Wakelyn, "Antebellum College Life and the Relations Between Fathers and Sons," in Walter J. Fraser, Jr., R. Frank Saunders, Jr., and Jon L. Wakelyn, eds., *The Web of Southern Social Relations: Women, Family, and Education* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1985) pp. 120-21.

11 On campus disorder, see *Battle History of the University of North Carolina*, I: 262, 267, 275, 278, 290, 305, 307, 453, 465, 532, 545, 576-78, and Coates and Coates, *Story of Student Government*, pp. 10-31. The quotation is from Waddell, *Ante-Bellum University*, p. 12. On the value of a University diploma, see Battle, *History of the University of North Carolina*, I:781-82.

12 On the careers of antebellum alumni, see Battle, *History of the University of North Carolina*, 1:783, 832-36. For an account of the economic transformation of North Carolina after the Civil War, see William S. Powell, *North Carolina Through Four Centuries* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), pp. 404-21, and Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, James Leloudis, Robert Korstad, Mary Murphy, Lu Ann Jones, and Christopher B. Daly, *Like a Family: The Making of a Southern Cotton Mill World* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987), pp. 3-43. The quotations are from the James Laurence Dusenberry Diary, Southern Historical Collection; *Inauguration of Edwin Anderson Alderman, President of the University of North Carolina, January 27, 1897* (N.p.: n.p., n.d.), pp. 23-24; and Edwin Anderson Alderman, "The University of To-Day: Its Work and Needs," *University Magazine* 17 (New Series, June 1900): 296.

13 "Our Union, Will it be Preserved?," Senior oration of James McNabb, March 1857; "Progress: Moral & Material," Senior oration of Thomas Cowan, August 20, 1857; and "Progress of Humbuggery," address of David G. Worth, April 9, 1853, Dialectic Society Records. On efforts at curriculum reform before the war, see Brabham, "Defining the American University," p. 431. For an account of the Hedrick affair, see Monty Woodall Cox, "Freedom During the Fremont Campaign: The Fate of One North Carolina Republican in 1856," *North Carolina Historical Review* 45 (October 1968): 357-83.

14 Brabham, "Defining the American University."

15 Hill, "Education," *The Land We Love* 1 (May 1866): 5, 9, 11, and (June 1866): 87-88.

16 On the new curriculum, see Battle, *History of the University of North Carolina*, II:71-72, and Brabham, "Defining the American University." The quotations are from George T. Winston, "The First Faculty: Its Work and Its Opportunity," *University Record* 1 (New Series, Number 2): 18, 21, and Winston, "The University of To-Day," *University Magazine* 13 (March-April 1894): 327.

17 On the transformation of the faculty and their teaching methods, see James L. Leloudis, "A More Certain Means of Grace": Pedagogy, Self, and Society in North Carolina, 1880-1920" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1989), pp. 88-93. Francis P. Venable, who came to Chapel Hill as Professor of Chemistry in 1880, was the first member of the faculty to hold a Ph.D. His student, William Battle Phillips, received the University's first earned doctorate in 1883. See Maurice Bursey, *Francis Preston Venable of the University of North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: The Chapel Hill Historical Society, 1989), pp. 28-43. For changes in the teaching of Greek and Latin, see Battle, *History of the University of North Carolina*, II: 333, 475; Battle, *Sketches of the History of the University of North Carolina*, p. 59; Karl Pomeroy Harrington, "Shall the Classics Have a Fair Chance?" (N.p.: n.p., n.d.); and William Morton Dey, "The Beginnings of the Philological Club," *University Record* (October 1942, Number 383): 7-13.

18 Winston, "First Faculty," pp. 23-24, and Battle, *History of the University of North Carolina*, I:408, II:356-58. For an overview of the library's early history, see Fisk Parsons Brewer, "The Library of the University of North Carolina" (N.p.: n.p., [1870?]).

19 *Inauguration of Edwin Anderson Alderman*, p. 27; *University Record* 1 (February 1897): 18-19; *University Record* 2 (January 1898): 19-21, and (April 1898): 34-5; and Battle, *History of the University of North Carolina*, II:587. The University enrolled 542 students in 1897. See Horowitz, *Campus Life*, pp. 56-81, for related changes at other American colleges.

20 "A Student's Life as Controlling Professional Life," *University Magazine* 1 (April 1878): 43, and Winston, "The University of To-Day," pp. 325-26.

21 Inaugural address of W. P. Cline, March 15, 1878, Dialectic Society Records; and Francis P. Venable, "The Educational Value of College Athletics," folder 129, and "To What Extent Should Non-Athletic Events Be Encouraged?," folder 132, series 4:2, Francis P. Venable Papers, Southern Historical Collection.

22 On defiance of the changing standards of college life, and for brief biographies of some of the "new collegians," see Leloudis, "A More Certain Means of Grace," pp. 94-108. The quotation is from Adolphus Hill Eller, *The New University, An Oration Delivered by Adolphus Hill Eller, at the One Hundredth Annual Commencement of the University of North Carolina, June 5th, 1895* (N.p.: n.p., n.d.), p. 10.

23 Undated manuscript, box 8, Charles Duncan McIver Papers, Special Collections, Walter Clinton Jackson Library, University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

24 On the University's rising status as a research institution, see Bursey, *Francis Preston Venable*, p. 69. In November 1922, UNC became the first southern college to be granted membership in the Association of American Universities. See "Annual Report of the President," *University Record* (December 1922, Number 197): 16. On the University's growing commitment to public service in the years after World War I, see Louis Round Wilson, *The University of North Carolina, 1900-1930* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1957), chaps. 14-33. Chase expressed his concerns about UNC's transformation from a college into a true university in "Annual Report of the President," *University Record* (December 1923, Number 205): 16-18.

25 For thoughtful commentary on today's debates over the college curriculum and the campus "culture wars," see "The Politics of Liberal Education," a special issue of the *South Atlantic Quarterly* 89 (Winter 1990), and Gerald Graff, *Beyond the Culture Wars: How Teaching the Conflicts Can Revitalize American Education* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1992).

Student Life

at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Students have made their own indelible mark on the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill throughout its two-hundred-year history. Their personal letters and diaries reveal a university experience that often differed from the intentions of faculty members and the expectations of parents. Rowdy, young, competitive, fun-loving students have never confined themselves exclusively to academic pursuits at Chapel Hill. They have always known how to have a good time. But the student vision of college life has also frequently challenged the status quo, pressing the University to live up to its highest standards. To hear the students tell the history of the University is to learn the unexpected—how to kill "chinchies" [bed bugs]; textbook bonfires that changed the curriculum; horse whipping the college president. The following student voices, selected from papers in the Southern Historical Collection, offer a glimpse of two hundred years of student life at the University of North Carolina. Their letters and diaries have been identified by collection name and number.



Student footpaths leading to South Building, about 1894. Rarely have students clung exclusively to the paths envisioned by faculty and administration. Instead, the many generations of young people who have passed through Chapel Hill played their own vital role in shaping the University. [North Carolina Collection]

Room and Board

The University and the town of Chapel Hill grew up together, and students have always found food and lodging on and off campus. During the early years of the school's history, students selected and furnished their own rooms in Old East and elsewhere on a first come, first served basis. University fare never seemed to measure up to a home-cooked meal. Anecdotes of dorm life include possum suppers prepared in student rooms; fire in Old East; conviviality and conflict among roommates; and a description of new Cobb dormitory in 1952 with modern conveniences undreamt of by nineteenth-century residents of Old East, who did valiant battle with the chinchies.

John and Ebenezer Pettigrew to their father,
3 February 1795

592,
*Pettigrew Family
Papers*

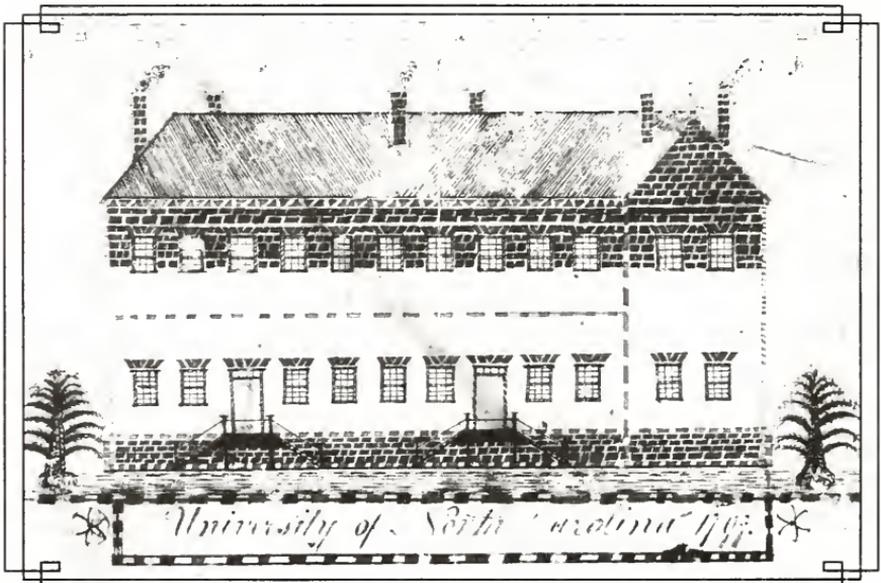
After a long & tedious journey we have at last arrived here safe. We found things very different from what we left them. There was hardly one boy but what had changed his room; & among the rest we lost ours. I confess that I was much displeas'd at it at first, and spok'd to Mr. Kerr concerning it; & he told us that he suppos'd we must have it again: but, upon a second consideration, we concluded that we would move into another room, where ther[e] were but four boys; two of them are sober young men, that We likike [sic] very well & the oth[e]r two are small boys.

Mr. Hardy's son is also in a room just above us that had but four boys in it. There was but one more room in the university but what had its number of beds in it, & I preferred *this* far before the other.

There are now 73 or 4 students at the University. They come very fast, & there is not

room for more than nine or ten more; so that those who propose coming up from Windsor had better set off as quick as possible

We have not yet settled with the steward, but we expect to do it tomorrow. I am much affraid [sic] that we shall be much pushed for provisions this year; for I am told that Mr. Taylor buys corn by *bag-fulls*; so that in case of necessity, we shall have to get in hollow trees, & do as the *bears* do; for it would never do, to set off home,—we should perish upon the roads All our class study french one half of the day, and lattan [sic] the other half; but we shall be in a class in *latin*, and study *greek*, when they study *French*. We shall be under Mr. Delavo reading latin, but Mr. Kerr or Hombs in the Greek.



East Building, 1797, drawn by John Pettigrew, a member of the first class to attend the University. [North Carolina Collection]

John and Ebenezer Pettigrew to their father,
3 October 1795

592.
*Pettigrew Family
Papers*

I wrote you about four weeks ago, and informed you that we had the promise of Mr. Kimbal's bed, but he now says that he is in great want of it, but that he cannot bear the thought of our laying on the floor; and said that he would endeavour to procure one for us. I applied [sic] to Mr. Daniel the other day, & he said that he had a spare bed, & that he would speak to Mrs. Daniel concerning it; and if she was willing he would let us have it; he said that he was not acquainted with the terms that beds hired at. Mr. Taylor has several hired to the students, & his price is twelve pounds a year. That is full as much as the beds are worth; but, I do not suppose this would be near as much, as we shall have nothing but the bed: however, I hope you will not make yourself uneasy, for I am shure [sic] we can get one of some person, as the time is but short that we shall want one

The steward provides very sorrily. There is not one in Colledge [sic] that does not complain; for this long time, that bread has not been I am shure [sic], near as good as Fillis bakes for herself to eat; it is impossible to discribe [sic] the badness of the tea and coffee, & the meat generally stinks, & has maggots in it.

John Pettigrew to his father, 12 April 1796

592.
*Pettigrew Family
Papers*

There are here at this time 86 Students: they are all in a perfect state of health; except one who was taken with the rheumatism last knight [sic] The house will not contain more than three or four boys, except the trustees should alter alter [sic] the law and have eight in each room; but I am in hopes th[e]y will not do it for I find it very difficult to get six well-behaved in a room as we have not

an opportunity of choosing & in my opinion it would be almost impossible to get eight well bred boys in a room. I shall now inform you of something as strange as what I wrote upon my first arrival here: that is we have moved into another room. One of the young men into whose room we moved, when we came up first, fully acted up to the chara[c]ter we gave him, but the other we were much deceived in; he is disliked by more than half the students in Colledge [sic], & as to his roommates he desired to reign King & said if we did not obey him he would use rough methods; this we greatly disliked knowing that no student durst take upon himself that authority, & that here we were all on an equality and to be room-mates and not one superior to another. I shall say nothing of my new companions untill [sic] I get better acquainted with them.

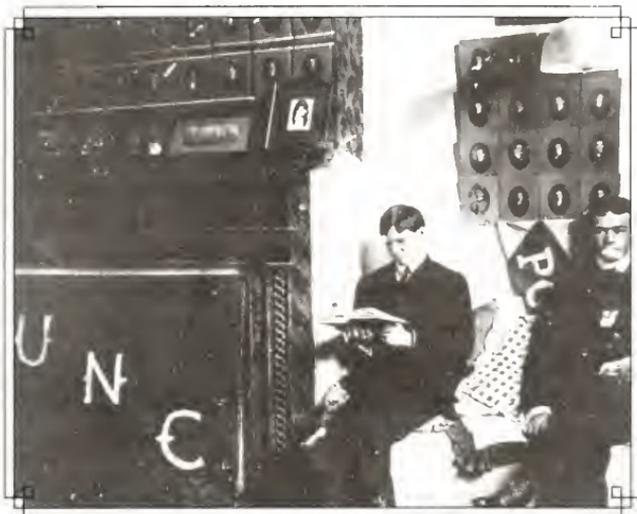


Student room, about 1900. [North Carolina Collection]

592.
*Pettigrew Family
Papers*

John Pettigrew to his father, 27 June 1797

The Chinches or what we call Sabines have increased & multiplied, & become so numerous, that in the late engagements which they have had



Student room, about 1904. [North Carolina Collection]

with us, they have quite [sic] defeated us, & obliged us to retreat from our rooms which they hold the entire possession of at night none of the room-mates have been able to sleep in my room for upwards of three weeks, & it is nearly the case with respect to all the rest; as for my part I generally spread the tables in the passage & pour water around their feet, by which means I escape them as they are in general bad swimmers. The steward has provided very poorly until [sic] lately, when the Trustees gave him a severe over-hall [sic], and I believe threatened him severely.

William D. Lowther to his sister, 7 April 1814

I wish you to write as soon as you can that I may be able to get away from here as soon as possible[,] for if I move in the village I shall not stay more than one week and then I shall return to the stewards hall where the fare is most intolerable, as we generally have a piece of fat middling or Jowl every day (except Sunday) from which it is almost impossible to get the least particle of lean, we sometimes however have fritters along with

592.

*Pettigrew Family
Papers*

them which is not in my opinion a good substitute for meat which I very seldom eat now as I cannot procure sufficient lean along with it, the stewards hall is to be abolished next session I expect, and then every man will be at liberty to board where he pleases so that if I can get clear this session I shall escape altogether from it, I had almost forgot to tell you the little news here which ended in the suspension of eleven students (the greater part for refusing to inform on the fellow students)



Student room, 1915. [North Carolina Collection]

Charles L. Pettigrew to his father,
19 August 1833

592.
*Pettigrew Family
Papers*

I have a room-mate who is quite a pleasant young man generally; the reason I took a room-mate was because I expected the college would be ful[l] and I would therefore be obliged to take one so I thought it better to have one of my own choosing but I now find that I might have had a room by myself if choose, but I shall now continue with him all the session and it costs less, however it cost more than I expected it; I suppose it is because there is but one good store here and they knowing that students are obliged to have certain things ask their own price. I study tolerable hard [sic] and am among the best in the class though there [are] some who sit up very late at night and have their books in their hands from morning untill [sic] night. I am in very good health. I would write more but it is so late, being past ten and I am so sleepy that I must quit.

Charles L. Pettigrew to his father,
21 January 1834

592.
*Pettigrew Family
Papers*

The business of the session has again commenced and I am in a very neat and warm room with out a room-mate, nor do I intend to take a room-mate because good ones are so hard to find; I had one last session, I was compelled to take him his brother wrote to me to take him in my room and there by he would be under some restraint, his brother had just graduated, and had left me his room one of the best rooms and some say the best in college and therefore I felt myself under some sort of oblation [sic] to him, for the first two months he made no noise studied hard and behaved himself well and properly and I liked him very much, the affection was reciprocated, but after a



Student room, 1915. [North Carolina Collection]

while he got a fiddle and of course got among the fiddlers in college idle and worthless fellows, then he began somewhat to absent himself from his room and finally he went and staid [sic] with one altogether although his trunk was in my room, so we parted and and [sic] very seldom see each other, after he left me he began to drink considerably and to have wines and brandy continually, and boy of about 15, I am afraid he will not do much good in this world . . .

2561 z.

*James Laurence
Dusenbery Diary*

James Laurence Dusenbery Diary,
29 August 1841

The Di end of the West Building has always been characterized as the noisiest part of College & well does it deserve the appellation. If proof be wanting to establish the fact, let anyone appeal to the Statistics of the 3rd passage of that building. The high crimes & misdemeanors of the past week alone, would stamp indelibly upon her front, the guilty stain. But what care we of the West for that?

We are proud of the distinction & I for one would not exchange my elevated place here in West for any, the most quiet abode amid these classic shades. We are a jovial, roistering company & our determination is to enjoy to the utmost the halcyon days of youth. Amity & good feeling exist among us & the glorious motto we have unfurled, declares

"That whilst we're here
with friends so dear,
We'll drive dull care away."

The noise was chiefly in my room on Monday night. Five of us were fighting with pillows. Beds were tumbled, hats crushed, my pillowcase torn to pieces & finally the candle thrown down & extinguished, when darkness put an end to the frolic. The following night, after our return from dancing-school, we illuminated the passage & commenced patting & shuffling. The noise was so great that it roused the judge, who appeared in our midst with the velocity [sic] of a thunderbolt. The death-like stillness that then ensued contrasted strongly with the deafening uproar of a few minutes previous. He spoke long & emphatically of the impropriety of such proceedings, entreated us to forbear & having concluded his dissertation & bowed politely we lighted him down stairs. There was more dancing on the next night but *Judex* did not make his appearance

Yesterday evening we sent over to the East for Fresh Smith, put a fiddle in his hands & had a real old scamper down. After the dance Pink sent down town for a bottle of wine & we pledged each other in flowing glasses. At night songs & social converse filled up the intervening hours 'till bed-time.

John Osborne Guion to his cousin,
13 March 1846

403.
*Theodore Bryant
Kingsbury
Papers*

I room in the village, at Mrs Lewis's whom I find to be a very fine old Lady. She has quite a pretty daughter, which makes it so much the more pleasant, for you know what a gallant I am. I have no room-mate, and I believe it is preferable not to have one, at least to running the risk of getting a bad room-mate. This may serve to make us more cautious when we come to choose a sharer, not

merely of your room for four years, but for life and more than this room. Three more fellows besides myself are keeping batchelors [sic] hall, and I am much pleased with it, and shall continue doing so at least this session There are a large number of students who board them-selves, which makes the boarding houses less profitable. If I roomed in college, I should not do it for the inconveniences of having your meals prepared in your rooms are too great, but as it is I have nothing to do but to see to the smoke-house for our meals are served up in a seperate [sic] apartment from the rooms.

1171 z.
*Thomas Miles
Garrett Diary*

Thomas Miles Garrett Diary, 23 July 1849

Probably no time in the life of any one is more pleasant than that spent at college and of all the times the beginning of the session is the most agreeable of the whole, when all the students rush as it were, rush together like a tremendous shock of an earthquake exerting and arousing the feelings of friendship, and brotherly love besides as the commencement of the session. There is not a little noise caused by the moving and shifting of the room furniture &c. The bustle and hurry of the examination of the "newyears." These and like circumstances, producing considerable excitement. The pleasure of this cannot well be appreciated or if at all at a time when stillness has changed the scene. There has been, it is true, a considerable assemblage at the doors of the college buildings to day[,] some hollering at the "Fresh in the Campus," yet despite of this a marked change has taken place in this respect since yesterday, so that looking back a day or two, my excitement I find has been so intense that the few days past have gone away, at least in happy forgetfulness of the events they brought, if not in absolute enjoyment. I have taken possession of a room in the East building with Brett. There is yet a deal of labor to expired in putting it in order, for most everything is thrown pelmel [sic] fashion about it.

After returning to rest last night, I was disturbed by quite a serious accident, which happened to the inmate of the room adjoining mine. He had attempted to replenish his lamp with oil or camphine, without extinguishing the light of it and as might have been expected from the ignitable quality of the fluid, the liquid in the lamp and canister both caught fire, and produced a general conflagration. His bed caught fire, and losing all presence of mind took no measures for extinguishing it nor of giving the alarm. The blaze of the fire was seen from a window of the South Building, and but for this circumstance the whole building in which were quartered fifty students all wrapt in sleep might have been extinguished. Some one who must have been very much frightened gave a most horrible scream, which awoke me, I sprang from my bed and ran out, in the passage where I found some dozen in the utmost confusion. I saw in a moment that a little water would make an end of the conflagration, and ran into my room, got some water, but when I got to the door of the room, such crouds [sic] had blocked up the portal that it was with greatest difficulty that I could get in the room, and after I did get in I found a greater part of my water spilt and that too on myself. I dashed the remainder upon the side of the ceiling which had caught fire, and presented a more horrid prospect of danger. The effort proved successful, and the fire was extinguished. It is impossible to conceive how much excitement this produced. Some student of such strong lungs hollered fire! fire! fire! so long and so loud, that the country people caught the alarm, and giving the sound a still loud as and prolonged echo, it verberated and reverberated among the hills fully some distance around and possibly waked the owles [sic][,] hawks, bears and panthers of the Blue ridge, and it may be that the

the [sic] sound is yet resounding along the shores of the Atlantic and that the wild Arabs of the Eutopous realm have been aroused from their drowsy slumber

1988.
Mary Biddle
Norcott Bryan
Papers

Henry R. Bryan to his mother,
19 January 1853

I arrived here about one o[']clock, the day after I left you. Our hacks got mired about seven miles from here, and the horses were not able to move them, so they were obliged to take the horses out of the hacks, and let the boys ride them up to Chapel Hill on horseback, I was quite sick, and therefore neither able to ride or walk, and consequently I staid [sic] all night on the road, with one of the boys. I went up to a house on the road and told them that I was sick, and requested them to let me stay all night, the old Lady of the house hesitated for a while and said that she had determined not to let any of the students stay there, but she said she "sposed" she would have to let me stay, so I went to bed immediately and soon entirely recovered, and then got up and dressed and went down and chatted with the old lady a while. Having to stay all night on the road of course I lost my room, but however the man that got it took me in with him next day when I got here, I think he will be a very good "chum." The boys that came up that night tried to save it for me, but they found him in there and of course they had no right to put him out. The boys on 2d & 3d passages threw dice in my room yesterday, to determine who should give up his room to Dick Hines the new Tutor. I was very much afraid that I would lose my room, because I am so unlucky, but my throw was highest of all.

Thomas Brown to his sister, 26 July 1855

1040.
*Gordon and
Hackett
Family
Papers*

I could have written sooner, but when we arrived I found all the College rooms occupied and also the room that I expected to get was also filled too, so that it took all my time hunting a room and [I] was obliged to take a very bad one at last. The increase of students is so much more than any one expected that all can not get rooms and every place that is fit to stay in is full, and I believe that some have even gone home again on that account. But I understand the Faculty intend making immediat[e] provision for more rooms for the students. There are so many new faces that one feels almost as much a stranger as if I was never here before. Tip does not like College as well as he expected, but I reckon he will like it better when he gets better acquainted, we are rooming together about a quarter of a mile from College in the village and it is quite boring going to prayers these mornings as we have to run all the way to get there in time. I am boarding at Mrs. Hargraves['], a private house in the village with four other boys

.....

Nathan P. Neal to his father and mother,
2 September 1857

4370.
*Neal Family
Papers*

Our fair [sic] at the Hotel is pritty [sic] sorry[,] badly cooked and filthy. We have corn pie[,] beef[,] gingercake &c. flies no rarity to be cooked[.] Cups and saucers are not clean[.] Coffee very weak, but I have it very sweet, and get a plenty but not so much as I like. When I left home I hardly knew what a chinch was but not [sic] have become pretty well acquainted with the customers for I sleep with a good many and by that means have scraped acquaintances. I would have this bed scalded but I expect that the matress [sic] is full[.] If so it would do but little good[.] They get on me in the day or any time that I lay down almost.



Eagle Hotel, about 1847. Miss Nancy Segur Hilliard provided rooms and served meals for hundreds of students during the mid-nineteenth century. [North Carolina Collection]

1596.
*William H.
McLaurin
Papers*

William McLaurin to his brother[?],
1 August 1859

There are seven of us from Richmond but all are from about Rockingham except myself . . . all of us board together. 4 room in the College building, the other 3 and a Cole from Tennessee room about 250 yds off and we are all at one place or the other alternately when we have leisure. When the rest of the Students see one of us alone they say the rest of the Richmond crowd are not far off. All have to walk about the third of a mile to meals and invariably get together about half way where their paths come together. We have excellent fare so far if it will hold out so all the time[.] I never saw a place that there are as many chickens used as there are at this place[.]

They have them at every meal[,] fried[,] stewed[,] or baked. I think they must spring up in the woods spontaneously I was very much deceived about the boys when I came here[.] I thought that they were a great deal worse than they really are[.] It is true they do a great many little tricks but they have to keep them concealed except in the crowd that did it and it is no fun for them, they are more afraid of the Society than they are of the Faculty although the Faculty come down on them like a thousand of brick.

John Worth McAlister, "Worth" to his mother,
8 October 1890

4321 z.
*John Worth
McAlister
Papers*

I have changed my boarding house. I was at the hotel the first month, and as there were between one hundred and twenty-five and fifty boys boarding there, the board got very bad, and last week a crowd of sixteen boys formed an eating club and we have wrented [sic] a house and table-ware, stove &c. &c.[,] hired our own cook . . . and waiter, buy our own provisions, and in that way we will live at exactly the cost of food, house, cook, &c. One member of the club is given his board to attend to buying &c. &c. We are getting along nicely on our experiment and are "waxing fat" off of ten dollars per month at present calculations, whereas we were growing dispeptic, not on account of quantity but quality of the food, at the hotel at \$13.00 per month. We have a very nice crowd of boys in it, Tom Little among them. I am taking regular exercise every evening and my cherished desire is to get on the base-ball team next spring—and before you all get me any thing else, tho[ugh] there is plenty of time yet, I want you to give me for Xmas, money enough to buy me a base-ball glove, which I will select

We will move into our new chapter house about first of Nov. It's going to be a perfect little gem, not so little either[,] fore [sic] there are to be two bed rooms and a large hall, with a passage in

between them, two other A. T. O. 's, Robt. Miller and Haige Dangerfield will room in the second room. It is beautifully situated right next door to Mrs. McRae's and opposite to the Episcopal Church and is built on the Queen Anne Style, that is if I know what the Queen Anne style is, anyhow, the roof is very steep and meets way up at a point, and there are pretty little windows in the gables, and every body is complimenting it, and some of the other fraternities are quite green eyed already.

1561.
Henry Mauger
London Papers

Henry M. London, to his grandmother,
25 February 1897

As it is only about 11:30 o'clock and as the lights (electric) do not go out before 12 o'clock, I have a short time to write to you and all. I have just returned from a "grub-rush" (in the very inelegant terms of a college student), but better known as a "spread," given by a friend of mine You don't know how much fun a fellow has at one of the above named occasions—every one is at his ease and enjoys himself. I had several boys up here (at my room) to my 'possum supper when I returned and they all of course were delighted with it.

Some of the boys said that they had never before eaten any possum and that made it much the nicer for them since they could better appreciate what they had before been unacquainted with. Judge Connor's sons asked me up to eat some turkey &c. with them just after I returned to the Hill. But I guess you are tired of hearing about "feasts" & the like. You mustn't think that this gayety [sic] is a continuous one, for it is only at intervals that we have such

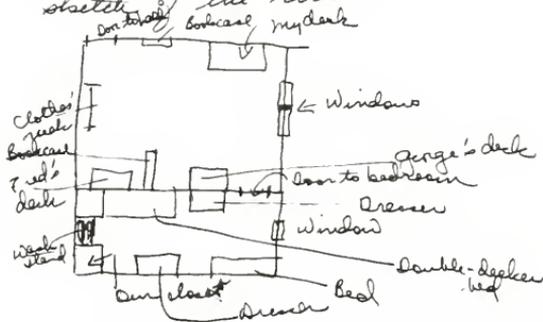
Well the lights are flickering which is a sign that they go out in 15 minutes, so with much love to All I am Your Affect. Grandson

7 Pettigrew Dorm
Chapel Hill, N.C.
January 2, 1952

Dear mother-dear,

I have arrived safely and am settled in my new quarters. The trip was beautiful, and the bus was only five minutes late! That was something really remarkable. All my baggage arrived safe and sound. It was a little late in coming, but finally got here.

Since you may be interested, I am drawing below a sketch of the room.



Floorplan drawn by John Schnorrenberg in 1952 shows the arrangement of his room in Pettigrew dorm. [Schnorrenberg Family Papers, SHC]

John Schnorrenberg to his mother,
5 October 1952

4002.
Schnorrenberg
Family Papers

Cobb dormitory in which I am living has 211 rooms occupied by 413 people and a basement temporarily occupied by 80 people. It has 2 telephones, 2 sitting rooms, sixteen bathrooms, five staircases, four floors, its own post office and laundry office, eight janitors, eight entrances and sound-proof ceilings in the hallways.

My roommate is a veteran of the Korean War, 24 years old, and a sophomore taking a pre-med course. He is quiet, ple[a]sant, and friendly.



University Library, Smith Hall. [North Carolina Collection]

The Studious Life

The rhythms of student life have changed in two hundred years. Nineteenth-century students memorized Greek and Latin texts, studied surveying, and examined steam engines. They formed debating clubs that represented an unofficial part of the curriculum, and established libraries that surpassed the University's collection. Although the academic subjects have changed, study habits sound remarkably consistent over time, especially tendencies toward procrastination.

John and Ebenezer Pettigrew to their father,
4 May 1795

We are very much in want of some English Books, we read every [S]aturday fournoon [sic]. We have only [S]aturday evening and [S]unday to refresh ourselves; before sunrise in the morning we have to attend prayers and study untill [sic] eight, & then eat brakefast [sic] and go in again at nine, study untill twelve, we dine and go in at two, we study untill five, then we have nothing appointed for us to do untill next morning: On [S]unday we have prayrs [sic] in the morning as usual at twelve we have a Sermon red [sic], and at four we are questioned uppon [sic] religius [sic] questions. The books I reckon we most want is the Pantheon and some Roman Histories.

592.

*Pettigrew Family
Papers*

John and Ebenezer Pettigrew to their father,
3 October 1795

We have read since the vacation three books in Eutropious, five books in Cornelius Nepos, & expect to read about five more, & then to go into Caesars Commentaries, which, I suppose will be

592.

*Pettigrew Family
Papers*

about the last of this Month. I reckon we can get them at Hillsborough, as there is a very good assortment of latin books there; there are here also, but no Caesars; we might borrow, but not with translations.

3129.

UNC

Miscellaneous

Personal Papers

Thomas L. Spragins to his brother,
Mel Spragins 22 September 1808

You wish to be informed what Class I have joined and what are my present stud[i]es. Sir, when I first came to this place I was very much divided in my mind what class to join, but after mature consideration I found it most expedient to join the members of the Sophomore Class which studies Latin, Greek, and Geography

The Students as you would naturally conclude are of various discriptions [sic]; some are young men of good information and quite agreeable, others again are to the contrary of this

Among the a[d]vantages at this place are the two Societies which is an advantage peculiar Chapel Hill, all transactions performed in each society are kept in profound secrecy we have some of the most distinguished men in the State in our Society which is the Dialectic, and from the decorum which exist in it, and the worthy members which composed it, and also the information which it affords, it even merits the attention of Sages. The Library belonging to this Society exclusive of that which belong to to [sic] the University cost \$1500 which is the best by far that I ever saw.

The way the Students get their studies are different from any othe[r] seminary, for there is such emulation existing among them, especially between thoes [sic] of the different Societies that they get their studies almost entirely by memory, which has an attency [tendency] to excite ambition in all of them and makes their studies [page torn] though in getting them so[,] they have to make use of more industry, therefore it keeps us generally busy.

546 Alston A Jones. 1838

Oct 28	Weekly Magazine	1	R
	Crossing	1.2	R
	Coff's Journal	"	R
Nov 12	Weekly Magazine	1	R
	Yellow As	1	R
Jan. 18	Sports of the West	12	R
22	Dary Croquette		R
25	Light on Luminary		R
29	Life of Croquette by himself		R
	Buccannens of America	123	R
"	Leit Blas		R
Feb. 8	Halcyon Luminary		R
Mar. 5	Franklin's Travels	"	R
" 19	Weekly Magazine		R
" 26	for Bryant		R
" "	Children of the Abbey		R
April 9	4 vols Arabian Nights	4	R
" 12	Three Shoe Robinson	2	R
May 3	Randome's Roderick	1.2	R
" 14	Three Shoe Robinson	1.2	R
" 23	Hist of North Carolina	2	R
" "	Mackenzie's 5000 Receipts	1	R
" "	Portfolio	1.2.3	R
Feb 11	Evening Magazine	21	R

Page from the Dialectic Society Library Register listing books borrowed by Alston A. Jones in 1838 [University Archives]

William D. Lowther to his sister, 7 April 1814

669.

Skinner Family
Papers

I have not yet recieved [sic] the book which you were so good as to procure me, and I am very much afraid I shall not receive [sic] it as the conveyance between this and Edenton is very unsafe, besides, if I should get it, I feel very doubtful whether I should be able to be prepared

on it against the examination as the class have been studying it ever since the last of January I beseech you therefore to consider seriously before you determine whether you will make me stay untill [sic] the examination which is a public one & we shall be examined on all the studies of the last session, but if you think with me that I cannot be prepared, I wish if it is convenient you would send for me as soon as possible as I will use my utmost endeavours to prepare myself by the beginning of the next session

. . . . The faculty will not make any allowances for my not having a book, for by staying and continueing [sic] in the class I say as much as if I was capable of preparing myself for the examination without a book, for if I am not: why do I stay here and run so great a risk when I might quit now and return the next session which very frequently happens, . . . the faculty will not permit anyone to leave college without their parents or guardians consent, but if you were to send for me they would not hesitate a moment in letting me go home

3914.
John F. Speight
Papers

Richard H. Lewis to his sister, 20 August 1825

My studies are much more laborious than what they were last session. They are as follows: Geometry, Logarithms, Plane Trigonometry, Cicero de Senecteete, and Blairs Lectures. In addition to these we study Paley's Theology on Sunday. Altho [sic] you are unacquainted with any of these studies, yet you can easily judge, from the number of them, that they are very laborious. Six studies pursued at one time are enough to confuse almost *any person's* mind. Yet we need not complain: for they serve to exercise and improve the mind the more; and this is what we all aim at, viz. the improvement of the mind. (Excuse me for mentioning my studies to you, since I consider it unpolite in the extreme to talk to a person about any thing, about which that person is ignorant).

Richard H. Lewis to his father,
24 September 1825

3914.
*John F. Speight
Papers*

My studies at present are Spherical Trigonometry, Blairs Lectures on Rhetoric and Belleslettre, two Latin lessons a week in order to keep it fresh in our mind, and mensuration of Heights & Distances which we will complete in a few days, next to which we will study Navigation and after *that* Surveying.

Charles L. Pettigrew to his father,
10 December 1834

592.
*Pettigrew Family
Papers*

The reexamination [sic] is now proceeding [sic] and will close the latter end of this week I have passed my examination on two studies which were the easiest, consequently not regarded by the students but to morrow [sic] morning I will stand my examination on mathematics which is considered the most difficult one in college to pass and at this time it is particularly so, the faculty having adopted a new plan; The members of the Junior class will therefore sit up very late to night to prepare, though I am afraid some will do it to very little advantage.

Tristram Lowther Skinner to his father,
22 September 1840

669.
*Skinner
Family
Papers*

My opportunities for studying here, are not near so good as I expected them to be. I mentioned to you, when I wrote before, that I could not prosecute the course which you desired me to pursue. I now attend Dr. Mitchell's lectures on chemistry, and read history & other books which I think are useful. The french teacher who was here

(and he was not a good one) has gone away. He did not think himself prepared to teach Spanish. There are no Spanish books on the hill, and very few french. The few that are here are in the college library, but I have obtained permission to use them. I have to study latin by myself, and do the best I can with the help of the advice which I can obtain from my friends. I borrowed a copy of Blackstone, from a gentleman in Hillsboro, rather than buy one (as I thought that you had one at home,) to study under Gov. Swain. I find enough to occupy my time pleasantly, and I hope usefully; and if the day was longer by several hours I could easily find occupation for them.

We have had some little disturbance here lately. The faculty have dismissed several students, and the trustees are to meet here the last of this week when it is supposed several others will be sent off.

. . . . I have joined the Philanthropic Society.



University Library, Smith Hall. [North Carolina Collection]

William Sidney Mullins Diary,
14 November 1840

531 z.
*William Sidney
Mullins Diary*

Today has been spent by me in more perfect idleness than any I have ever passed in College and I will give a brief history of it. I commenced by snapping [student slang for taking an unexcused holiday] from Prayers and slept on soundly until the breakfast bell rung. After breakfast I met with John D. Cameron, Thomas Ruffin, and Judge Strange at the well and staid [sic] with them there for nearly two hours About half past ten Barcly McGehee came up and asked me over to the South to take a Game of Whist. I consented, and going over to Harwells room, we formed a party, Viser and myself against Spencer and McGehee. We played several games and when we finished there, I went down to Myers room and Battle and myself played against Myers and McGehee until dinner. After dinner I called over at the West and smoked a Cigar, and had just returned to my room and commenced reading, when Thos. Ruffin, Tomlinson, and Pool came into my room and proposed a walk to the Rock Quarry. I joyfully consented and off we started. On the way we gained Belk, and S. Graham to our party and thus sallied forth from the College to visit the woods. It is a beautiful walk—the road lying through Mr. Clayter's ground—and we felt quite poetick [sic] as we strolled along in groupes [sic]. Belk and myself especially experienced such sensations as the lovely Miss Mary Mitchell was the theme of our discourse. Had but I but space and time, it would delight me much to record here, his glowing eulogies on her beauty, grace and loveliness; her intellect, goodness, and purity, but I may not dwell on the pleasing subject. Long however will I remember the Speaker[']s animation and enthusiasm. When we arrived at the Quarry, all busily employed themselves in selecting whetstones and preparing them for use, and no little emulation

was excited by our efforts to excel in the taste of selection, and neatness of preparation. An hour, or more, was thus very pleasantly spent, and the sun was sinking low, when we started to retrace our steps. The walk back was enlivened by humourous converse, and this evening well deserves a place in my recollections of happy College Hours. We arrived at College half an hour before supper, and I read Aaron Ogden Dayton's speech until the bell rang. Our Club met as usual and I presided. The Query was "Are Debating Societies beneficial?" and soon after the debate commenced, I called Gov. Holmes to the Chair and joined in the discussion. After a short but very animated discussion, it was carried in the Aff.[irmative] by an unanimous vote. We adjourned about half-past eight o'clock, and I immediately went over to Myer's room where I was invited to a Turkey supper.

A Whist party was immediately formed: and we played until ten o'clock, and I then went up with Billy Battle to his room and sat until the supper came. A fine one it was: a noble turkey and two fine possums, with a quantum suff. of potatoes, gravy, bread and coffee. Belk, Hartwell, Spencer, Sessums, McGehee, Battle, Robin Jones, Meyers, and myself joined in doing justice, and Hines, the host, received ample thanks. After the supper was over, a party of us went down to Peltiers', and tried to get some "peach liquer" but the old scamp would not rise, and we had a stout quarrel with his wife. Finally after banging the door some time, we gave it up in despair and retreated to College, and soon after I retired to rest.

531 z.
*William Sidney
Mullins Diary*

William Sidney Mullins Diary,
20 January 1841

The wind is whistling fearfully down the passage and through the grove, while not a star shines out and all around is dark save the earth and roofs, which wear a white mantle. Dave woke me when he came to make my fire this morning and I asked "is it snowing yet?" "Yessir and harder than ever." "How deep is it[?]" ["Over my shoes, Sir" and at this I raised my head up and looked out of the window: all was white and the flakes fell fast and thick. The sight startled me: I saw I could

never attend prayers and recitation in that storm and so I fell back and slept till every one else had returned from breakfast, when I arose and went for mine. It snowed steadily all the morning until nearly twelve o'clock, when it ceased, though the clouds did not break, but have hung lowering all day. Meantime, I went over Calculus—we have been turned back to Differentiation again,—recited, and came back to my room, read several letters of Wm. R. Thing, Will. Gaston, Tom. B. Sheppard and other less distinguished, to our Society, which were in a bundle I had taken from the archives in which to look for a receipt, and read awhile. Between twelve and one I shaved, dressed, and with Tom nailed up our pictures on the walls; and by the bye, several of these are very handsome. After I returned from dinner, I took up my Journal and wrote the record of Tuesday, having previously taken a good smoke. After this task was accomplished I set about making some ink and spent the whole evening until four in staining my hands and clothes and dirtying the floor: at that hour I repaired to the recitation room and heard Prof. Phillips deliver the driest kind of lecture.

After supper I came direct to my room[,] built up a good fire, and sat musing until my roommate arrived; soon after him came young Bridgers, G. W. Ruffin and Dr. B. and we had quite an amusing discussion *de adjunctis et membro Veneris*. After they went out my roommate and me fell into a little quarrel and in consequence got our Greek Lesson separate for the first time this session. Since I have finished that, I have been in Ruffin's Room, as well as Thos. B. Wetmore's and from the last I ran down to Mrs. Jennings through the snow to see if she could alter my gown. As soon as I came back I read Blackstone's Life and then took up this book and wrote the note of day: it is now nine, Tom is sulky and has gone to—but here he is—and for the present I'll lay aside my Journal.

After this I read Cardinal Wolsey's life as given in Lardners Encyclopedia, and the first Canto of Shelley's Revolt of Islam and then retired to rest, there being but few lights in College.

William Sidney Mullins Diary, 21 July 1841

531 z.

*William Sidney
Mullins Diary*

This Class convened in the Labrotory [sic] at half past eight and heard Dr. Mitchell's opening lecture on the Science of Chemistry. Misses Margaret and Ellen Mitchell, and Miss Whitaker

were also present, and perhaps drew off a little attention that should have been given to the Lecture.

. . . . The Lecture embraced nearly an hour and a half and he gave us a lesson to prepare for Recitation at eleven, so that the intermediate time is generally pretty well employed. By this contrivance, he manages to make the Seniors recite three times a day notwithstanding their exemption from ante-breakfast recitation. Indeed when we recite to him twice on the same day, (as is the case on Wednesday) we go to the Labrotory [sic] four times a day, and spend at least an hour more there than any other class in College devotes to the Recitation room. This circumstance is however by no means displeasing to classes generally.



Electrical laboratory about 1904, probably in the basement of Alumni Building [North Carolina Collection]

On Monday the 18th ult. the regular exercises of College commenced. The Senior Class recited for its first lessons to Gov. Swain, the bill of rights of the freemen of N[orth] Carolina & the constitution of the 22 States. We also began this week, the Study of Chemistry, including Botany, Zoology, & Mineralogy, under Prof. Mitchell. The class recites once a week to Philips on Astronomy & twice a week to Fetter on the Medea of Euripides. Monsieur Robards, the Prof. of French, has not yet returned from the enjoyment of his vacation. During the past week I have been trying to overcome the habit of sleeping between prayers & breakfast, but without success. It is prejudicial to health, a waste of the most pleasant part of the day for Study & therefore that habit must not be indulged. The fact is, the weather has been so excessively warm & sultry, that I have done very little else but sleep during the whole week.

I brought from home seventy five dollars, with which I paid my debts to the amount of fifteen dollars; paid also ten dollars in advance for board, five to Society, five for Kents Commentaries, & deposited thirty five with the Bursar, for which I took a receipt. Of the remaining five, I paid fifty cents to a boy for bringing my baggage from the tavern to my room, deposited one dollar in the P. Office & bought a box of cigars with the remainder.

I retired from church last Sabbath after answering to my name. I had no absences either from prayers or recitation during the week.

2561 z.
*James Laurence
Dusenbery Diary*

James Laurence Dusenbery Diary,
10 October 1841

I have done nothing as yet towards writing a Speech, but have chosen for my theme, the "Present condition of the practice of Medicine In N[orth] Carolina." To write a speech for the first time & one too that is to be spoken before an intellectual & severely critical assembly, is, to me, a task of "fearful magnitude & startling responsibility." But if I would win for myself, a Sheepskin & the honourable title of "Bachelor of Arts" I must e'er brace myself to the task. The week has passed with very little adventure of any kind. Dr. Mitchell, a short time since, received a very fine selection of Galvanic & Electro-Magnetic instruments & on Wednesday, he showed the class some striking experiments. Several young ladies of the village were present & the Dr. remarked that we could pay no higher compliment to a young lady than to call her an Electro-Magnet.

427.
Lewis Papers

Exum Whitaker to William F. Lewis,
1 April 1843

I am comfortably seated by a small fire, the wind is whistling throughout, and the fellows are passing up and down the stairs into the Halls taking out books. I suppose you have heard that owing to a resolution of the trustees we have to recite on Saturday mornings.

. . . . In consequence of this regulation, the two societies meet on Saturday morning at nine o'clock, and our society has abolished declamation from its list of duties, the debate has become languid, in a word the society has fallen considerably below its former high stand. The present Fresh class is about the "reddest" perhaps imaginable consists of little shirttail fellows about "knee high to a grasshopper,"

who think they cant [sic] unless they curse big, play cards, indulge freely at the bowl and be found frequent visitors at the [undecipherable].

. . . . Notwithstanding the trustees have taken measures to put down these drinking clubs (and it is alleged as one reason that the [?] club sent tickets to some of the ladies requesting them to become members,) yet they are kept up and flourish if such things can be said to flourish

William Bagley to Asa Matthews, 8 July 1843

863 z.

*William Bagley
Letter Books*

I arrived here on the 28th of May & stood my examination for the Sophomore class on the 30th, I passed on every thing I tried for but there are Mathematics, Prosody & Ancient Geography, that I have to make up, though I think of joining as an irregular & reciting with the Freshman & Sophomore classes, at least until I can make up entirely

Next Friday (14th) our session commences when I wish to commence ascending the "hill of science" it now appears very steep and rugged but I desire by close application to render it smooth & level; I shall find it very difficult for a year or two though. I expect, but I *must try*. The young men here are very wicked indeed there are only some dozen professors of religion in all College & I expect my religion will be put to a severe test but through the prayers of my friends I hope I shall outride every storm

William Bagley to his father, 22 July 1843

863 z.

*William Bagley
Letter Books*

There are I suppose from 160 to 170 students, they are very wild and dissipated & I now feel quite unwell from loss of sleep owing to their shouting and frolicking last night

863 z.

*William Bagley
Letter Books*

William Bagley to his father, 13 September 1843

Chapel Hill is situated in the midst of very beautiful & picturesque scenery; On all sides it is diversified with hills & plains. The College buildings are situated on a little eminence & are composed of five. The South Building, which is much the largest & in which are two recitation rooms, a laboratory & the halls of the two societies, besides some thirty private rooms, the East Building, in which there is one recitation room, with twenty two rooms for the students, & the West Building, which is composed entirely of private rooms. The tutors occupy one each in the East & West Buildings. There is also a chapel in which we attend church & prayers & another building for recitation rooms exclusively, in which there are four.

Thus you have some idea how we are situated here; I would be very well pleased indeed but for the wickedness of the students

. . . . I am almost continually annoyed with oaths of the most horrid kind, & with the conversations of those who indulge in lewdness, dissipation, & gambling.

863 z.

*William Bagley
Letter Books*

William Bagley to his father, 27 April 1844

I am aware that the better astronomer[,] Mathematician, surveyor, or navigator I am the better qualified I will be to enter upon the duties that may devolve upon me but here the theories of those subjects are merely taught which, with the exception of surveying, can't be applied to practice & there is very little surveying or navigation taught, I had a conversation the other day with the Tutor of Mathematics, who said that the navigation taught here was not of that kind used by seamen—that the principles only could be understood—& I grant that

the better linguist I am the more able I will be to negotiate, sell, buy or entertain in a foreign land but with the exception of French, there is not a single Modern language taught here, consequently I should be as badly prepared to deal with foreign nations as I was before I came through.

James Johnston Pettigrew to his brother,
5 May 1844

592.

*Pettigrew Family
Papers*

The studies of the Freshman class are considerably lightened by carrying up the mathematics and instead of five Algebra recitations a week we have only three. The Faculty have decided that the present course is too difficult for minds so young and untrained and on that account have transferred the study of Astronomy and Natural Philosophy to the Senior year.

Thomas Miles Garrett Diary, 28 July 1849

1171 z.

*Thomas Miles
Garrett Diary*

It is a matter of considerable difficulty to study at present. At the beginning of the session there is probably more idleness than at any other time, and although I would not reproach myself with this evil habit, I must say that I am quite unable to study. It seems that a drowsiness which I am quite unable to comprehend has seized upon and my mind appears to be in a lethargic state from which I find it impossible to arouse it. It is almost in this manner that I have passed the day, between a state of sleep and wakefulness. I endeavored to read some but found it impossible. I made such little progress that I am completely ashamed of it. I experienced however last night a serious interruption by the noise of the "blacking club" and did not get to sleep until past midnight. I may with some propriety attribute my drowsiness to day to that cause.

1171 z.
*Thomas Miles
Garrett Diary*

Thomas Miles Garrett Diary, 15 August 1849

I have not had lately much time for reading owing to my having to devote more time to my Latin recitations, while we are reading Cato . . . I can not yet have the recklessness to go in the room without preparation, as some. I had indeed prefer to get every lesson than be continually harrassed by the fear of being called on to recite. I have devoted unusual time to Philosophy this weeks being now in a very interesting portion.

1171 z.
*Thomas Miles
Garrett Diary*

Thomas Miles Garrett Diary, 21 August 1849

This morning our lesson was in Philosophy and as I expected to be called upon to recite, I commented very thoroughly. I was called upon as I expected and made a pretty good recitation. I am now free for three or four lessons. The class is so large that each student does not recite but about every fourth time and the Professor is so regular that we can always tell when we are going to be called on to recite.

214.
*DeRosset Family
Papers*

William Lord DeRosset to his mother,
9 November 1851

We have had a "big kick up" since I last wrote. The Students heard that there were no more copies of Pierce's Mathematics in the United States; so they collected all the copies that there were in College and made a bonfire of them. There were some seventy or eighty books. The consequence was that they put our Class (which was studying Calculus) into Astronomy and the sophomore Class (which was studying Analytics) into Philosophy. The supposition is that Pierce's Mathematics (which



"Bicycle Club of 1899." These boys at the turn of the century followed longstanding tradition. Students have always formed their own organizations, from officially sanctioned debating societies to secret clubs and fraternities. [Kenan Family Papers, SHC]

is the hardest published) will be struck out of the College Course. The Students have been trying to do this for the last ten years.

Hector McNeill to his father and mother,
18 August 1852

475 z.
*Hector James
McNeil Letters*

I have got into Colledge [sic] by having to make up two studies & also two that the class commenced this session. I am not very well satisfied[,] being a little behind my class I shall have to study very hard & close all the time[,] and there is the greatest amount of profanity used certainly of any other place & upon the whole it is

a very dissipated place. The longer I stay the better I like it. I have got a room in Colledge [sic] with a man named Robinson from Warren Co., he is in the Senior class & thus far is a very good fellow I have rented a very good bed for \$4.00[.] I had no furnature [sic] to buy but 2 chairs the room being furnished by Mr. Robinson. I am boarding at the Hotel at \$10 per month[.] We have the best table that I ever saw[.] every thing upon it that is good but bacon & collards I cannot take any excercise only by walking & I have no time for that I shall try & take some however.

. . . . There is 75 students in my class & between 250 & 300 in college & 145 or 150 boarding where I do.

. . . . I have to pay \$4.00 for my washing & \$1.25 for brushing shoes.

4183.

*Royster Family
Papers*

Iowa M. Royster to his mother, 9 March 1853

They are going to put up a steam engine here, and I shall have a fine opportunity of studying its construction practically. Our class studied it last session, but at the time we had no models, and didn't therefore learn as much as we might otherwise have done.

4370.

*Neal Family
Papers*

Aaron Neal to his son, Nathan P. Neal,
25 July 1857

Your having to learn French seems to me to be a very unnecessary expense of moneye [sic] & time as I think they could as easily have books in english as easily as to have them in french were it not that they wish to drea[n] [sic] the pockets of the common people but let that be as it may they have the advantage and we cant help ourselves so let us take it patiently[.] I suppose that you can learn it in two years anyhow so let them go it in their own way. I don't understand how it is that you have to recite on [S]undays though I suppose that they have

their rules & reasons for that you will do well to conform to all of their rules & regularly and seem to do it cheerfully whether it be so or not—

William McLaurin to his brother[?], 1 August 1859

1596.
*William H.
McLaurin
Papers*

The Students have prayer meeting every [S]unday morning and it is pretty well attended by them. Sunday evening they have to have a Bible lesson. Some of them have to get 5 Chapters and those that don[']t have the Bible have something else and are examined as strictly as they are on any other the lesson as there is in college. The teacher that I recite to requires it to be gotten nearly by heart.

Ruffin Thomson to his father, 16 January 1860

3315.
*Ruffin Thomson
Papers*

I guess you would be interested to hear our change of studies for this Session. In Greek we have Heroditus [sic], in Latin Virgil's Georgics & Cicero, Mathematics, Geometry, & higher parts of Algebra, & Roman History. There has been some change in our instructors & we have now on Mathematics one of the regular Professors. He renders the study ten times more interesting to us by his manner of teaching.

. . . . I am still rooming by myself & expect to for some time to come I expect the boys will be required to room in College when the new buildings are completed. Would it be healthy for a person to room in a new brick building?

On next Friday night I understand there will be a general "bust" up in the "Old South[.]" It will be given by the Candidates for "Ball Managers" & "Commencement Marshalls[.]" I will attend for *information's sake*.

3129.

UNC

Miscellaneous

Personal Papers

Preston H. Sessoms to his sister,
27 September 1861

I got my room and board at a widow woman's house, she is very good and nice, I like her very well, my room is up the stairs of her house At every morning sunrise the college bell rings for you to get up and dress. The bell is a large one about 1 ½ foot through[,] hung in the top of one of the college buildings, it is rung by a long rope and when it rings you can hear it about a mile off. The first time it rings in the morning is for to get up and dress and about ¼ of an hour afterwards it rings again for to go to prayers. There is prayers up [at] the college every morning and evening and preaching every [S]unday. The professors preach in returns and the students are bound to go to church every [S]unday and every [S]unday evening bound to say a bible lesson, each class. We go to prayers in the morning before breakfast and soon after prayers we have to recite a lesson[.] All the whole college recites the same time, but they recite in different rooms and there are four different classes[.] Before breakfast recite one hour, the bell rings[,] then we go from recitation right on to breakfast, after breakfast the bell rings for to go studding [sic], study 3 hours[,] then the bell rings at eleven o'clock to recite again, the whole college recite until twelve, being one hour at recitation. Then at one is dinner. The college bell rings for dinner, after dinner we study again 3 hours, then the bell rings to recite again at four o'clock, recite 1 hour, soon after recitation is prayers in the evening, after prayers is supper. There are 3 recitations during a day. There are seven large buildings, which are the college, they are builed [sic] out of rock and brick, each one five or six stories high, there are about 50 rooms in each building[.] They are for the students, but I have got a room by myself out in the town at Mrs. Yancey's. There are eight or nine professors, each one hears the recitation which he is

professor of. The Professor of Latin hears nothing except Latin lessons, the Professor of Greek hears nothing except Greek lessons, and so on. There are here now only ninety students, last year there was about four hundred, there is about 300 gone to war. When I was coming on the boat up to school, I saw some Yankees who were taken priseners [sic], they had handcuffs on them to keep them from getting away. I saw six of the Yankees and one German. There are four dif[f]erent churches in Chapel Hill. A Baptist church, a Methodist, an Episcopalian and a Presbyterian church. There are meetings in every one on Sunday and once or twice during the week. In every [S]unday morning, I can[']t hear nothing but bells ringing all over town for church. Chapel Hill is very hilly, hills about here as thick as they can be, 2 or 3 hundred yards high, and it is very rocky about here. There are nothing but rock fences in town, fences about 3 feet thick made of rock, they last forever. It is very healthy about here. I have been well since I have been here, and like the place very well. This session ends at the last of November, then there is vacation[,] six weeks[.] I shall come home about the first of december and stay until about 2 weeks after christmas.

Willie Maverick to his mother, 19 November 1866

498 z.

*W. H. Maverick
Papers*

I will tell you exactly what I do here[.] My Latin & Greek I study very little. You ask me why? Well of Greek you know I had never learned my alphabet before coming here, whereas boys coming here & entering the Freshman class are required to have studied enough Latin & Greek to have occupied at least two years of hard studying before coming. Latin I had studied in all about eight months before coming here. French I study tolerably well[,] Mathematics I study very well. I am aware that boys have been in worse "fixes" here than I am & before leaving have taken first. You will ask what in the world I can be doing all the time? I answer that I am learning how to study[.] Instead of my text-books (which were always obnoxious to me) I am studying History & I have now trained myself so well that one has never seen me playing (wasting my time away) these last two

months[.] Next session I mean to turn my studying history into studying my text books. This session I have read between five & six thousand pages of history besides several useful book[s] not history[.] I do not read novels[.] I am determined & promise you & myself that next session I will take a stand.

3914.
John F. Speight
Papers

Richard Harrison Speight to his mother,
25 September 1867

There is nothing new to be seen or heard about the Hill now. The students seem to be interesting in nothing except base ball, & their lessons. Our reports will be made out in a day or two. I guess my stand on Math will be very low this session[.] I have been trying to improve my stand on the languages, a little but I don[*]t know whether I have succeeded or not.

3129.
UNC
Miscellaneous
Personal Papers

Neil A. Sinclair to his mother,
9 September 1882

I am better pleased with C.H. & the University than I thought I would be. It is a beautiful little town & the college, I believe, has few superiors. The Profs. are all fine men. Not a common man among them, except Prof Hooper, who is a rather old fashioned fellow, but who is certainly well posted in his department Prof Mangum has charge of the English department & is the best elocutionist I ever saw. I could sit & listen to him talk all day. He uses the most beautiful language of any man I ever heard

We get up here at 6 o'clock. Go to breakfast at 7 to the Chapel at 7 ½ & to first recitations at 8—to dinner at 1, & to supper at 6. First yr. Math is from 9 to 10. 1st yr. Latin 10-11. English 12-1. Greek 3-4. Latin every day but Wednesdays.

Greek every day but Mondays. English Monday & Wednesday & Math every day.

John C. Martin to his father, 23 January 1887

Now a little news about college. Some of the university Dudes have a dancing school in the Gymnasium Hall which meets every night in the week except Sunday night from 7 to 12 o'clock[.] It seems to me like it would be more profitable for them to study their lessons while here and learn to dance afterwards. The Negro Brass Band are giving music on the Streets every night[.] At present a good number [of] freshmen have entered college since Christmas. My studies now is [sic] first G[e]ometry, History of England, in Greek, Homer & Jones prose composition[;] in Latin[,] Cicero, Bennett[']s Exercise Book, and Gildersleeves exercise Book, Latin Grammar[;] in English, Bains Composition Grammar, Swinton[']s Literature, Irving[']s Sketch Book. I am now taking a course in Book Keeping and Elocution.

3129.

UNC

*Miscellaneous
Personal Papers*

John Schnorrenberg to his mother,
5 January 1949

My schedule is a pretty good one which arranges my free time in great lumps which is better than having it in bits and pieces the whole day through. I am taking English II, rhetoric and composition; Vergil, Latin IV; and Chem II which is a continuation of the previous quarter's work. I am still working for the *Carolina Quarterly* and am much involved in the Senate activities. I am chaplain of the Senate, chairman of the committee on public relations (It puts out copies of the Senate Bulletin), member of the Committee on Finance,

4002.

*Schnorrenberg
Family Papers*

and member of the Greeting committee which is, however, only a temporary committee. I enjoy the Di more than any of my other activities and meet more people there.

4391.
John Bailey
Dunne Papers

John Dunne to the "folks,"
8 February 1962

My English course is the finest course I've ever had . . . It really zings—the prof is amazing, the lectures loaded, stimulating, fun, etc. . . And not stuff that is just the repetition a text. My Poly Sci course is good—very bright class & the Prof. is much published. My French course is also tremendous—best man in dept. We read a Parisien [sic] weekly magazine and then in class, sit in a circle and discuss the articles in French, getting very quickly off on great thought tangents—much fun. Mod Civ. is the same and Chem is a new Prof.—less jokes, more business—should be a better course.

Rowdyism and Dissipation

In 1847, James Johnston Pettigrew admitted to his father that "a sojourn of two years and a half in a place like this is enough to ruin a saint much more a mortal " Unruly students indulged in cursing, drunkenness, pranks, and violence. But there was sometimes method in the madness. From the students' perspective, some "misconduct" was a legitimate method for asserting their independence from a domineering faculty.

John and Ebenezer Pettigrew to their father,
3 October 1795

There are now 60 students, & they are all very well, except one who had a fit or two of the ague and fever. I shall now inform you of an affair that happened last week, which I am very sorry for, that is that one of the students was banished; it was for going to a cotten [sic] picking after eight at knight [sic]; he, with some others, had left the Colledge [sic] before, after eight, & received private admonition by the Faculty: after that two of them [sic] went to this cotten [sic] picking. Those two were F[r]ancis Burton & Joseph Green. Mr. Kerr intended to admonish them before the whole University; but Mr. Green thinking that he would get off clear, he went away and after he was gone, was banished by the faculty.

592.
*Pettigrew Family
Papers*

John Pettigrew to his father, 12 April 1796

Cursing & swearing is carried on here to the greatest perfection: even from the smallest to the largest: they vent out the oath's with greatest ease imaginable [sic]. They have lately got a supply of bo[o]ks, & those are chiefly Payn[e]'s Age of

592.
*Pettigrew Family
Papers*

reason, they prefer it to all the books that were ever wrote since the creation of the World, they also say that he was sent into the World to set menkind to liberty; but I would not have you think that they are all of this opinion but there are are [sic] a great majority of this cast.

592.

*Pettigrew Family
Papers*

John Pettigrew to his father, 27 June 1797

You desired me to give you a full & just statement of the management of affairs, & also with regard to the conduct of the Students in general In compliance with your request I shall give you as true an account a[s] possible. The Students in general have nothing very criminal in their conduct except a vile, & detestable practice of cursing, & swearing, which has become very fashionable here, there can be hardly a sentence spoken without some of these highflown word which sailors commonly use to pirvert [sic] each other. As to study, I believe those who are in the senior classes, & far enough advanced in years to study their own interest ap[p]ly themselves perty [sic] closely, but on the contrary there are here a great many small boys the half of whom do little or nothing with regard to improvement; those are the ones that make the greatest proficiency in the art of swearing.

592.

*Pettigrew Family
Papers*

John London to Ebenezer Pettigrew,
29 September 1799

My indisposition caused me to come to the university very late and I was very much surprised in not finding you here as I expected. But I hope we will have the pleasure of seeing one another at School once more. The place is not in the most thriving condition but I hope it will turn out better than I thinke [sic]. Most of the boys that are here this year will not return next I am afraid, which

will tend to hurt it. Our President has got a horse w[h]ip[p]ing from a boy which he and the Teachers had expelled unjustly and we have been in great confusion in taking his part for he was liked by all the boys, but everything is put to rights again[,] only our president relished the w[h]ip[p]ing so badly as to return, William Baker, Robert Alston, Samuel McCulloch are expelled for taking an active part in the business.

Leander Hughes to his father, 2 October 1824

1691 z.
*Leander Hughes
Papers*

I have just heard the sentence of expulsion pronounced against two of the students viz. Augustus Alston and Leonidas King; for having on last [T]hursday night, committed violence upon [sic] the persons, of some of the faculty viz. Mr. Betner, Mr. Sanders,—and it is said that Mr Mitchel, the now president received several blows, both from Alston and King, though he has [no?] appearance of it now. These acts of violence were committed in a time of intoxication. I did not see any of the engagements that took place though one was ensued in thirty steps of my room between, Alston & Mr. Sanders after which, Alston ran into my room and requested that I should give him a knife (which I refused as both Mr. Mitchel & Sanders had both been upon him. Betner is confined to his room, though not from the blows he received but from spraining his ankle [sic] by some means in the contest. A. & King were expelled at a meeting of the trustees to day, and the sentence pronounced by judge Ruffin. There have been three others dismissed this session.

Joshua Perry to his father, 18 May 1839

3129.
*UNC
Miscellaneous
Papers*

The astonishment with which I met, in the perusal of you[r] letter, induces me to write to you

immediately. I find in your letter, that I am accused of neglecting my studies, and also of disorder, both of which charges, I deny, and can prove at any time to be false, by those to whom I recite and also by my whole class. I have consulted Governor Swain concerning the affair, and he says, that he knows nothing against me. As to being disorderly, I am very certain, how that originated, some three or four weeks ago Swain was absent from the hill, and one evening at pray's [sic], something took place, which created a great laughter, and Old Mitchell, (to be smart) got up, and spoke very harshly, and in return, nearly every fellow in college commenced stamping; and those whom he did not see, he reported on suspicion. The honors were distributed among the senior class this morning, and as usual with great partiality. Jones & Matsby, who were entitled to the first honor, have both met with injustice, Jones, I suppose, has not missed more than three words this session, and Matsby has done equally as well, though Jones being a member of the Dialectic society, gets first, and Matsby, because he is a member of the Philanthropic society gets only second. Various acts of partiality have thus been confer[r]ed on the Dialectic Society [sic]. And daily observation proves to me, that the Faculty are a set of rascals. I hope when you recieve [sic] this, that you will have no further doubts as to the dissolute course which, some of the Faculty would have you believe, I have been pursueing [sic].

531 z.
*William Sidney
Mullins Diary*

William Sidney Mullins Diary,
30 October 1840

This morning our Recitation on Calculus was made without blackboards. Several members of the Freshman Class made a general sweep last night and have left the Recitation Rooms boardless. They took four from the Fresh Rec Room; one from the Soph. R. R.; and two from ours, with one from the Senior Rec. Room making in all eight. This is a sweep of Sixty Dollars on the Deposites [sic], as they will all be immediately replaced. Prof. Phillips made us a Speech on the occasion and was remarkably severe. He denounced the act as a robbery and said there was no palliation for the crime. If the doors had been open, and under the

excitement of feelings they had rushed in and destroyed them, there might have been some excuse, but the deliberately opening the doors left them not a vestige of apology. He called on the class to use their influence for the discontinuance of such acts and hoped for the honour of the Institution that none of them were engaged in it. They went about it very deliberately in fact, is squib [cq] was made and the bellfry lock blown off. This gave them the keys of all the Recitation Rooms in College except the Labrotory [sic] and the small board in that is the only one not destroyed. The opinion of College has been expressed very freely today against these proceedings and I am heartily glad of it. For who have they injured. *No one but their Fellow Students.* The Faculty care not; they have but to order new boards. The Deposites [sic] alone suffer and in draining them there is neither wit, talent, or fun. Unfortunately a new state of things has lately taken place in college. When the Executive Committee met here, the Faculty told them that we were much the most orderly, well-behaved, gentlemanly set of Students; and the remark was perfectly just at that time. But a change has been progressing and it may be not improper to notice it fully.

William Sidney Mullins Diary,
19 January 1841

531 z.
*William Sidney
Mullins Diary*

An amusing circumstance occurred today in our room. It is usual for Gov. Swain to visit all the Rooms in College at the commencement of each Session and enquire of the occupants if they have any guns, pistols, or other deadly weapons, and on this semiannual tour of enquiry he came this morning to our room and asked us the usual question. To it my roommate (one of the stoutest fellows in College) replied, at the same time shaking very significantly his brawny fist, "None but this, Sir." The Governor was very much amused at the reply and laughed heartily. N. B. I had a pistol in the draw[er] and therefore said nothing, but let Tom talk.

2561 z.
*James Laurence
Dusenbery Diary*

2561 z. James Laurence Dusenbery Diary,
5 September 1841

Returning from breakfast Saturday morning, my attention was attracted by seeing an unusual number of Students in the street before Miss Nancy's tavern & evidently in great commotion. Ere it was possible for me to reach the place[,] a pistol went off & I soon became aware that a fight was in progress. The parties were Bunch & the younger Rice, both members of the Phi Society. The insult had been given by B. during the session of their society the night previous, & R. met him for the first time thereafter in the street & at the place above-stated. Bunch was almost universally despised & the few friends that he did possess, deserted him, to a man, in his time of need. Jno. Jack, his cousin, alone stood by him & cheered him, in his hopeless conflict with a man, much his superior in size. But his voice was scarcely heard amid the shouts of "Beat him Rice" Kill the d—ned rascal &c. Bunch sustained the unequal fight for some minutes when he received a blow which made him recoil several feet & fall. As he did so, his eye rested on a pistol he had dropped at the first of the fight, which he seized & fired, not at the man he was fighting, but through mistake, at his brother. In the short pause that followed this deed, I reached the spot. Bunch's friends wished to take him away, but the other party would not permit them. They even denied him a stick, while Rice was armed with a tremendous one, & his friends were so few that they dared not give him one. They fought thus unequally for several minutes & Bunch was well nigh beaten to a mummy, when the Gov. & other members of the Faculty came up & dispersed the crowd & seperated the combatants.

Bunch was a rascal & deserved his beating but it was really a shame to compel him to fight at so great a disadvantage. They have both been dismissed.

W. F. Lewis to his sister, 19 September 1841

3914.

*John F. Speight
Papers*

I believe there is not much news stirring about the Hill at this time. There was a fray here between two students, a few weeks ago. A student, a brother of one of those engaged, was shot. The ball struck him on the hip; in such a direction however, as to glance without doing him any serious hurt. It was a very fortunate escape. It would doubtless have proved a more serious affair, had not some seven or eight students in anticipation of it, gone down to prevent the friends of either party from interfering. They were both dismissed from college of course.

Such serious difficulties among the students seldom occur here, less frequently here I believe, than at most colleges.

James Laurence Dusenbery Diary,
26 September 1841

2561 z.

*James Laurence
Dusenbery Diary*

Yesterday was Slade's birth day—he went to Hillsboro & returned in the evening, pretty tight, bringing with him 3 bottles of elegant Nash brandy. Punk & Slade got most *gloriously tight* that night. Myself, with a few others were moderately so. We paid Peter & J. Graham a visit at their room in the village & finding there a good fire, we levied large contributions upon Mike's patch of roasting corn[,] the tempting prominity [sic] of which, was too powerful to be resisted. We soon found that roasting them by Peter's fire was too slow a process[.] So we all took our corn & repaired to No. 23 of the west—the abode of Dusenberry & McBee, where there was a kettle which those gentlemen keep for just such purposes, as to boil "*corn*" *et cetera*. We always have plenty of salt on hand for any emergency & the boiled corn was great. We also had chickens & an opossum supper.

The old Nash again began to circulate pretty freely & every thing went on nicely. McBee's main desire, was to show the *U. States* that he could walk the line made by a joint in the flooring, or any chalk line in the *U. States*. Matters went on thus until midnight when Slade began to vomit & we put him to bed. McBee was still high in the wind & began to halloo at some other drunken fellows in the Campus, some of them cursed him. Mac, himself is pretty good at that & he let himself out. He was most outrageous mad & he cursed a full hour. Bell was the man who cursed him. Pink saw him next day, but he denied all recollection of it, saying that he was tight & that it was not his intention to insult him.

2561 z.

*James Laurence
Dusenbery Diary*

James Laurence Dusenbery Diary,
27 February 1842

Tuesday was the 22nd—the birthday of Washington. The day was celebrated by the delivery of a speech by Morrissey. The procession formed in front of the S.[outh] B.[uilding] & marched round by Caldwell's Monument, to the Chapel. Mears was Marshall of the day. The amount of liquor drunk by the students was tremendous. More than 2/3ds of college were intoxicated. Pink & I went over to the East & were gloriously tight before breakfast. We kept the *thing hot* throughout the day. Nutall had an excellent dinner. Parson Green dined with us for the purpose of preserving order & preventing us from drinking too much wine. A member of the Faculty dined at each of the boarding houses for the same purpose. In the evening Mike was passing through the "Campus" & some drunken fellow cursed him from Ms. Nancy's window. He came up & found the room full of drunken students, while the sugar was scattered about & the floor was drenched with the brandy which had been spilled. He sat down & gave them a long talk & went away, after giving them to understand that he would reprove none of them. On Thursday, however, Dick, McNairy[,]

Williamson, were called before the Faculty, at Mike's instigation, & dismissed for three weeks On Friday[,] Yance & Gooly set out on foot, for Moring's—8 miles from the Hill on the Raleigh road, with the intention of spending their three weeks there. About a dozen of us accompanied them as far on their way as "Piny Prospect." When they reached Moring's, the looks of the place were not agreeable & an opportunity offering itself, they returned to the Hill on the same day. At night Yance rode out to Johnson's[,] 4 miles on the Hillsboro road & procured a very convenient place for a student to rusticate. They moved out on yesterday. I went out with their baggage & helped them to fix up their room. I was so well pleased with the place that I almost wished that I were also dismissed. Their room is upon the stage road, but they eat at Johnson's, whose house is 3/4ths of a mile distant. They have a gun with them & plenty of books. Old Charley has 3 very courtly daughters & in hunting, fishing[,] reading & keeping company with the ladies, no doubt their 3 weeks will pass away very pleasantly. Dick has gone home. Our 3rd passage looks gloomy & desolate since they are all gone.

William Bagley to his father, 27 April 1844

863 z.

*William Bagley
Letter Books*

This place is filled up mostly by those of the lower classes—in fact [sic] there are very few decent families in the place & I understand the faculty don[']t encourage decent persons to come here to reside at all, thus the poor student is destined to grope his way [sic] along through the drudgeries of a session without the encouragement of the smiles of the ladies . . . and I think the faculty are disposed to be tyrannical—they wish to impose duties on the students that he can[']t, without considerable exertion, accomplish, and give him scarcely no respite whatever. On account of these things there is an almost continual warfare kept up between: the faculty & students, now for instance, the other night, Deems went to some fellow's room & they locked them both up in there & threw stones in at the window, broke the lights, & kept him there until one of the Tutors, aroused

by the disturbance, went & turned him out. He (Deems) is in the habit of going around to the rooms while the classes are at recitation & by this means has rendered himself very unpopular & he is accused of searching their drawers &c. that he may find translations or anything else that they may have contrary to the rules of College which I think is decidedly wrong. The rowdiness and low dissipation of the students is still another objection whose highest ambition seems to be, to be expert in shuffling cards, turning off a dose of liquor, or engaging in any low revelry—most of them also are small,—mere boys who ought not to have come here until they were two or three years older. My religion also would stand a severe test as there is very little opportunity for cultivating pious emotions & numberless avenues to sin & degradation through which I could be led on from one degree to another until I should be finally plunged into the whirlpool of shame & disgrace. Taking all these things into consideration I would rather not graduate *here*, but if you desire it, I will forego any pleasure or make any sacrifice to gratify your wishes.

592.
*Pettigrew Family
Papers*

James Johnston Pettigrew to his father,
13 January 1844

A great many persons have joined College this session, which I believe is unusual, the number of students, generally, being less the spring session than the fall one. Our class consists of forty-five, being eight or ten more than last session and it is now the largest class in College and most of our old visitation rooms cannot hold us

This place is a great deal more dissipated in the vacation than in the session and the nights I came they were all of them intoxicated in some degree, which, together with cardplaying constituted the principal amusement.

James Johnston Pettigrew to his father,
19 April 1844

592.
*Pettigrew Family
Papers*

It is somewhat amusing to see how persons evade the law about selling liquor to the students within two miles of the hill or to any other persons. Some time ago, a man here named Thompson gave a dinner and charged a half a dollar for the eating and gave away the liquor. And within the last week a groggery has been established just a little over two miles from the hill.

William Bagley to Edward C. Yellowly,
26 October 1844

863 z.
*William Bagley
Letter Books*

The number of students is about 145 & there seems to be a spirit of leaving among almost all of them. No less than eleven have been sent off this session, the first eight of which I expect you have heard of, they were Taylor of the senior, T. Pool of the junior, Clanton, Mebane, Moseley & Sharp of the Soph and Caldwell & Haughton of the Fresh, and day before yesterday Banbury, Benjamin Justice were suspended for not answering to their names when polled by Fetter. "Young Johnny" told the Soph class to carry in their slates while studying Algebra & every one except five or six refused to do it until Bunk gave the second division a lecture. The faculty not wishing to send off the whole class will now suspend or dismiss them for very trivial offences do I understand.

William Bagley to his father,
27 February 1845

863 z.
*William Bagley
Letter Books*

Last Saturday, the 22nd being Washington's birthday, it is customary for the students to partake

pretty freely of the intoxicating cup & about night I observed that they were getting unusually rowdy & boisterous. I however retired about ten & had been abed I suppose about an hour when I was aroused by my room-mate inviting Dr. Mitchell in & the ringing of the bell, having procured a match he left to go into other rooms of the building, I then got up & witnessed the manoeuvres [sic] of the revellers, I soon saw Gov. Swain, who had come up, accost a student, who raised his stick in defence & Dr. Mitchell & Mr. Philips, the tutor of Mathematics, both being near ran up & seized him, he called lustily for help & one student ran to his assistance & I expected to see a real encounter but the Faculty did not strike him, their only object being to discover who it was, the Governor, however lost both the buckles off his cloak in the engagement, the fellow whom he rushed upon having collared him. One of the young men was dismissed—the other suspended. Some of the trustees also have been sitting on the cases of two young men to-day [sic] who will be dismissed or expelled & then probably delivered over to the civil authorities. Seven, I believe, will be sent off in all.

592.
*Pettigrew Family
Papers*

James Johnston Pettigrew to his father,
14 April 1845

There was a very tragical occurrence at Hillsboro last week. Two or three students went up from this place, all of them of the rowdy kind, and one fell in with some loafers then, and got drunk. They then went to a tavern and on the tavern-keeper's coming down to stop the noise, one of the loafers advanced towards him; the tavern-keeper picked up a chair and the student, that was with them, drew a pistol and shot in the arm. He is out of all danger now; the student fled immediately from the state; he is a nephew of Chief Justice Ruffin. The attack was totally unprovoked, and it would be a good thing if the officers would catch him, as it would teach him a lesson not to be forgotten shortly. He was a very quarrelsome fellow, and it is said, that his father used to tell him to shoot any person, if he had any difficulty with him and this is the consequence.

William B. Dortch to James Johnston Pettigrew,
11 December 1846

592.
*Pettigrew Family
Papers*

There are twelve students on the Hill, the Law students excepted. Four in South. 4 in East & 3 in west and Gin Clinch in the village. We have rather a dull time of it. I do at least. The west fellows are tight (I may say beastly drunk half thier [sic] time). My Statesman, "Old Eucher" the other night while it was raining was lying down at the well in the mud & water so drunk that he could not get up, he lay there some time squalling out to some one to help him out before any person would do it. Bryan Wholfield at last went to him, his companions were so tight that they could hardly navigate Old Jugs & McEachin.

James Johnston Pettigrew to his father,
21 February 1847

592.
*Pettigrew Family
Papers*

From the tener [sic] of your letter, it seems to me that I have been the unintentional cause of offence [sic] to you. Nothing could give me more sorrow; and I assure you, that [it] is a source of great mortification to apply myself closely to my studies, to be strict in morals and to attempt a faithful discharge of my duties, and then to fail to give satisfaction, when nothing would afford me more pleasure than to do so and when there are many others who are idle, prodigal, dissipated and yet seem to give perfect satisfaction. Of course, it is not my wish to appear, in the slightest degree whatever, censorial, but merely to show, as far as words can, that I know, what is right, if I know not how to perform it. I rest, however, in the full confidence, that after June, I may be able to minister to the cares of your declining age, in such a manner, as such a father as you have a right to expect from all your children. I am fully

conscious, of having done many, countless improper actions. but let this be a partial extenuation, that a sojourn of two years and a half in a place like this, is enough to ruin a saint much more a mortal.

1171 z.
*Thomas Miles
Garrett Diary*

Thomas Miles Garrett Diary, 27 July 1849

I feel inclined to write longer but a parcel of noisy students have got their instruments and one giving up what is called a Calathumpian serenade [sic], some whooping, some playing on instruments, others ringing the bell, and a general confusion throughout.



References to musical instruments abound in student letters. This informal gathering of student musicians may have taken place in Cobb Dormitory about 1917. [North Carolina Collection]

George N. Thompson Diary, 26 January 1851

I arose this morning and went to prayers. When I came out I was directed to look at the belfry, to which all eyes were turned. I could not see until I had gone nearer than the chapel door, what excited the gaze—admiration with some, and jolity with all. When I had gone near enough to see plainly and to distinguish the pictures I was equally pleased for the first thing [I] saw was a large *bull* painted on the side of the belfry. To represent Mr. James Phillips¹ over the bull[']s head[,] were drawn a bowl (of *hot*) punch! glass & Jug[,] representing Old Mike, who, it was said, when he caught whiskey in a student's room always took it, to the Laboratory and made punch to drink himself. As you went round to the left on the belfry was a pair of the most knock kneed legs any one ever saw. These were the legs of Bunk²—and on a little farther was a man, who strutted largely, apearantly [sic] of small capital—but who wished to be reputed more than he really was painted—to represent Old Wheat³—in the Campus. On farther was a skull with bones under it with the motto "kill & eat." This is said to represent the life and character of the Bull, during the ten years which he never speaks of. Under the skull & Bones there is an anchor drawn, with letters at each corner. Next on the row was a *Jack Ass*, made very large—above it being "x & y"—this is to denote old Fatty⁴—and next you come to is, "Pay your \$1.00 for vaccination" but on the door was written, "Dr. Dave Barum⁵ will vaccinate for half price." This was to cut Old Mike, who has been advising every boy to be vaccinated, saying the "price was only one dollar." After looking over all these *curiosities* & talking about who could have been so rude as to put them there, I returned to my room and went to breakfast.

2367 z.
George N.
Thompson Diary

¹James Phillips, professor of philosophy, known to the students as "Old Bull."

²Gov. Swain, president of the university, known to the students as "Old Bunk."

³Wheat was professor of English.

⁴Charles Phillips, professor of mathematics, known to the students as "Old Fatty."

⁵David Barham, janitor of South Building

William Lord DeRosset to his father,
3 March 1851

I suppose from the way you wrote that you suspected something about my having some connexion [sic] with that riot; but I can assure you my dear Father, that I had *nothing* to do with it. 'Tis true, I was present for a minute or so while it was going on; but I went out once where they were in order to get to my room from the room that they were rocking [throwing rocks], & in which I was where they began. I did not care about risking my life in there. So I told them from the window to stop until I jumped out, they did so & I went straight to my room for I was undressed. After that one of the crowd (I don't remember who) came into my room and got my candle, & took it out, & after a little while I went out to get it, & by that time they had stopped, & I waited there to hear them talk to some of the Students who came out to try & stop them, & when they all went away (which was about fifteen minutes after); I went to my room, & went to bed. I suppose you thought I meant by saying "that nothing could be proved against me" that I did something but no witnesses could be got who could testify against me. But I did not mean it in that way.

I don't think you need be apprehensive about my standing this session; for I think I stand better than I have previously Eleven men were sent off last week. Ten dismissed for engaging in a "Calathumpian Serenade," & Dav. Cowan I am sorry to tell you suspended three weeks for being found intoxicated. Out of the ten who were dismissed, the Faculty will not hear the petition of but one this Session, eight will be allowed to return next Session & one will not be taken back at all.

John F. Speight to his mother, 10 November 1859

3914.
*John F. Speight
Papers*

The boys, a good many of them at least, had a military parade last night, in the moons[h]ine, and marched up the street but met some of the faculty, and fired, and run; they said it was meant for a burlesque on the Harpersferry [sic] run.

Willie Alderman to his sister, 12 March 1878

2994 z.
*Alderman Family
Papers*

Since spring has begun all the boys in this building seem to get into fighting notion[.] We have a fight nearly every day[.] It is nothing unusual to see a boy with a black eye, big nose, or crippled up some way, though I haven[']t had the pleasure of performing or being performed on yet.

George Arrington to his brother,
10 February 1884

3240.
*Archibald
Hunter
Arrington
Papers*

Some of the boys got an old cow last night, carried her up four flights of stairs and put her in the Belfry. Then they rang the bell almost all night. If the faculty find out who did it, they will certainly send them home as they had to break down the Belfry door and then it was Sunday also. This is the first time the boys have misbehaved any worth speaking of this session. This does not include taking faculty [fire]wood as nearly all of us do that when we get a chance.

John Worth McAlister, "Worth," to his mother,
1 May 1893

4321 z.
*John Worth
McAlister
Papers*

Somehow I don't get that same joy out of my Christian life that I used to, I am not as good, and

as consecrated as I used to be, even as I was when I left home last Summer, and I don't always follow the dictates of my conscience, and worst of all, God seems far away when I pray to him, not near like He used to. I know this is my fault, and not God's and it makes me ashamed to say that God will not hear me, when he has done so much—everything—for me in the past, I seem to limit the power of God The devil is always on the watch out, and a boy is never safe until he has finished college. Now, don't get scared and let visions of barrooms and champagne suppers rise up before you, for I give you my word & honor that I haven't been—exactly drunk—no[,] my dear little mother. I haven't touched a drop of anything, not even the cider sold down street, and I haven't smoked any cigarettes or chewed any tobacco or done any of those *heinous* things—then what's the matter with me? The only thing I know is this, that I have decided to dance at commencement, and have made my engagements which I can't get out of if I would, and wouldn't if I could. Mamma, I don't know whether I ought to do this or not—it[']s an experiment—and here, Mama, I confess it to *you*. I believe I have blunted my conscience, and reasoned myself into the belief that it is all right and very little harm, if any.

Send Money

Perhaps the most consistent theme of student letters home over the course of two hundred years.

Moses John DeRosset to his father,
12 October 1815

You will no doubt be surprised to hear how near I was starting home the other day. I was offended by one of the teachers and declared I would not stay, but a little of Mr. Caldwell[']s excellent advice convinced me, almost as soon as yours would have done that I was wrong and that you would have been displeased with me if I had acted in that manner

I am pretty well acquainted with Moral Philosophy and Logick [sic] and will have made considerable progress, by the vacation in Natural Philosophy.

I wish very much to be with you and enjoy the benefits of your advice and example in medical pursuits. I want some cash, if you can spare me a little now, it will be quite acceptable.

William Bagley to his father, 1 July 1843

I shall need some money in order to pay my tuition, boardbill &c., as I have had to pay well for every thing I have used since I have been here. My board bill will be from 50 to 60 dollars at the end of the session, & my tuition connected with room rent & servant hire, I understand, will be \$31.50 which I have to pay in advance

My board at \$10 a month will be about \$60, tuition \$31.50, bed \$25 furniture \$5 washing \$5 &

214.
*DeRosset Family
Papers*

863 z.
*William Bagley
Letter Books*

there are other little expenses necessarily attending an Institution of this kind, tho' next session it will be cheaper as I shall not have to buy my bed or furniture & at the end of three years (if I should be so fortunate as to remain) I can sell them for nearly the same, I dislike, Pa, to make this request very much, but I know full well that I am writing to a kind parent, who is unwilling that I should lack for any thing

863 z.
William Bagley
Letter Books

William Bagley to his father,
13 September 1843

I shall need more money at the close of the session & will make out a while showing how much is necessary. I owe Mr. Owen \$22.15 for money he paid for me on the trip, I shall owe Mrs. Scott (the lady with whom I board) about \$55. My washwoman \$5.00 & \$2 or 3 for other little expenses such as wood, blacking shoes &c, making in all about \$85

592.
Pettigrew Family
Papers

James Johnston Pettigrew to his father,
8 February 1846

Although it is early in the session, I presume it will not be out of place to make a statement of the clothes I shall want, more especially since my wardrobe is nearly exhausted. The present underclothes are the ones I had when I left Hillsboro [sic], with the exception of four bosoms and collars, which I bought two years ago. Most of these, that is to say, shirts, drawers, stockings, collars, handkerchiefs, & cravats, are either worn out or have become too small. The same is the case with my outer clothes, with the exception the two pairs of pantaloons, which were purchased at Raleigh last summer, and are bothe [sic] too small by this time. In the article of shirts, I am almost certainly deficient. My present cap has lasted two

winters, and Sister Mary can inform you with regard to its shabby appearance during the vacation. This I mention, merely to show, that I am not disposed to be extravagant in my dress. The following is a list which I have made out of my probable wants I have only one coat for this winter, so that it will be better to get another for Commencement.

One Coat.
One pair of Pantaloon.
Two vests. (I am entirely out of vests, also.)
One hat.
Shirts.
Drawers.
Stockings.
Two or three handkerchiefs.
One or two cravats.
Shoes.

There is in addition to these another want, which may appear trifling, but which in my situation is absolutely necessary as a Marshal for Commencement, namely, a cane. Judging the price of these articles from my clothes last summer and the summers before, the amount will probably be \$70 or \$80, a very large sum, but I do not see how it is to be avoided, without an appearance which I wouldn't wish to show.

Francis Marion Johnson to his mother,
17 February 1856

745 z.
*Nathan Wilson
Walker Papers*

I shall want a few clothes[.] You see I am getting up toward the higher classes[,] and of course must dress according[,] not fine but a little better than I have been as yet[.]

Richard Harrison Speight to his mother,
25 September 1867

3914.
*John F. Speight
Papers*

I am sorry to have to write you for more money, but can[']t possibly do without. I paid out all I brought up as soon as I got here in order that I

might not spend it for trifles, & I haven[']t spent any foolishly. I shall need seventy dollars. Please send it soon.

1588.
Thomas Perrin
Harrison Papers

Lewis (Luke) Wardlaw Harrison to his father,
4 October 1922

Dad, on last Monday night I joined to [sic] Dekes. The K.A.s here have a fine bunch of fellows, but you see, Dad, I've only known them for four months or so, and the boys who joined the Dekes with me and those already in, I've known almost all my life.

I would have liked nothing better than to be your brother as well as your son, but I thought no fraternity could make us nearer together than we are, and no fraternity could make us further apart. The K.A.s were nice to me both before and now and they are my friends too.

Now, Dad, I want to make a sort of a contract with you, just as though you were a business man who I had never seen. Here it is. The initiation fee of D.K.E is fifty dollars

. . . . If you will *lend* me this fifty dollars now, I give you my word to pay it back at the first possible moment [sic]. It will probably be bit by bit, on the installment plan. I intend to work all next summer, so I can in all probability pay in part or all then. And this loan, if you agree, will be paid back with the regular interest.

Dad, this isn't talk. It will be as I say and will not be put off.

This can't be called a business transaction exactly, for of cou[r]se without your goodness to me I couldn't stay in college a minute, nor ever think of asking such a thing as this, for you have no security, but this is to be a *loan* and nothing else, and I realize that these are the only circumstances under which you could do it.

I'm awfully sorry to have to ask it, but to save

my life this the only and best way, I can see.

All my work is going finely. You may be sure I won't let [the] fraternity disturb my studying or exercise.

Lewis (Luke) Wardlaw Harrison to his father,
ca. 1922

1588.

*Thomas Perrin
Harrison Papers*

I have been intending to write for a long while, but there just never seemed time. My work recently has been most exacting, especially English which has required constant reading of long books. Just to-night I finished "Nostromo" by Conrad, a very long novel and one interesting only in spots.

The outlook for my work is, on the whole, bright, but with the certainty of much work between now and Exam time (Mar. 17)

As it is nearing the end of the month, I might as well give you an idea of my expenses. Board as usual will be about \$30.00, Room \$10.00, dues \$3.00. My laundry depos[i]t is exhausted and will require about \$5.00 to carry through. It might be a good plan, if convenient to you, to make out a separate cheque for that amount & payable to the Laundry Department. Here last month, just before my last visit home, I was honored by being initiated into one of the junior, social orders. It's a junior & senior organization and is considered a fairly high complement to be asked to join. The only draw-back has been that the initiation fee is composed of the large amount of \$25.00 dollars. This I lear[n]ed for a certaint[y] after I had become a member. Really, on account of the expense, I shouldn't have joined it. If possible, however, I should like to pay it and, as it has waited almost a month now, as soon as possible.

1588.
*Thomas Perrin
Harrison Papers*

Lewis (Luke) Wardlaw Harrison to his father,
ca. 1922

Dad, I hate like everything to always be in need of money, yet how not to be while in Chapel Hill with all the little unexpected expenses coming up all the time, I don't know. I haven't thanked you yet for the five dollars you sent last week, and I do so now very much.

1588.
*Thomas Perrin
Harrison Papers*

Lewis Wardlaw Harrison to his father,
15 December 1923

I am very ashamed to say it, but the fact is that for some time up here I have been spending more money than I had. It's just that all during my stay up here, I have been associated with boys who were wealthy, and I have been weak enough to give in and spend money when I didn't have it. It isn't the fraternity's fault or anyone's but myself.

At present I owe the following debts

\$22.00-	to Mrs Klutz for room rent left over from last year.
\$ 3.00-	to Drug Store for December.
\$10.00-	to Pritchard-Patterson for a hat and socks.
\$20.00-	to the fraternity for due left over last year & part of this months rent.
\$ 8.50-	to Norman Cordon for remainder of the \$20 paid
_____	to him for the overcoat.
\$63.50-	Total obligations.

Now the most urgent of these is the \$22.00 to Mrs. Klutz. This has gone on for a long time and she needs the money.

Dad, I've never felt so badly about anything in my whole life. You have been more than liberal with me and I should have told you about it, but I always thought that something would turn up and I

would be able to pay. I figured on summer jobs and when the time came I couldn't save any.

It isn't that I've taken this money and been really bad with it. I've never played cards for money, never been with a bad woman in my life. It just went on extra clothes, on drug store mess and on the moving picture here.

As I've said before there's no need or rather help in being sorry now. At last I've learned my lesson and it most certainly will never happen again.

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Command at All Hours**

Pickwick Theater interior from an advertisement in the 1913 *Yackety Yack*.
[North Carolina Collection]

3228.

David Connor to his mother, 30 April 1956

Otelia C. C.

Connor Papers

I may have a problem before school lets out. Automobile insurance ran a little over a hundred dollars. My April Frat bill is \$92 and my May bill will be close to that or over because of Pledge weekend and Pig Dinner, and my purchase of some uniforms which are coming COD, New cap and two sets of "whites" for graduation. I will need another pair of Navy shoes, plus hot weather is running my laundry bill up because of frequent changes, etc. And it cost me \$15 to get a ticket to take the Law School admission test next Saturday, given by by [sic] Princeton, required to get in both Carolina and Duke Law Schools. Summing up my budget looks too shallow to take up my slack before graduation. Help me somebody! I don't think I am going to make it to the end of the year. Just wondering if you could stand another loan, of a hundred or so. It is bad on me to carry so much obligation, but I hate to owe commercial people and have to put them off. I sure do miss my \$45 a month treasurer salary.



Entrance to the Pickwick Theater on Franklin Street, about 1918. [North Carolina Collection]

Grades

In an effort to regulate student behavior more effectively, trustees and faculty had established a grading system by 1830. Professors evaluated student conduct, attendance at classes and prayers, and academic performance, using terms such as "tolerable" and "respectable." Students complained about favoritism and subjectivity, but seem to have worked harder to measure up to the new standards. Grading philosophy had shifted somewhat by end of nineteenth century, when one student wrote that he "had often heard it said that we are here to train our minds, and not to make marks."

Charles L. Pettigrew to his father,
11 October 1835

592.
*Pettigrew Family
Papers*

The trustees passed a law that the parents of each student should be informed of the manner he was conducting himself in the institution. As to the relative number of each member of the class little confidence can be placed in them, for it is very difficult to distinguish between men nearly equal, and also the teacher is biased sometimes in favour [sic] of one to the disparagement of another.

Charles L. Pettigrew to his father,
7 November 1835

592.
*Pettigrew Family
Papers*

You of course have recived [sic] letters from the faculty concerning our relative standing in our own respective classes, whether it be good or bad; I hope that my general position has been such as to please you and entirely fair. I should be much gratified to learn from you in your letters what number has been in my several studies so as to

know whether it is as good as I expect it to be and whether I should apply myself with greater diligence. There has been a much greater amount of studying in college since this plan has been adopted, as all wish a good account to be sent to their parents and friends. It would be a gratification and more than probably a permanent good to have an account of what the faculty consider us in our college duties.

2561 z.
*James Laurence
Dusenbery Diary*

James Laurence Dusenbery Diary,
3 October 1841

The reports were made out last Monday. Mine was tolerable on Astronomy, very respectable on Greek & respectable on French, Chemistry & Political Economy. There has never before, since my connection with the institution, been such general dissatisfaction with the reports. Several speak of leaving, on account of the injustice done them.

3077.
*Willis G. Briggs
Papers*

William S. Grandy to his uncle, 31 July 1842

I have to apply myself more intensely to my studies now than ever before. It is on account of the increased quantity of the lessons here in comparison with those to which I have been accostomed [sic] to.

It is a law of the university that the President shall transmit a report of the demeanor of each student to their Parents or Guardian respectively, twice a session so I wish you when you get mine to write to me immediately and transcribe in your letter his report. I predict mine will be very common at first but if studying will better it, it shall be done.

The present number of students is, I believe, about 165 and it continues to increase some every week. Nothing hinders any person from learning here if he can learn.

I learned my Report from the Governor[,] with which I was unequivocally displeased. It was discouraging to the ambition and wounding to the pride of any Sensitive and generous youth. My friends have flattered me to think that I am not without the advantages of some degree of intellect. I have endeavored during this Session to use those advantages. I struggled hard to crown the hopes and wishes of my friends at home and to secure the approbation of the faculty here. But what is my reward? The hopes which had been quickened by the prayers of friends, are blasted and an innocent and laudable ambition checked. The anticipation of friends and still disappointed and the Faculty still view me with the steady eye of caustic severity. Is this calculated to give stimulance to my energies? You would say "Never mind what the faculty say of you; if you study hard you are improved thereby—the report of the faculty cannot affect the value or amount of your actual knowledge." This is very true. I have studied mainly for my improvement. But a youth of my age and character sets a high value on a reputation for qualities[,] whether of the head or heart. My fellow students know that I have studied—they know my report and altho' [sic] they may tell me that the faculty are unjust, they will rejoice at that injustice in secret. I have ever been for the common spirit of College of accusing the Faculty of injustice. But from the bottom of my heart (and I record it here for any who may read) I believe that Mr. James Phillips, whom I have mentioned before, is not disposed to do me justice; if he is I am sure he has not done it. Whether he cherishes an ill feeling against me I know not; but actions speak loudly. This decision arises from no puerile vexation or petty malignity, but from calm and deliberate judgement [sic]. Here ends my first "Phillippic."

3279 z.
*John Dudley
Tatum Letters*

John Dudley Tatum to his sister,
30 September 1856

I am getting along very well with my studies and will attend a lecture this evening on Natural Philosophy, which is very interesting. I have a hint from one of the faculty a few days ago, that my report which was sent out yesterday states that my scholarship was declining. I suppose that this has happened because one or two of the faculty have taken a dislike to me because I have talked a little in recitation room. The one, to whom I recite the Bible lesson this session, is a trifling freesoiler and is not respected by any of the students.

4321 z.
*John Worth
McAlister Papers*

John Worth McAlister, "Worth," to his mother,
8 October 1890

You don't know what a great thing you are doing for me by sending me to college. All my past school days have been a kind of bore to me . . . but now I have passed out of the elementary part of studies, and the drudgery and am beginning to appreciate and enjoy my studies now more than I ever did before, and to see the reason for going through three years of preparation of what seemed of no practical good at all. Now after my saying all this, you may have a right to expect a grand report in Dec. and I hope to get good marks in my studies, but I am carrying nineteen hours this year (it is not too much for me) and I intend to study regularly and systematically and honestly and I think with that, I ought to "pull through" creditably anyhow. But as I have often heard it said that we are here to train our minds, and not to make marks, still I don't think the former is possible without close application and yet does not depend on the latter.

Who is a Student?

A few female residents of Chapel Hill attended occasional class demonstrations before the Civil War, and the summer normal school for teachers accepted women in the post-war era. Beginning in 1897, a few white women were admitted into the junior and senior classes. They faced a separate set of entrance standards and rules of conduct until 1972. The first African American undergraduates, John Brandon and the Frasier brothers, Leroy and Ralph, were admitted in 1955. When they joined the freshman class, there were 6,575 undergraduates, including 1,444 women.

William Sidney Mullins Diary, 29 July 1841

531 z.

*William Sidney
Mullins Diary*

The Ladies of the Hill, with the exception of the Misses Owen, attended our Lecture on Wednesday morning, and it is useless to add the interest of the proceedings were greatly enhanced. True, the Class were [sic] very disorderly, and forced the Lecturer to take his seat and threaten the discontinuance of the Lectures, but there he soon resumed, and all was still and interesting. The Lecture was not *very* interesting however, and my eyes were on the fair faces oftener than on the Experiments.

William Sidney Mullins Diary, 30 July 1841

531 z.

*William Sidney
Mullins Diary*

The Ladies were all present at our Lecture in the Labrotory [sic] again, and as before attracted much more notice than the remarks or experiments of the Professor of Chemistry. The Barometer formed the subject of experiment and the Prof. gave us very clear ideas of its principle, and uses.

3914.

John F. Speight
Papers

W. F. Lewis to his sister, 19 September 1841

I think Chapel Hill is coming out a little. There has been of late a decided improvement in its society; having had a valuable acquisition, in some 8 or 10 *young ladies*.

It is thought by some that it would be an advantage to have a female academy established here. I have no doubt it would be the best place in the State for such an institution, on account of the salubrity of its climate, and for the advantages that might be derived from the large and choice libraries we have here; but I apprehend that the students would soon be found to slacken in their progress up the steep of Science's rugged mount, and would be found more frequently paying court at the shrine of Venus, than of Minerva. Some retired nook in old Orange might soon attain the celebrity of the far-famed Gretna Green.

2248.

Alice Spencer
Kerr Papers

Cornelia Phillips Spencer to Alice Kerr,
2 September 1876

[June] is reading Horace to me, but has forgotten her Latin mightily I find. Lucy is ahead of her in that. She reads her German & French regularly & practices her music very steadily,—and is busy with Will P's aid in getting up some Chemical *rudiments*. I was tremendously disappointed when the session opened, & I found that if she attended Prof Redd's Lectures she would have to do it alone; not another girl in C. H. [is] able to take the course. So we had to give it up—for the old-fashioned squeamishness strong in me—dislike to any appearance of singularity—provoking remark—& so on & so on. Am half-inclined now to regret that I did not coolly put on my hat, & go with her every time—& brave it out. They are fitting up a fine Hall for those Lectures.



Senior Class of 1898, including Sallie Walker Stockard, who was the first female graduate of the University of North Carolina. [North Carolina Collection]

I wish—I do wish there were twenty fine, studious, thoughtful girls here to share these advantages with these trifling young stupids, who if they can shut a cow up in the Chapel all night, or carry a workman's two horse wagon up to the top of one of the Buildings, are more than satisfied.

Yet some of them are studying hard & generally college is perfectly quiet. New students are coming in

June, I am thankful to say—does not see much of the college boys They have a wholesome fear of June's *Mamma* which I trust time will not diminish.

Cornelia Phillips Spencer to Alice Kerr,
23 July 1879

2248.
*Alice Spencer
Kerr Papers*

June has been going clean through the mill this session, & in addition to everything else for the past 8 days has been attending the examinations for Public School Teachers conducted by Profs.

McIver, Dugger, & Gaither—& is also a member of the singing class & Concert Choir. She goes up to Coll.[ege] at 7 ½ in the morn.[,] home at 1. Back at 2 to exam. wh[ich] lasts till 5 p.m. Then *singing*—(think of singing after 3 hrs exam) till 6. Home to tea. Shakes—or Eng. An. at 7 ½ p.m. Then stroll about Campus, or go & watch the Calis. in Library till 9—& *then* go to Chapel for *lecture!* & home generally t[o]wards 11 o`c. I never saw such *incessant* work & nervous strain in my life.

4340.

Allard Kenneth
Lowenstein
Papers

Al Lowenstein to friend, 6 May 1946

As for UNC's "inviting Negroes," unfortunately it just ain't so. State law forbids interracial educa[ti]on [sic], for one thing; and for another, the student body here, even were it able to make the decision all on its own, would not vote to admit colored students, though an increasing minority would

Last fall . . . the Dialectic Senate, oldest college debating society in America, voted in favor of bills abolishing Jim Crow laws and providing for the admission of colored students to the University. These "laws" of course have no effect on anything, except as weathervanes.

4375.

Leroy Benjamin
Frasier Papers

G. W. Cox to Leroy Frasier, Jr.,
16 September 1955

I have just passed along my congratulations to your daddy and mother for the success which has come your way by virtue of their determined efforts to get for you the best education which the State of North Carolina affords for its citizens. They have done a very beautiful job in cooperating with other interested friends and attorneys and the NAACP, and I am very proud of the fact that your record at the high school was of such that upon that record

you had to be admitted to the undergraduate school at THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA.

Now, just a word of admonition to you. The responsibility now shifts from your parents and friends direct to YOU. You will have to prosecute a program of putting to use all of the available facilities for pursuing your major at the University and prove beyond a doubt that you are worthy and capable, and that insofar as holding up the high standards of the University over the long number of years which it has served the public, you have as much of what it takes to do that as anyone else. If you are to prove that you are the equal of your fellow Americans through your opportunity, you must make up in your mind that equality is EARNED and not conferred.

Your pictures have been in the papers—not just the Durham papers, but they will find themselves in papers all over the world. Let that go to your heart and not to your head—in fact, forget about that if you can and be YOURSELF. This is good advice and it will help you a whole lot if you will follow it.

You have my interest and I shall be observing you with sincerity and earnestness in your pursuit of the fulfillment of this great opportunity which has been bestowed upon you.

Good luck, best wishes, and more power to you!



Admitted to the freshman class in 1955, John Brandon, Leroy Frasier, and Ralph Frasier were the first African American undergraduates to attend the University of North Carolina. [North Carolina Collection]



"Blacking Party," about 1900. [North Carolina Collection]

The "Fresh" Experience

Once they got past entrance exams, freshmen faced hazing and homesickness. Sophomores, whose memories of their freshman experience were still vivid, seem to have been the most notorious abusers. Hazing ended with the "fresh treat," a nineteenth-century tradition in which freshmen provided a wagon loaded with watermelons, hungrily attacked by a competitive student body.

James Laurence Dusenbery Diary, 7 August 1841

2561 z.

*James Laurence
Dusenbery Diary*

Wednesday morning during study hours a large wagon-load of melons was driven into the Campus. The new Freshmen generously stepped forward, bought the whole load & called for every man to help himself. The fellows forthwith mounted into the wagon & began to carry them to their rooms. Our passage brought away about a dozen of them. While we were yet eating & the passage was literally covered with rinds & fragments, Judge Owen paid us a visit. He pronounced himself thunder-struck at the aspect of things, assured us that it was indecent, unhealthy & decidedly rash to keep so filthy a passage & remarked that it was a duty we [had] to the younger classes, to the Faculty & to ourselves to be more circumspect in our conduct. He went on to say that on us the Faculty is dependent in a great measure for the maintenance of order & decorum in the West building—that to us they looked to set an example of sobriety & morality to our younger brethren of the University. Let me indulge the hope, continued the Judge, that you will, henceforward mark out for yourselves a line of conduct at once dignified, gentlemanly & worthy of the exalted & highly responsible station which you occupy as Seniors of this University.

"Good morning Gentlemen."

3077.
Willis G. Briggs
Papers

William S. Grandy to his uncle,
31 July 1842

It was customary to black those who came here to join the freshman class, so Friday night the club prepared themselves with Lampblack and whatever else they wanted and began to give them a coat. They had just com[m]enced nearly when the Faculty came up and you can imagine how quick each one absented himself for the President had publickly [sic] announced that whoever was caught in a Blacking Club would have to leave. The next day (the second day of the session) the faculty examined several of the students about this blacking expedition and dismissed two, but A pledge that those who signed it would not engage in such while a student of the University was circulated and nearly universally signed. This pledge was signed upon a condition that if they (the Faculty) would restore those whom they had dismissed. They were restored. So we will have no more blacking for at least two years.

1171 z.
Thomas Miles
Garrett Diary

Thomas Miles Garrett Diary,
25 July 1849

There has been a considerable noise in college today. The old students have a custom of hollering at the Fresh when they go out in the Campus, and they have kept us a continual sally of [w]hoops and hollers. But as is usual with many things that come from the mouths of men. This is sound, empty and void and without sense so that it is better calculated to disturb than excite by interesting. I could find but little time for reading today on account of the frequent interruption I have experienced from the busle about the door of the building to which my room is very near. A too powerful flood of light in my room owing to the want of curtains which I

have not been able to have put up, has sensibly affected my eyes. They continue to feel heavy though by no means inclined to sleep.

Thomas Brown to his sister, 6 August 1853

*1040.
Gordon and
Hackett Family
Papers*

I was not very pleased with Chapel Hill at first[,] but have since become better[,] for when I first arrived I had few acquaintances and felt almost lost among so many boys and besides they all halloed at us fresh all the time and called we [sic] long-legged ones Shanghais. The Students did not attempt to black the fresh this session. I suppose the shooting last year scared them off for they say that this class has come off better than any class that has been here for some time and if that is so I pitty [sic] those that have come here before us for they have done us bad enough. I am rooming in a brick row in front of the Campus two doors below Mr. Nicholson a very quiet and good place to study.

William McLaurin to his brother[?], 1 August 1859

*1596.
William H.
McLaurin Papers*

The Fresh treat came off last Saturday[.] Every Fresh has to put in \$2.00 apiece [sic] to treat to watermellons [sic] they had about 150 or 175 dollars which would buy 1000 or 1200 mellons [sic][.] There came 10 wagons with them[.] They came in the Campus from the Western gate every one whipping their horses[,] coming at full speed and the boys trying to get as many as he could[.] Some got 20[,] others none[.] Some pushed down and ran over by the rest. I got 4 and Richmond clubbed together and had about 35 of the finest kind[.] I had a bag and got 4 in it and I couldn[']t begin to move then[.] It was a day of general agitation all over the place especially about the chapel and Campus[.]

3789.

*Henry William
Faison Papers*

Henry E. Faison to his sister, 9 September 1877

I have been on the Hill ten days.

. . . . On Saturday, Jimmie Hill and I fitted up our room and enjoyed that comfort which an independent style alone can afford.

I did not attend church on Sunday; but I went to The Young's Christian Association and heard some fervent prayers offered up by some of the old boys in behalf of the new students. Since then I have joined it and I truly hope that it will prove a source of benefit to me. All last week I studied very hard and I think that I will continue to do so. On Saturday the Fresh all threw in a quarter each and bought a treat for the old boys; but they behaved so badly it was no pleasure at all. The olds [sic] boys were going to black the Fresh that night but the ringleaders were to[o] drunk to navigate successfully, so that thing was a failure

On Saturday night I witnessed a regular drundin [sic] revelry; but I assure you, it was no intention on my part. I was thrown into it accidentally, and God forbid, that I should ever witness another. Though I was invited to drink I am glad to say that I had the courage to resist and I shall continue to do so. The crowd consisted of four in a room just above us and you could actually smell the whiskey throug[h] the ceiling. I am surprised to see that so much drinking is going on

. . . .

1168 z.

*Mattie Holton
Wilcox Papers*

Maurice H. Wilcox to his mother,
4 September 1878

. . . got to Durham at 7 oclock and took a carriage and got here at ten oclock at night. The boys were waiting for us and immediately they commenced haller [sic] Fresh! Fresh! I was taken out and

jerk[ed] around[,] matches struck all over my coat[,] and I was lifted off the ground and carried and placed on a bench to sing and dance, but I told them I knew nothing of either so I was let off[.] The next I knew they had me on a horse's back that was hitch[ed] to the carriage. They took me off and were going to devil me some more[.] One big boy said that was enough and he threw me across his shoulder and ran up the street and put me down and told me to make for my room. I met Latimer Vaughn and he took me to his room where I staid [sic] all night. John Smith' experience in "Sea Life" is a "fac simile" almost. I never had better controll [sic] of myself and laugh[ed] it of[f] so I was not trouble[d] any more that night, they gave some [of] the others the mischief. I expect to be black some time soon. Although the Faculty have said they would expel any parties concerned in it.

William C. Alderman to his sister,
22 September 1878

2994.
*Alderman Family
Papers*

I have not commenced studying good yet but will get straight in a few days: about one hundred of the old boys have returned and a great many more Freshmen than were here last year. Same old piney woods fellows that were never off from home before. Same regular old *bluds*[.] You have seen in the Observer that *blacking* and *hazing* have been abolished[.] It is true that blacking is abolished but hazing, giving them the *grins* and several other things a great deal worse than the former, still exist[.] I feel quite big calling them fresh and *quizing* [sic] them.

William C. Alderman to his sister, 11 October 1878

2994 z.
*Alderman Family
Papers*

I guess you would like to know what a blud was, well they are boys & men who dress mighty fine and sport a watch[,] beaver, and several other things *pertaining to a fool*.

2248.
Alice Spencer
Kerr Papers

June Spencer to Alice, 30 August 1879

The Fresh are pouring in. Every room in college has been taken. "Fresh" are all the talk. The Sophs are enjoying pelting them with watermelon rinds. They pulled a poor *petit* out of the back the other evening, & asked him where his wet-nurse was. Isn't it mean? Boys have no mercy on each other.

3129.
UNC
Miscellaneous
Personal Papers

Neil A. Sinclair to his mother, 9 September 1882

There has been [a] good deal of "freshing," but I've been troubled but very little. The first of the week, while going to supper one evening, a fellow thought he would be smart & stepped up in my path & drew his fist as if he were going to knock me down. He came meeting me, but I deliberately walked on till we met & ran up against each other, but instead of backing off I stood firm & looked him square in the eyes. He seemed rather disappointed & after a while asked what I was looking at him so hard for, thinking he would create a laugh, but I said, "I was just going to keel you about 10 ft. out there on the grass if you had touched me," & I would have done it too. He saw I was in earnest & he got *mighty small* & slunk around to one side of me & passed on leaving me in possession of the field. Then I started on without even looking back & the crowd first yelled at the Sophomore about allowing a Freshman to bully him. I was not troubled any more till Wednesday night. About 25 boys came around & told me I had to make them a bow, but I told them I would do nothing of the kind. They also tried to make me get on the table & speak & to dance but I would not. They said they would black me then. Ransom & 2 others about drunk were going to do the blacking. I told them that was one thing I did

not propose to allow & that I would not be blacked alive & that the first man that attempted to black me would get that. I told them there was but one thing they could make me do & that was to trot[?], that I would not think of fighting a man for such a thing as that, & I knew they could carry me by force. So they gave out their blacking notion & we started out & just as we got to the door, Pres. Battle met us & said, "Gentlemen, this devilment has got to stop." In five minutes the whole campus was quiet, & for 3 hours before you could have heard the noise for 5 miles. So I am done of it, except the "Fresh Treat" which comes off this evening. I don't know whether I will go or not yet, but think I shall. I promised . . . another Freshman to go with him. They have not even said "Fresh" to me since the other night

The Phi. Society has by far the majority of the Freshmen so far. We will be allowed to join next Friday week. I have been in the halls. They are very near alike Our Society, has much the finest portraits—many of them costing \$500.00, but the Di. has more[.] The libraries are about equal having about 7,500 volumes each. But our chandelier is the finest costing about \$200.00 more than the Di's. The halls are said to be finer than the Senate chamber of the U.S.

Two wagon loads of watermelons have just arrived for the "fresh treat" & there will be a right big time by & by. When they get through they turn the wagons over & cut up generally. The grand "winding up" of hazing—

Neil A. Sinclair to his mother, 15 September 1882

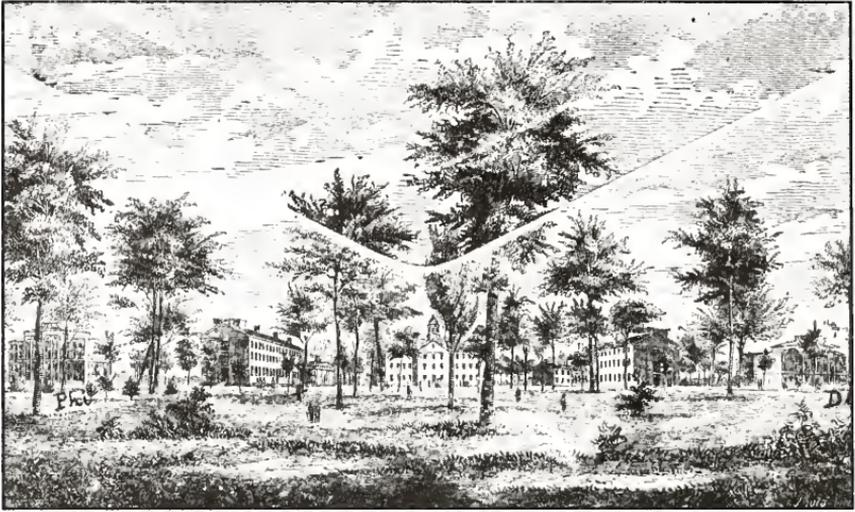
3129.

UNC

Miscellaneous

Personal Papers

I have not done much as yet, on getting settled & used to things. It depends altogether on the man here & not the teacher. I have been called on only once in Math. & 3 times in Latin. Our Math Class has over 50. Nearly ½ of the Freshmen have to take Prep. Math, & the majority, Prep. Greek. The "News" was mistaken. We have not 100 Freshmen, but hope to have before next June. About 85 now The "freshing" is over now[,] ie. as to the boys already here. I rather enjoyed it, but some did not. I don't like my room-mate much. He is a sour morose kind of a fellow, pretty green & imagines that his equal is not on the Hill.



Neil A. Sinclair, a member of the 1882 freshman class, mailed his letter home in this envelope. It shows a view of the campus about 1861, and Sinclair labelled the Di and Phi buildings for his family. [UNC Miscellaneous Personal Papers, SHC]

4225.
*Kenan Family
Papers*

Richard Hackett to his mother, 10 September 1883

I arrived here safely last Thursday and have been well ever since. I think I will like Chapel Hill very much indeed. I am rooming with Mr. Alexander and think he is a very nice man. The boys have not hazed me any except [sic] in the fresh treat in which I got hit with a few rines [sic]. I have entered the freshman class on every thing but Greek and will stand my examination on that this evening. I have not been home sick any yet.

1040.
*Gordon and
Hackett Family
Papers*

Willie L. Grimes to a friend, 1890's

I have thought of writing to you for a long while but have been very busy with my studies and have almost neglected writing to any of my *friends*.

I have just finished with my *examinations* and feel completely broken down but hope I have passed on them all. I presume you are accustomed to standing them by this *time*. I like [it] up here very well with the exception of one thing and that is my *social-standing*, I deem it unnecessary for me to explain to you about the Fraternites, that are here at the University. I do not know how it was when you were here, but now unless a *student* belongs to some *Fraternity* he is not looked upon as being *much*. I think I can well say that all the boys who are from nice people and have friends here, are sure to get in some Fraternity. By not belonging to one myself you readily can see how it places me. Several years ago only the nice boys of the state came here to the University, but now since Dr. Winston became President the students are very much mixed. So many of the boys have their tuition given them and the majority of this kind are not from very nice people. I came up here a stranger and had no friends to tell me how to do and whom to go with. I made a great mistake by not rooming in the *South Building*, and then I would have associated with the very best of society. I was too late in applying for one of those rooms, and the Bursar put me in the New East B which you know yourself is not a very desirable place to room, but I was hazed and *freshed* so much, till I was satisfied to get in any *building*.

The boys who room over in this *Building* do not belong to any Fraternity and being with this crowd you see I was looked upon as being like one of the others. I think from what I have already stated you will see why I was not asked to join. It is true I knew Willie Kenan but I never was well acquainted with him or at least I did not feel so. He is a senior *too* and they do not trouble themselves about a *freshman*. He roomed down the streets therefore I hardly ever saw him, and besides he might possibly have thought I was a Fraternity Man and did not ask me to join, as there was one, Grimes, up here who *joined*. Willie belongs to a *good* one, but I would be glad to get in most any one so I could associate with the boys I want to.

If you think there is no harm in doing so, *won[']t you please* write to him and ask him to try to get me in, but please do not let *him* know I wrote to you, as they never take in one who is over anxious for they call such boys—"Booters." I think Willie is very well acquainted with Father and Henry and do not think he would have any trouble in recommending [sic] me as being all right. There are some freshmen here who have just been asked to join. *I wish you would write to Willie*, and even if nothing results of this, it will be all right anyway.

I did not intend to make such a letter of this, I wish I had the time

to write to you about my experience with the *Sophs*. I will have to close and hope to receive a few lines from you in the *near future*.

1588.

James Harrison to his father, 12 September 1913

Thomas Perrin

Harrison Papers

Last night some Sophomores took two freshmen down to the athletic field and made them dance on barrels[.] When they got tired[,] one of the Sophs kicked the barrel from under one of [the] freshmen[,] a fellow named Rand. He fell on a broken pitcher and cut his throat and bled to death before the fellows could get him to infirmary. The Sophs are in jail. Ralph Oldham & Stiron were among the Sophs. I did not know about it until this morning The Sophs have not bothered me at all. They make me wear my coat all the time and keep step while they whistle. That tragedy last night will put an end to all hazeing [sic]

Just for Fun

From politics to sports, a few little known episodes of student life: shaking hands with General Lafayette; observing Washington's birthday with syllabub and sugar cakes; pursuing the "Fakir of Ava"; illuminating dorm windows in honor of James K. Polk's inauguration; comparing Yaie to UNC; skipping class to ice skate on mill ponds; baseball scores by telegraph; proper dressing for commencement officers; football weekends.

Richard H. Lewis to his father, 5 March 1825

3914.

*John F. Speight
Papers*

The faculty dismissed college form last [T]uesday morning until tomorrow morning, (which is [S]unday) that the students might go down to see the "Nation's Guest Genl. La Fayette." The students were so anxious to go that some of them walked in the rain and others rode in waggons [sic]. I went down in a waggon [sic] and have this morning returned well pleased with my visit. The students were introduced to the "Old Genl," and highly gratified was I to have the pleasure of shaking hands with *that man* whose virtues and military talents in defence [sic] of "our rights" in the revolutionary struggle (if I may be allowed the expression) will, next to those of "Washington", ever shine conspicuous in the "Historical pages" of the revolutionary war. The Genl. left Raleigh at about 1 o'clock, [T]hursday, for Fayetteville attended [sic] by a band of calvalry of about sixty. I saw him when he ascended into his carriage, and after gazing at him steadfastly and with admiration, I turned aside and left the spot, and in a few moments he was out of sight.

3914.

John F. Speight
Papers

Kenelm H. Lewis to his sister, 28 February 1836

We had a celebration here last 22nd in honour of the illustrious [sic] Washington. After proceeding [sic] to the Chapel, and hearing a beautiful and appropriate oration delivered by Mr. McQueen late senator from Chatham. We repaired to the principal hotel & partook of a sumptuous dinner, the table was covered with syllabub, plumb [sic] cakes, sugar cakes, sweet cakes, & as Washington Irving says the whole "family of cakes," etc., etc., etc.

The president tells us that the trustees are determined to support the character of this institution!!! They intend *finishing* a building which was commenced some 10 or 15 years ago; they also intend erecting another building to correspond with the former one

My reading this session has been various: Histories, Novels, Biography, etc. some of which was very entertaining, and indispensably [sic] necessary in the acquirement of a liberal education.

863z.

William Bagley
Letter Books

William Bagley to Mose G. Pierce,
13 February 1845

A fellow, calling himself the "Fakir of Ava" came through here the other day with a boy & girl proposing to give a grand scientific entertainment to the inhabitants of Chapel Hill; after procuring a house & getting in readiness about a hundred of the students went down & the house I understood was crowded to such an extent that the "Fakir" had very little opportunity for "showing off" & the students being rather noisy he dismissed the assembly, gave them tickets & told them that on the next night he would have a better place & consequently a better chance for exhibition, but the next morning he left having made some forty or fifty dollars at the expense of the students, several of them followed

him to Hillsboro [sic] & I expected that an engagement would have taken place there but as he was exhibiting he let the students go in which I supposed pacified them one of them however, while there became intoxicated & with some other fellows went to one of the taverns & began to be rather noisy & the landlord came out & ordered them off & to enforce his command raised a chair at one of them & this fellow immediately shot him, the ball went into his arm near the shoulder but they say his life is not endangered; the name of the fellow that shot him is Ruffin, he was a member of the sophomore class & lives in Alabama, I believe he has not been heard of since the occurrence.

William Bagley to his sisters, 8 March 1845

863z.
*William Bagley
Letter Books*

Some of the students commenced illuminating their windows in honor of the inauguration of Jas. K. Polk & my room-mate who is a [D]emocrat wanted to illuminate ours & having two windows that front the campus, he illuminated one & I dropped the curtain of the other, if I had have had some crape [sic] I think I would have hung it out, however I have no doubt but Mr. Polk will make a good president.

Thomas C. Pinkard (at Yale) to James Johnston Pettigrew, 7 October 1846

592.
*Pettigrew Family
Papers*

You will kindly remember me to Mr. George, and your Freshman from Florida, and by the by, my best respects to the valiant and rebellious Sophomores

I am now a regular member of the Junior Class, and have had the pleasure of making some few recitations. From what little I have seen, I am forced to believe candidly that they turn out better schollars [sic] here than they do at the Hill. But it is not owing to the advantages and facilities for instruction, for the University is equal to it in that

aspect, if not superior. The students here are men of mature age mostly, men who know how to estimate the value of their time and opportunities [sic] and mostly indigent students who depend upon their education for a support in life and add to these considerations a spirit of rivalry and emulation—who and who shall obtain the highest appointments, besides a most rigid college discipline, all tend to excite to study. They have a certain standard of scholarship here, if a fellow falls below which they merely advise him to retire for the benefit of his health; as they say. Which standard corresponds to about "very respectable["] or "good with you["]. They have an everlasting "abominable" system of Tutorship also, which I do detest from the very bottom of my heart, and who too, have almost despotic power after all. Yale and Harvard and all these *big schools* live on reputation. They make out a great long catalogue [sic] of *big* men's name as those composing the faculty, and who rarely ever see the college more than once a term. The University has its good qualities and so does Yale, and upon the whole I believe they are about equally ballanced [sic]. For pleasure, fun, socialness and instruction, C Hill is superior to this place. I say, perhaps superior in instruction, because the tutors instruct here principally, who are not as good as the Professors with you. In every thing else Yale has the advantage.

2367 z.

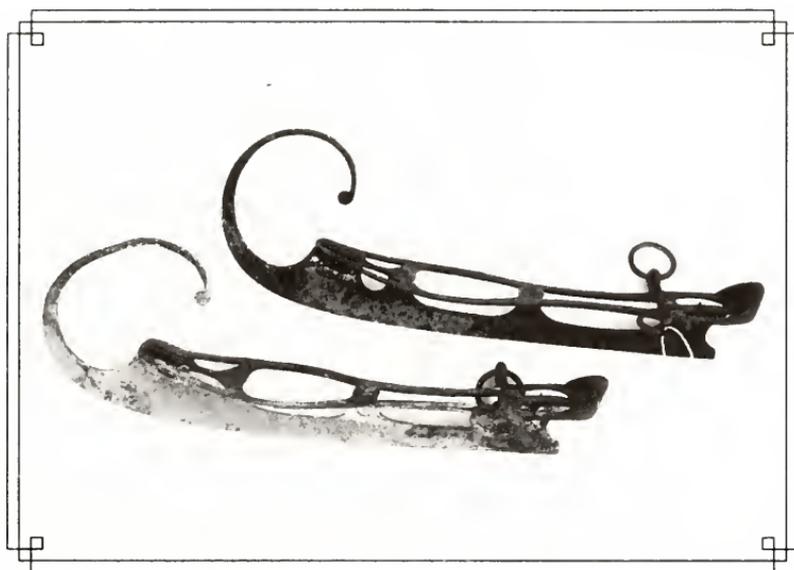
George N. Thompson Diary, 31 January 1851

George N.

Thompson Diary

It was very cold this morning & I did dislike so much to get out of bed—it was so warm and laid so good. When I went to prayer, I was a little surprised to hear Old Mike say—"there will [be] omission of College duties today. You are required to attend only at prayers this evening." A good many sleepy, but smiling faces could have been seen, about this time through the chapel. Glad to get rid of some hard lessons, and to have an opportunity of skating, as it was for this last purpose that the boys obtained the snap [student slang for holiday]. It has been the standing custom to give one snap when there was ice suitable in thickness to be skated on. Soon after prayers, I went down to the pond to see others skate, for I had no skates myself. I went on the ice however

with nothing but my shoes on. In trying to run I slipped up and my head was the first portion, that was fortunate enough to beat the rest of my body down to the ice. The contact of head and ice created no agreeable sensation on my part



Ice skates of Henry Armand London, class of 1865. [North Carolina Collection]

George N. Thompson Diary, 1 February 1851

I did not go out to the ice pond before breakfast as a great many did I went to wait for breakfast which was not long coming[.] I returned and staid [sic] up in my room long enough to warm and smoke and then went up to the Di Hall, but did not remain there long[,] for one of the students moved regular duties be suspended so the boys could go skating which motion was carried. I opposed it. I went down to the mill pond of Utley where there were about 60 boys skating and some not, I had a good deal of fun. I staid [sic] there until nearly dinner, no body having fallen in while I was there.

2367 z.

George N.

Thompson Diary

3914.

*John F. Speight
Papers*

James P. Rives to Seth, 8 September 1867

I thought you would like to hear from the base ball match game, which came off Yesterday, (Saturday the 7th Sept). I will endeavor to give you a brief account of the game. The game was fought with the 'Crescent' club of Raleigh.

Our club (ie[.] first-nine) fell in rank with bats on the shoulder and march[ed] out to meet our opponents where we found them waiting. We then marched out on the field, side by side, where the Captains tossed for the inns, and our Captain got the inns. The first man to the [bat] was Hargrave who made a very good strike reaching the first base. Next Rives to the bat, the very first ball the pitcher threw I made a very good strike and also reached the first base. It would occupy too much time and labor to go into every particular. It sufficeth to say that Our boys beat them by a score of 54 runs to 36.

The sum total of the (University) club was 54 runs, 16 Fly catches, 3 Home runs, and 27 outs. The sum total of the Crescent club was 36 runs, 6 Fly catches, No home runs and 27 outs.

I made the best score on either side.

2994 z.

*Alderman Family
Papers*

William C. Alderman to his sister, 11 October 1878

We ar[e] going to have a big to[-]do, here tomorrow [for] the aniversiry [sic] of laying the corner stone of th[e] University[.] My room is on the corner stone[.] It is the east room in the East building, first floor[.] Several distinguished Speakers will be here tomorrow and will exhort about old times I guess[.]

Henry Faison to his father, 20 January 1879

3789.

Henry William
Faison Papers

For the past week the College has been terribly stirred up on account of elections. One week ago the campaign commenced and day by day additional warmth was added to the contest and finally last Saturday it resulted in the election of good commencement officers. There was scarcely any studying done last week. I myself missed four recitations. The excitement was interesting and I like it very much. Good many of my best [friends] were candidates, and I did all in my power to have them elected. Jimmie Hill was elected by a good majority. He will make a fine looking marshal. My roommate, Noble, was elected to represent the Society by a good majority. Some time ago I was spoken of for representative, but I withdrew in favor of Noble, and the Society awarded my magnanimity by giving me some other office. I was elected to introduce the Speaker at commencement. I will have to go down to Durham, hire a fine "turn out" and "blood" the Speaker up to the Hill. The day after we arrive I attend him in the procession, and finally I appear on the rostra, and introduce him to the audience. Now this is a position which many desire, because it gives a man a chance to wear fine clothes and to put on kid gloves.



Well-dressed commencement marshalls, 1884. [North Carolina Collection]

Three fourths (3/4) of the voters of the society have chosen me for the place, and they expect me to wear "low-quarter pumps," "red socks," "white cravats," and a "stove piped hat". They have selected me to "fill this bill"—toes pinched by "box toed gaiter," lungs compressed by a "buttoned frock," neck sawed by a "starched stander," and hands sweating terribly under my kids. I had rather meet the man in a neat homespun suit. How in the world did they ever select me for the place! Am I guilty of making false impressions? Nothing but love for my society, and willingness to serve my society in any capacity could induce me to perform the duties of the office. The Society pays my travelling expenses. You, Pa, will have to foot my dressing bills. If you can afford to dress me up nicely for the occasion I would like to serve my fellows; if you think not, I am happy to reconcile my self to the best wishes of my father

Well the excitement is about over and we will begin to work Monday morning. Most of the Old boys have returned, and about 20 new students have come in. There will be nearly 200 on the Catalogue [sic]. The advantages of the University have be[en] advanced by the establishment of a medical school. It is not connected with the University, but it is situated here. The class of 9 members are instructed by Dr. Harris, who has the reputation of being a well read man. They have a dissecting department, and I went with them to steal one dead negro. They are all clever fellows, and that night we had a good time. Several of the boys got frightened, but I enjoyed it very much. I am going to work in earnest tomorrow. Send my report.

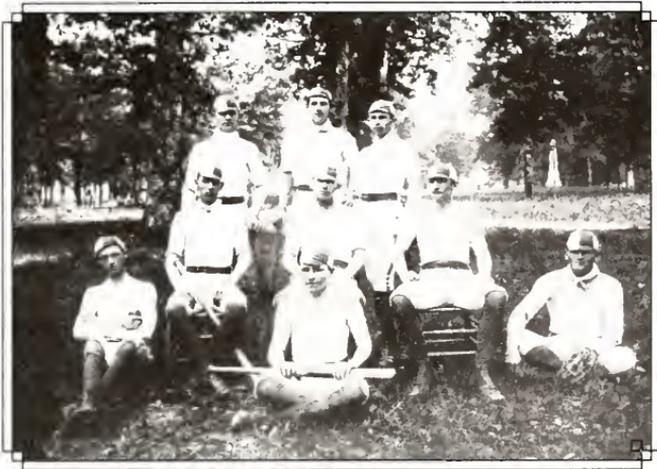
2248.

June Spencer to Alice Kerr, 16 November 1879

*Alice Spencer
Kerr Papers*

Thursday eve. Mr. Battle said that Miss Maggie & I had had [sic] been so good to him, that to reward us he would take us up on the campus to see the boys play football, Minnie went with us, & Tom Battle. We went went [sic] up in the museum first to see two huge hideous figures, of "Christian & Appollion fighting," presented by Prof. Mangum, & carved entirely with a pen knife by an uncle of his, who I am not surprised to know is now in the lunatic asylum. Thursday night the students sat up to see "the stars fall," (which did not fall) & they

employed this valuable time in burning gunpowder, ringing the bell, building huge bonfires, & finally they broke open the museum & brought down Christian & the devil & put them where the fire light could shine on them, so as to imagine the last named gentleman in his place of residence I suppose! After we finished with the museum, we went & sat on the ball-room steps



Baseball team, 1885. [North Carolina Collection]

Henry M. London to his mother, 26 April 1896

Everyone here is exuberant over our baseball victory yesterday evening over W. Va. by a score of 14 to 5 We had telegraphic reports of the game sent here every 5 minutes so that although we did not really see the game yet we knew exactly what was going on.

1561.

*Henry Mauger
London Papers*

Al Lowenstein to the editors of *Life* Magazine,
25 October 1948

. . . . In Chapel Hill we are not a proud lot, so it's perfectly all right with us if *Life* (October 25th)

4340.

*Allard Kenneth
Lowenstein
Papers*

chooses to continue doing write-ups on relatively obscure universities like those dozen in California, while ignoring the oldest State university in the Western Hemisphere—a University which, incidentally, happens to have the most beautiful campus, the best football team, and the most advanced student government in the Nation (to say nothing of its academic distinctions, which maybe wouldn't photograph well). But when, in the very same issue (page 45) *Life* dwells upon photographs of assorted personages who happen to be officials of various Pottawattomie-like institutions, while failing to so much as identify one of the greatest men of our times and the greatest university president in the world today, Frank Porter Graham—well, a rebellious yelp would seem in order . . .

As I say, it's not that we're proud, generous though we are in our willingness to let the rest of the Nation know of our good fortune here at the University of North Carolina

3228.

David Connor to his family, ca. 1956

Otelia C. C.

Connor Papers

I am just winding up a long week end by studying and I think getting right much accomplished. This past week has been a long and busy one. The week end started Thursday when we had a party with the Pi Phi's here on the campus. That was one of the best party's I have been to in a long time. The house as a whole had a better time than it has had in a long time with the exception maybe of last spring's pledge week end. Then came Friday, and I had a girl to come down from Woman's college for the week end, the game and a party at the Gimghoul Castle and the Lodge afterwards. This afternoon was terrible as most Sundays are after two days of a football week end but I shaped up tonite to go down to th[e] Library and write a paper and read to almost catch up on about 100 pages of poetry. Quite a job. Now that the rushing and running around is over, I feel like I am going to be able to buckle down to a steady pace.

End of an Era

The following letters offer a glimpse of student experience during the turbulent aftermath of the Civil War. The University closed in 1871; when it reopened in 1875, the institution established a new set of academic standards, replacing students' recitations with professors' lectures. The student body itself changed dramatically. Once primarily sons of wealthy Southern planters, students of the late nineteenth century were drawn from a broader socioeconomic background. Equal access for women and African Americans took more time.

Henry Armand London, Jr. to his sister,
15 February 1864

868z.

*Henry Armand
London Papers*

We had quite an excitement here last week, and which we enjoyed very much, it was this; The Sheriff of the County summoned a "Posse" of about thirty of us to break up a camp of run away Negroes, which we most effectually did, capturing the camp with all its contents, taking 7 prisoners and wounding one, without a man of us scratched. We had another one, but of a totally different character, namely the carrying away to Raleigh of about half dozen students who were eighteen. You know it is only the Juniors & Seniors who are exempt and so last Tuesday the Enrolling Officer took to the Conscript Camp the Sophs and Fresh who were liable to conscription, and who had been skulking here for sometime with the hope of being let alone till they were Juniors, when they would be exempted by the President. Tell Pa not to be afraid of their taking me, as Gov Swain says there is no danger of it, but I would not care much if they did, as I hate the idea of skulking, as it were, out of the army, when my Country needs my services so much, but yet when an exemption is proffered a man, he can scarcely be blamed for taking it.

J. B. Mitchell to "Ruff," 29 May 1866

I came here intending to remain and complete my college course which the War interrupted, but the old Hill is so different from its former self that I begin to think seriously of going elsewhere. It is melancholy to contemplate the change. I can well understand the feelings of the old Indian who came back from the far West to visit once more his native hunting grounds & found himself alone & unknown where years before he was accustomed to sport with crowds of merry companions. Such is my situation now. New faces & cold hearts meet me everywhere. Our old club is no longer in existence. I shall not endeavor to revive it. Some of the most pleasant memories of my life are connected with the exercises of that old club room. That genial flow of wit & humor, Jest & ready repartee which made our hall so attractive and beloved cannot now be equaled by the material which we have in College and I would not burlesque those good old times by introducing a miserable failure. I have procured for my room the office in Dr. Mallet's yard formally occupied by Charlie Marin. The Doctor's medical library remains in it and a skeleton used by him hangs on the wall by the side of my bed. So you see if I should change my decision & conclude after all to study medicine & go on with you to New Orleans this winter I have an excellent opportunity here to do so. The fact is, Ruff, I really don[']t know what I am fit for, or whether I am fit for anything at all. I know this much however, that I must work for my bread and I dislike very much to begin. One principle reason why I come here is that I may postpone the choice of a profession until I recieve [sic] more light on the subject. I am afraid you will think I am fickle & probably I may be so, but I do not believe it. I only think it is that natural distrust of one's self & fear of making a false step which every young man is apt to feel when about to make choice of a profession.

Richard to his mother, 22 July 1866

I have been waiting to get settled before I wrote to you. I am not quite settle[d] yet[.] I have been examined and was told to make up on greek and latin so I think that I shall drop greek. Nearly the whole Freshman class has to make up on greek and latin. The Professors make them do it in order to make money out of them, but I don[']t think they will make much out of me[.] I am boarding at Miss Nancy Hillyard[']s[.] Board is \$110 per session[.] I have been quite sick since I got here but I am a great deal better now[.] I had the bowel complaint[.] The students have been trying very hard to tease us. When ever we go out of doors every boy is calling us fresh. I shall need about \$75 more [.] Write soon, and tell Seth and all the others to write[.] Give my love to all and accept a good portion for yourself.

J. B. Mitchell to "Ruff," 20 December 1866

In College I am persuing [sic] an irregular course which comprises all the studies of the Senior & Junior classes with the exception of the Latin & Greek. Having but one year to employ here I thought I would during that time approximate finishing the whole course as nearly as I could. The inconveniences of an irregular course which before rendered it objectionable I now regard as recommendations [sic]

There are now only two Clubs in College As usual in such cases College politics set them at variences [sic] and they are at daggers' points. The number of students in college is very small not more than seventy-five. Many of them have been soldiers and consequently are not very remarkable for orderly behavior. Of the two old students there are only two beside myself.

3914.

*John F. Speight
Papers*

3315.

*Ruffin Thomson
Papers*

3543.

Edmund
Walker
Jones Papers

E. Jones to his father, 29 July 1867

Our class (the Junior) is much dissatisfied with their course, Our course is incomplete & so is the senior. I have concieved [sic] the plan of taking both together & as I have plenty of time I can easily do so[.] Most of the class wish to do the same thing, by that means we will be enabled to graduate, next June, & thereby save one year Several old students have have [sic] left the here [sic] because they were not satisfied with the course of instruction & there are only twelve (12) members of the Freshman class In short the University is a farce on a large scale. I think there will be a general breaking up before long, unless some very radical measures are taken. There are about 90 here.

3543.

Edmund
Walker
Jones Papers

E. Jones to his father, 26 August 1867

Thinking that perhaps by this time you might feel some inclination to hear how matters are going on at the Hill, I will endeavor to portray the situation as well as posible [sic] I am somewhat at a loss to come to a definite conclusion as to the future of our University, but this much I think can safely be counted on, (i.e.,) that this is the last session here, or at all events the last in its present state. There must be either a great reaction or else the instruction is bound to go down. Now the question is which shall it be.

3914.

John F.
Speight
Papers

Richard Harrison Speight to his cousin,
31 August 1867

Every one in this vicinity seems to think that the prospects of the college are better now than they have been since the war. After this session the trustees intend adopting the University system, *that is teaching by lecture*. All of the professors have resigned, but I suppose most of them will be reelected.

Adjusting to College Life

Tasting freedom for the first time; the challenge of succeeding socially and academically; separation from family and friends; self-discovery—some aspects of the college experience have not changed much in two hundred years.

Edmund Deberry Covington Diary,
13 October 1842

1506 z.
*Edmund Deberry
Covington Diary*

I return to my room tonight with a deeply settled "Ennui." I strike a few chords on my Guitar which sooth[e] and lull me into deeper melancholy. They touch a kindred chord in my heart which beats responsive to the note. Remembrances spring up—the sorrows and pleasures of the past are before me. All the associations of home—Mother—brother, sister, all are here—Myself are before me and why am I here to do nothing? . . . I would toil and labor for Eminence for them alone—

William Bagley to Marietta Bagley, 6 April 1844

863z.
*William Bagley
Letter Books*

Now before I came to College I thought no one was my equal scarcely but the case is quite different for I have found out that I was sadly mistaken & that I am now nothing but a fool . . .

Hector McNeill to his mother, 5 November 1852

475z.
*Hector James
McNeill Letters*

Health is the first blessing that can bestowed on man & more especially in such a place as I inhabit now[.] I have seen some poor fellows get

but very common attention here[.] It is here not like home where you can have a tender mother's care & a loving sister's attendance[.]

1561.

*Henry Mauger
London Papers*

Henry M. London to his mother, 30 April 1899

This letter must needs be short as it is rather late and I wish to rise early tomorrow, being engaged in writing my graduating thesis I suppose a senior, when about to leave this old place, does feel some reluctance at departing. However, at present I am pretty well tired of college life, four years is enough for a college course, and makes a fellow feel like he is ready for anything just for a change.

4340.

*Allard Kenneth
Lowenstein
Papers*

Al Lowenstein to a friend, 2 July 1945

This place is truly as swell a place as you'll find anywhere(!) My Dorm room is one of the worst, but that's cause Navy, ROTC, Marines, Pre-Flight, etc., have taken over the newer facilities. I picked myself a roommate . . . & by chance, he's swell. If not *all* I hoped for in a Roomie, he's still a wonderful person—& maybe *I'm* not all *he* hoped for

Chapel Hill girls are swell. The U.N.C. ones are all Juniors-Seniors, but seem nice

I've had some bad moments, but things seem on the upswing

The amazing amount of Freedom (with a capital "F") that we get here is a tremendous help & boon. Believe it or not, I'm going to end up in love with U.N.C. . . . "Making the best of things" those first days is paying off dividends . . . but I *do* miss everybody & *pant* for mail.

John Schnorrenberg to his mother,
26 September 1949

4002.
*Schnorrenberg
Family Papers*

I like college (I am not the first) but it is work as well as fun

I have a chance now for four years to learn something and to see many things I will not see soon again. I'm trying to take the chances as they come. Planetarium, art galleries, concerts, [P]laymakers, musicals etc. All come my way. None cost too much.

John Schnorrenberg to his mother, 7 June 1953

4002.
*Schnorrenberg
Family Papers*

I went last night to a very pleasant reunion dinner of the class of 1952. There were only some 25 people there but it was a good meal and it was nice to see some of the people I had never met in college. I am beginning to suspect that at lea[s]t here at this University[,] class unity if any is a thing fostered, nurtured and created after graduation rather than before.



The classical pavilion was built over the well in 1897. These students posed together about 1900. [North Carolina Collection]

Advice from a Student

Student essay, circa 1851

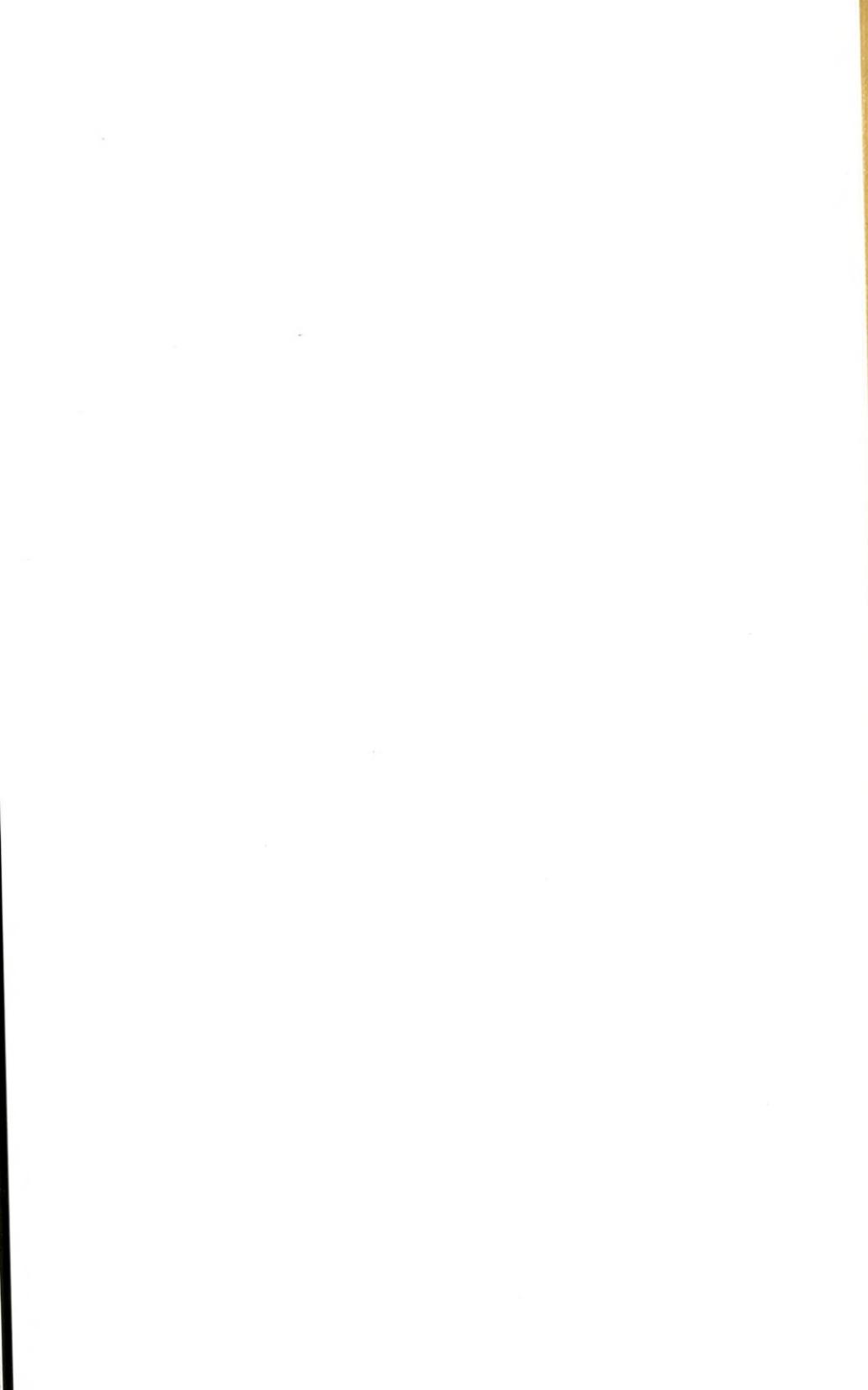
3621z.
*Bartholomew
Fuller Papers*

The "Dangers of a College Life"

The dangers to which a young man is exposed during that part of his life which he passes in college, are numerous and difficult to oppose with a firm, unyielding spirit. After he has left the place, where till that time he has been under the supervision of those, whose duty it was to watch over and guide his erring steps and to guard well the disposition to contract vices of every kind; he feels himself at liberty as he thinks to act *for* himself, and the consequence in most cases is a departure from those principles of moral conduct, which have been instilled into his mind from early youth. If he could realize, that the habits contracted at college will follow him through subsequent life, and perhaps in more aggravated forms; he would more readily recognise the duty to guard well himself lest he should yield to temptation. There is danger of extravagance. This is to be shunned with diligence as it is of an increasing and insinuating kind. Surrounded with kindred spirits, each indulgence paves the way for a greater until he quiets his upbraiding conscience with the soothing argument, that it is necessary to keep up appearances[.] There is another danger to which he should present an invincible front, that which is called in common parlance "spreeing" this habit from its apparently harmless character, is readily contracted, and it appears in a short time to be a very creditable thing, to disturb the faculty and his fellow students with noise and annoyances of

different kinds[.] This vice should especially be avoided on account of its prolific nature, it begets many others, which when expanded under the fostering care they are likely to receive [sic], become of as great importance as the parent vice. Among its offspring may be enumerated, idleness, disrespect towards superiors, a general spirit of insubordination and a neglect of duties, which while they render him more prone to indulge in aberrations from the path of rectitude, debilitate, and enslave the mind, fasten it upon the common things of the world, and if at any-time, tired of such groveling occupations it would soar above the sphere in which it has been so long confined, it finds its pinions shackled and as the moth flitting around a candle, after a few feeble flutterings dies, so the mind after a few vigorous exertions sinks again into the same supineness and inanity as before; and if it thinks at all of lifting itself, it is only as one thinks of an impossibility[.] The mass of evil habits, which which [sic] a long course of indulgence has heaped up around the once noble powers, prevents the jewel from sparkling with its primitive brilliancy. It is thus that we may imagine one who though having received [sic] the highest honors of college, is yet a slave to the most pernicious habits—his fine intellect becoming day by day less right, and suffering himself to be led on by the syren vice of temptation, until in the mediocre man you would fail to recognise the talented scholar to whom all once conceded the first might.

Profanity too he should put far from him. This vice is often produced by peculiar circumstances[,] with some it seems to be one of the qualifications of a man, there is one other which I am sorry to add is drunkenness[.] Oh that anyone should ascribe such qualities to these the worst of all sins! Vices which if indulged will corrupt the noblest nature, and which if persisted in by anyone, will draw down upon him the everlasting burning of the fire that is not quenched, and the ever gnawing tortures of the worm







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