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Mr. Arthur Dunlap

[0:00:00]

Mr. Dunlap: This is Arthur R. Dunlap speaking. I recently retired from the Department of English after 39 years of service. I came here first in 1928 at invitation of the Department of English. I've been in Harvard and received my master's degree.

At that time when there was acting chairman named Erwood Matthews, he was acting in the absence W L. Seyfried who was the regular chairman of the department. I came down in September 1928, Dr. Seyfried and the other members of the English department, W L. Blare who was the Shakespeare specialist, E P. Congko who was the Director of Dramatics. Dramatics was then a part of the English Department and George Berry.

And then there was one more member in the department namely George Eton Dutton who was also dean on the School of Arts and Science. That was the size of the department in those days. History department was correspondingly large. The head of the History department was George Rayden and he's associates were James Barkley and Frank Squire.

Interviewer: How good was the English department in terms of student going?

Mr. Dunlap: Well the whole school was relatively small and I suppose it was as good a better less than thousand students the whole university at that time. And there were, small number of buildings compared with present day. We had our offices in what was then called Primal Hall and has been called out until just recently. Now, the alumni office and then housed the History department also and there was one secretary for both the English and History department. His name is Mary McCafferty and she was a sister of Margaret McCafferty who was the secretary to the president.

We had most of our classes in a building called recitation hall which is now the home of the Department of Art. And then there was old college and an old gymnasium was there and building hall and mechanical hall which was still I think been used by the military department. It used to be School of Engineering at one time, but there was a new building for the School of Engineering Evan's hall and we had some classes at Evan's Hall. The library was there and *[inaudible]* [0:04:29] hall was there. That was all in the north campus. Of course we were separated under the men's college and women's college and there were several buildings in the south end of the campus for the women. And then Harter Hall

[phonetics] **[0:04:50]** of course was there as a dormitory and the two paternity houses that are near Primal Hall were there.

[0:05:05]

Interviewer: Was there much coordination between the men's college and the women's college?

Mr. Dunlap: No. We had separate faculties – no a common faculty but separate administrations and separate classes. There was real segregation of men and women in those days. And some of the courses, it was duplication of effort really because advance courses would be given one semester at men's college and one semester at women's college. And you could easily have put both groups into one class in one semester and it wouldn't have stretched the services or strained anybody.

But this was done that way because of concept that Dean Robinson's had to is dean of women and she have been trained I think at *[inaudible]* **[0:06:15]** and had that approach of education of women. So she was out having a separate and distinct college for the girls. And they had I think better students, perhaps more select students in the southern end of the campus, but of course there are good students in the men's college as well as down below.

The chief proponent as I recall out of the merger was Dr. Seyfried who was I think at that time acting president, Dr. *[inaudible]* **[0:07:11]** have had an embolism and passed on and he was acting head. And I mean Dr. Seyfried as acting head and I think it had been his feeling for a number of years as a great waste and a great duplication. So he was the moving force as far as I know behind this or considered opposition I think on the part of women's college to the merger. The feeling was that the achievement of the women's college over the years, the standards which have been set and so on with everything there would be changed and not changed for the better.

But it seems that this was an inevitable move not only in the light of conditions of that time, but in the light of developments in our recent times and probably just as well that it took place did.

You want to start with a question?

Interviewer: Just if you could describe the nature of the student in the early years that you were here.

Mr. Dunlap: Well, the typical student I'm thinking perhaps more Delaware college student than our student from the southern end of the campus, it seems to me in 1928 and the years following to be fairly well groomed, eager, willing, ambitious to a degree, many of them have come here the urging of their parents because their parents wanted them to have a better kind of life than they've been able to have themselves.

[0:09:55]

And these students settle down, worked hard enough to achieve what was called a gentleman's grade and had a good time in the bargain, enjoyed social life of the campus. And it was a fair amount of this especially on the weekends, dances. Of course the student body was divided into those who commuted and those who did not. And the commuting students of course were not glad to be around very much on the weekend and so didn't participate as much in the social activities as those who live down the campus.

Interviewer: You mentioned about seeing students who would remind you today of students.

Mr. Dunlap: The question arises how much is a student in the earlier days different from the student of today. My feeling is that there is a great deal of similarity between students today and students back in the earlier days when I first came here. There is a group today fairly small percentage I would say of the student body not more than 10 percent certainly who have different ideas, different approaches, different attitudes, but a great many of the students when you stand before them in the classroom remind you of students that you had in times passed, both in their attitudes and ideas and approaches as well as in their parents.

I spoke earlier about the size of the department when I came here. It was roughly speaking half a dozen or half way speaking, half a dozen members including a young woman whom I got to mention before named Nora Beam Kellya. She was strictly speaking member of the women's college, but she joined sooner department meetings into all intents and purposes whereas full pledged member of the department.

During my career at the university, the department grew from approximately six to over 60 and the number of specialists that we have in the department ultimately made it possible for us to offer not only graduate or toward the master's degree, but graduate work toward the PhD degree. This PhD program has been running now for, I don't know, six or seven or eight years. And it turned out a number of students they

all found places in the teaching profession, some of them very good places. We have a man at Toronto for instance, one in Vermont, one in Mary, man and woman at *[inaudible]* **[0:14:20]** in the New York State system.

So my particular area of interest is medieval period. And when I came here, Dr. Seyfried was the specialist in this period and he was interested primarily in Chaucer studies.

[0:14:57]

He's succeeded in building after very good Chaucer collection which we've carried on and I think it's a fine collection now for that phase of our endeavor. But Dr. Seyfried was not interested in other medieval studies as much as we have in Chaucer and remained for us to develop other courses in the middle English period and courses in the old English period to give our students opportunity to study in this important area.

The Department of English in the university has under the leadership of Dr. Seyfried in particular has maintained close contact with secondary school teachers of English in the state. We had an organization called the Delaware Council Teachers of English which I was secretary of treasurer at one time. This was a group of people from the university in the English department and from the various school systems in the state. And that's still an act of organization. And each year now, January we have a meeting on the campus with these teachers.

Another aspect of this part of our work is the staging of institutes, you remember that the government has supported institutes for teachers and our department has run several of these institutes. And I was a teacher in the first one that we had here and then the third one, I was director in the institute and other people who have worked in these institutes are Mr. Arman and Dr. Osenberry, George Henry and Frank Newman, Bruce Finny and Max Kirsch in the Department of Language and Literature.

Interviewer: What are the purposes of these institutes?

Mr. Dunlap: Well the purpose of these institutes is to help the teachers come abreast of the latest developments and criticism in linguistic and methods of teaching. And it was fine when the government would support these but in more recent years we haven't had the support, but we've been carrying primarily on our own particularly under Dr. Newman's leadership.

In thinking back over the years that I've been here, I'd like to speak a word of appreciation for the finest group of people that I've been associated with. We've never had a split in our department. This is one of the curses of American college teaching. We've never developed an attitude of scorned hard teaching of lower division courses.

[0:20:04]

And I think I'd like to pay tribute to a number of fine number of fine people, some of whom I've mentioned before. It's been a great pleasure for me to get to know men like Dr. Seyfried and W L. Blare, George Rayden and Frank Squire, Lawrence Wilson, *[inaudible]* **[0:20:51]**, Seed Bradford Mitchell and many other members of the department most of whom are around still and I'm not embarrassed by mentioning their names but this is one of the great delights of having a career like mine in the university.

[0:21:25]

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