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S T E T

The Wilmington Press

All through my years at Wilmington College I had a comradery with the newspapers that sometimes shocked me with the intimacy and friendliness of it. I think I can honestly say that I never made overtures to the papers, seeking to curry popularity by tooting my own horn. I was weak on that point to a fault. I never took the pains nor the time to organize regular newspaper publicity for the college, although I often thought of it and the friendly reporters besought me to do so. I did furnish much material, some of it personal, by request, but most of it consisted of programs, announcements, promotional plans: but "to toot my own horn" I was a "dud", and recoiled from it.

In those same early years when I was making my debut in Wilmington, the Wilmington NEWS had come to town and started its new paper in a room down S. South Street, between Sugar-tree and the Pensy tracks. Its bright and hustling young manager and proprietor, W.J. Galvin, was especially congenial and enterprising, and I liked him, and I think he liked me. I liked to drop around at his place, and he always wanted me to do so, and wanted to do some favor. "You and I", he would say, "we're both starting here at the same time", and he said it in a way and a manner that made me catch the same hustling spirit that he himself had, as he hustled and rustled and talked and worked, and his spirit and his hustle seemed to make his old style press rattle and hum and run faster. But the NEWS was a new-comer in Wilmington, a competitor breaking into the field of the

long established JOURNAL-REPUBLICAN. The JOURNAL had its tentacles around Wilmington and Clinton County pretty tightly drawn and was wary about this new-comer. Rivalry was inevitable, I could see that, and it made me careful. The JOURNAL was a good typical weekly newspaper and was the organ of Republicanism in Wilmington and Clinton County. The NEWS was Republican too, but was a lot more newsy about what was going on around town and on the streets. Its editor was young and bright and alert, and every day he found out something that was happening and let the people read about it the same day it happened. the JOURNAL then started coming out as a semi-weekly, and was going out after the news and printing it while it was still hot. "Dusty" Miller was on the JOURNAL staff. He lived out at the Campus Grounds on Fife Avenue in the house that he now occupies again. His two boys were still wearing dresses, so "Dusty" was young then too, and every day walked by the college grounds and was watching around the college, and whenever I happened to run into "Dusty", he would stop and would have something to say or to ask about, and frequently got me to say something unconsciously or casually, as two men will do when they meet on the street or elsewhere, and I often forgot, when talking or hob-nobbing with "Dusty" Miller or John Galvin, that I was talking with news reporters. The men were hot after the news and could scent it against the wind. The college got publicity, lots of it, of the choicest kind, untainted and untinged with propaganda, and

I prize it. I have bundles of clippings that I am not ashamed to show, because not one of them was sought or self-inspired.

John Galvin has bestowed a legacy of clean, ardent, potent publicity upon Wilmington College ever since the advent of his DAILY NEWS into Wilmington, and to me personally as to Wilmington College he has been a friend that I can never adequately compensate as my heart would like to do. And "Dusty", who can ever repay "Dusty" for all his tributes paid personally and in name to the multitudes of folks that he meets and remembers and compliments in his inimical columns. His words are imbued with heart-felt tenderness toward his friends and he warmly befriends them. Why, it would fairly break "Dusty's" heart, if he should hurt anybody's feelings by what he says or does. Somehow I feel that John Galvin and "Dusty" Miller are the two stems that twined naturally into one great trunk when the NEWS and the JOURNAL united into one great voice, one great newspaper, that is far above and beyond the stature of the ordinary county newspaper. Wilmington has a metropolitan news service and owes this distinction to the genius of W.J. Galvin and the institution he founded in the WILMINGTON DAILY NEWS-JOURNAL.

Note--"Dusty" is the trade name for Thurman.

Of all the unsought, surprising, amazing bouquets thrown at me by "Dusty", I think none so humbled me and at the same time so raised my Ego higher and made me want to dare and do loftier things as did one little write-up that "Dusty" gave me way back in the days of the JOURNAL, when he was posing as the astronomer pointing out the stars of the "Milky Way". Think of it, how would you feel if you were pointed out as a star? A sun that would mean, in one of the great other worlds of the universe. O, "Dusty", how could you do it? But "Dusty" did just that and printed it. It makes me cringe, but I'll give you part of it here :

" The biggest little man in Clinton County, the most surprising amount of energy with the least noise or bluster about it, the most tactful leader one could find in a crowd of a thousand, a man of precision in thought and action, a man of wisdom, of shrewdness, of culture, of integrity, of keen business judgment, and moreover a man of deep religious conviction and sternest ideas of right and wrong, and yet a man of kindness, of broad-mindedness and of liberality--that's No. 34. *****

" No. 34 does not speak until he has something to say, but when he says something it counts. He has that remarkably rare trait, which hundred of men would give worlds to possess, of being sure of his course and sure of his methods in following the course."

No other astronomer but "Dusty" could have described so sincerely and so magnanimously

"My Star" as I would want it to appear in the world. "Dusty", live forever in my garden of memories, and live forever in the annals of Wilmington College.

In building up the NEWS-JOURNAL, Galvin shows his mighty ken for bright reporters, and some of his pick have grown up themselves to be real celebrities. Miss Elizabeth Reardon would range out to my office every week or oftener to see what I had for news, and invariably I would be caught empty-headed and empty-handed, and would confess I had neglected to make any notes, and would promise that surely I would do better next time. I could not think of anything off-handed that I thought worthwhile to publish. Miss Reardon in particular was never satisfied, and lingered and visited a little and went away apparently dissatisfied. Then to my surprise the NEWS next day would carry a jubilantly good story about some project going on at the college or about to take place. Well, no wonder our bright little sun-glow blonde reporter turns out in these later years to be a nationally known columnist with the trade-name MARY HAWORTH. One never knows in this school business when he is facing up with celebrities, for MARY HAWORTH is one and is still setting the world right, giving them the tongue, and hails right out of Wilmington.

Kenneth Kerr and Raymond Howard and Kroger Babb were three others, smart reporters and learners under Galvin, all of them, and they were great racers as

students out at the college; that is, they raced through their studies in a hurry, and threw their books away, I suppose, in their hurry to think up something themselves that they wanted to write about. It was just a little problematic sometimes how to keep their statistics (Grades) on an even keel with their genius for running the world and making it go faster. Fine boys were these young cub reporters, and I am glad that I fought off the Profs when they whined about grades and other things. It paid off with me, for some of the best and finest publicity I ever got or the college ever got came from these young quillers, and now just see how they are still at it, every last one of them, and they are what we call "Big Guns" now, making a really big, big boom.

Raymond Howard runs his own live newspaper and heads the R. B. Howard and Associates, Inc., Public Relations Consultants, at Columbus, Ohio, and can say "Thumbs Up" or "Thumbs Down", as he chooses, being his own editor and being a Big League member on the Republican State Committee. The politicians, big or little, don't snub Raymond, not ever, I am told, not if they expect to stay in the pack. Why, he used to lean up against the end of my desk, negotiating about his schooling and itching at the same time to get away from it. He was so quiet you would never suspect he was loaded up with all that T.N.T.

When our 1923 campaign was in the offing, Kenneth Kerr was just out of the crib at Wilmington College and was the young and hustling manager of the CLINTON COUNTY DEMOCRAT. There always was just a make-believe

fence between the Democrats and Republicans of Clinton County. Whenever a community project was in the air, people just ignored the fence, stepped over it or crept under it or kicked it all out of the way. That is the way they acted in our campaigns for the college, and the college couldn't tell, either by the color or by the odor, which was Democrat money and which was Republican money. I wondered sometimes, when reading a boosting yelp that was printed in both the DEMOCRAT and the NEWS, whether it was Galvin or Kerr that did it. Anyway they were brothers-in-law as well as brothers in the brotherhood of the press, but one was Democrat and the other Republican, or vice versa.

But nobody, not even Galvin, could out-do Kenneth when he undertook to do a thing. During the preliminary publicity stages of our 1923 campaign, what he did for us without our asking for it was nothing less than a great triple-section twenty-four page special edition of the DEMOCRAT devoted almost exclusively to Wilmington College and its coming campaign. All this was gratis to the college. The whole history of the college was pictorialized and publicized beyond anything the college could have afforded to do out of its budget. Kenneth attended Wilmington College, but did not graduate. He was too busy getting the world keyed up so it could be talked about, and this coupled with a beautiful prospective bride ready and waiting for him to hurry up led him to take a short cut through college. But, Kenneth, I wrote you in my list of bright boys and have never scratched your name

from the list, and I shall never do so, for see what a really big man you have become in the world.

John Galvin and Kenneth Kerr through their papers and their reporters have contributed thousands of dollars worth of publicity to the college, without cost, and it was publicity that was priceless, because it was voluntary, not propagandized, but given for the weal of the college and the weal of Wilmington.

I need not tell Wilmington what horizons have lifted and extended in the visions of Kroger Babb and his globe encircling enterprises. But I will try to show you the bright inner ray and hue of Kroger's heart and character, ^{which you might miss} if you have not watched him rise from his boyish youth to his present mature manhood and grandeur of success with his visions still reaching on beyond. Kroger is a fine typical illustration and example of the vocational principles I have been advocating, that take nothing out of the precepts of right character and learning, but stimulate success, because success will rise invariably when people find their fitness in a vocation where heart and might can work together.

When Kroger became settled on the NEWS-JOURNAL staff, he headed his column with the title, "BUMBLE BEE". Only Kroger would think of such a name, but it was mighty significant. It was a buzzing column, every issue of it, and wherever Kroger is, there is going to be a lot of buzzing or else a lot of stinging, one or the other, and I have observed that the folks around

Kroger prefer to buzz. Anyway, I once got my name buzzed in the Bumble Bee column, and it was such a nice revealing of Kroger's appreciative and discriminating nature, that I have saved that clipping for the past twenty odd years, and I know (or hope) you will concede me the right to quote some lines of it here, copied from the Bumble Bee column of the NEWS-JOURNAL of May 20, 1927—

" Not only has Wilmington College been lifted to a much higher plane by President Jay, but he also has had a big hand in the expansion of athletics at the local institution. To-day Wilmington College athletic teams possess records that rival any school's in the State, considering all things.

" President Jay has always appreciated the good that comes from successful athletic teams, and has even worked overtime, smoothing out difficulties and aiding Coach Bolen in order to help put the standards of the local school's athletics at the highest possible point.

" We recall an instance that happened some years ago which gave us our first impression of the W.C. Prexy and one we believe worth passing on to you.

" Wilmington College vs Dayton University football, at Dayton, was the setting of the story. Making the trip with the team, we happened to be by Coach Bolen's side when he addressed complimentary tickets to be left at the box office for some few Wilmington

" people. "Preident Jay" he wrote on an envelope, and we cut in with 'No use wasting those tickets, because he won't come over here in all this rain'.

" Coach Bolen said, 'If there is any one here from Wilmington, President Jay will be here'.

" The officials were discussing the condition of the water-soaked field just prior to the opening whistle when in came President Jay and his party. Through two hours of slashing rain President Jay sat still watching the team from his school battle a much stronger one from a much larger school.

" Our friend in the press box said, 'I can understand now how you get so much fighting spirit in those kids over at Wilmington. When the President of a school will sit through a game when it is raining like this, just to see his team beaten so badly, and then stand up and take it with a smile, there is a good spirit there'.

"There was spirit there too, spirit that's not found in the heart of many Prexies, and it's **this spirit** of which we speak.

"President Jay was always ready, day or night, to assist Wilmington College athletics or athletes, and to him goes all the credit of making it possible for W.C. coaches to produce winning teams."

a thousand above par, for I had just resigned at Wilmington College, and the greatest crisis of my whole life was brewing and brooding over me. Kroger did not know this, of course, and did not know how much he was doing for me. I did follow the teams to Dayton, to Otterbein, to Purdue, to Columbus, to Earlham, to wherever I could. Who should desire to do so more than I? I got enjoyment and relaxation out of it. It was as good as a vacation. All that I ever did for W.C. Athletics or for any other department, I did it just in my stride, in my official as well as in my personal duty, and as the inclination of my heart towards my work and my responsibilities in behalf of those around me. One does not tire in this spirit. He tires only when thwarted at heart.

I wince a little again, as I put these lines into my narratives, seeing how personal they are. But at the time when they were written their value to me went up

XXIV

HEAVY ON MY CHEST

Open Letter
 To
 Wilmington Yearly Meeting

I am reluctant, very reluctant, to offer the suggestions expressed in this letter, for I am not unaware of the repercussions of divided sentiment that these words of mine may create. What I wish to offer however is offered with kindest regards in behalf of everyone involved, and especially with tender regard for the welfare and feelings of my own church body. But, I do want to bring to issue a movement that I believe would redound to the greater good of all the public, my church included. What I shall say comes out of a conviction of mind and heart, that I have carried and travailed with for the past twenty-five years or more. My convictions have come to me out of long and trying experiences, observations, and visions of trends. What I propose involves and affects the very soul and well-being of Wilmington Yearly Meeting, of Wilmington College, of the City of Wilmington, and of Clinton County.

I propose that the movement be started looking towards the transference of the status of Wilmington College as a private institution to the status of a municipal or community college controlled by a Board of Trustees elected by the public electorate of whatever domain the future corporation of the college may include. This community field might be ^{the} City of Wilmington, or

Wilmington and Clinton County, or it might revive the political fuss and become an institution created by the State Legislature to carry on some specific type of vocational training like was indicated in the Marshall-Hazard Bill. The point is, there must be some distinctive broader field found for Wilmington College than what can be attained through its present limited denominational forces. Not only is there a field to be found, but the very name should be changed to Ohio Southwestern College or to some name not so localized and provincial as is the present name Wilmington College.

I am deeply sensitive of the misconceptions that may arise regarding my motives. I must take that chance. If I am mistaken in my outlook, I know that I can trust in the intelligent public opinion of the citizenry of Wilmington and the sound judgment of the Yearly Meeting to safeguard the right course of events. I can hardly expect a generous favorable action at once. But, wait. Consider before destining. At least, the transference would require time: much time and much unselfish planning. There are difficult problems involved: legal as well as moral and political, but all problems are solvable, none are unsolvable, if taken in right approach and honest approach.

The movement could get started, I suggest, by the creating of a special Public Relations Committee for the College, composed of appointees by the Yearly Meeting and an equal number of appointees by the City Council of Wilmington. Such a

Committee would have no official powers but would have tremendous weight if its deliberations were done faithfully and conscientiously for the public interest. It should be composed of the finest and best public spirited minds in both Yearly Meeting and the City. Let this Committee study the problems and possibilities from all standpoints, legal as well as moral and political and within the year report its progress and findings to the Permanent Board of the Yearly Meeting, where it could be decided in respect to what further action should be taken. If carried through these proper channels there will be no divisive public arguments. Let the public have time to think and to feel for the consciousness of what is right and the public can be trusted.

Of the many facts involved in the consideration of this question by the Yearly Meeting, here is one that cannot be veiled, but must be resolved with intelligence and candor. For the past twenty-five years, the dominant policies of operation, promotion, and expansion of Wilmington College have edged it farther and farther away from partisan control as a denominational school. For the first forty years the college enrollment was practically static, around the one hundred mark. Now the annual enrollment has jumped five hundred, seven hundred hundred, yes, a thousand percent. This increase has not come from the Quaker fields. In the earlier history, the student body was seventy-five percent Quaker, the Faculty was one hundred percent Quaker and the

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administration was rigidly denominational. It is not so now, not at all. It could not be thus and survive. It could not be thus and be fair, for it is living on resources of patronage and money that come preponderantly from outside the Quaker Denomination. If not for this, the college would die. I level no criticism, I am stating a condition. I myself, as much as anyone else ever did, contributed to this situation. I had to in order to enhance the income and keep the college going and keep it growing. Let us Quakers not lose the view in front of us. Our college we say is Christian, as if there are other colleges that are not Christian. Our college is Christian. Yes, that is, it is Christian like all Americanism is Christian. Not more. Problems that bob up at other colleges, do bob up occasionally on the Wilmington campus. Wilmington College is vaguely Quaker. Not more. So much has transformed the face of Wilmington College during the past ~~thirty~~ years, that seventy-five percent of its students and faculty do not know the real heart of its mother, the Yearly Meeting. We all hardly stop to ponder the anguish that would paralyze the souls of the founders, could they return and gaze upon the college. They gave of their substance and of their labors and of their prayers for a particular ideal that is now past and gone beyond return. Wilmington College as the partisan denominational school that it formerly was does not now exist and can not return. Can we honorably hold within our denominational clutches the sovereignty

of this great complex institution which we cannot adequately cherish and which we do no longer dominate? These are solemn realities, hard and fast realities, which we must face, not in criticism and desperation, but in honesty and responsibility.

Expansion has been the only means of survival, and that still is true. In the future, not only expansion in numbers but also improvements and replacements in buildings will have to be secured, and equipments will have to keep apace with new standards. A large church constituency with large resources of church wealth might provide all this. But Wilmington College has neither a large Quaker constituency nor has it immense resources of church wealth. Neither has it now an adequate endowment to guarantee its future operational needs.

But I have always been deeply sensitive of the fact that Wilmington Yearly Meeting needs a Quaker college to which it can direct its young members whose parents would like to send them to a school where they will be intelligently imbued with the philosophy of Friends views concerning the Christian life and faith while they are, at the same time, acquiring the fundamentals of their collegiate education. This I wish could be the happy fortune of every young person in my church body. This is what Wilmington College was founded to do, but its course of development and means of survival have changed its character and its trends. Wilmington College is not now such a college, and, I fear could never again turn back and fulfill the place of

a strictly denominational college. Furthermore I would be uncertain whether or not it would be advantageous for it to do so if it could, for the Wilmington Quaker field lies within the field and within the shadow of an older and more stabilized Quaker denominational college. So, I will make a suggestion.

Fifty-five years ago I graduated from Earlham College, which ^{was} then and is now the one great typical, consistent denominational college within the Society of Friends. There is no other Friends college whose foundings, traditions, standards, location, and management so completely fulfill the place of a Friends denominational college as does Earlham. Earlham is established and well known nationally. Earlham is what no other Friends college can become. These statements about Earlham, I think, could not be strongly challenged by any of the other Yearly Meeting colleges of the Friends, unless an exception be made in behalf of Guilford College. Guilford is a finely poised Quaker college. But Guilford lies below the Mason and Dixon Line. Guilford is indeed the Earlham of the South. Guilford belongs to the South. It should stay keyed to the South and the great southern traits and traditions. I am not wishing to minimize the significance or importance of any one of our Quaker colleges. But in Wilmington Yearly Meeting Earlham overshadows us as the great center of Quakerism where the ^{Quaker} traditions and trends come to focus. Wilmington is within two hours driving distance to Earlham and for those Friends who would

send their children to a college where Friends teachings and customs are dominant and forthright, Earlham, I say, if we are unprejudiced, is the school for them. This in no sense obviates or minimizes the significance or importance of Wilmington College in some great distinctive domain of its own where it can accomplish some great needful field of education.

I have always been sensitive of this fact, that Wilmington and Clinton County want to keep their college alive and growing. They do not begrudge it to the Friends, if the Friends devote their loyalty and their wealth and their might in earnest to make it a great institution. Wilmington not only wishes to see the college kept alive and growing, but expects more than that. Wilmington as a city would languish without its college. Wilmington knows that, and Wilmington wants a great college, a greater one than anyone partisan group can create. Sooner or later, the times and the needs and the civic spirit of the community will demand that the college be operated under some kind of auspices that can give it adequate support. I have seen and felt this spirit of Wilmington like a mighty wind blowing. I love my church and crave its sheltering care, as a Homing loves its roof-shelter. But I will respect the winds that blow, as a sparrow respects the hurricane, lest it be dashed to the ground dead.

By the magnanimity and generosity of a friendly public cooperating, the

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Friends have saved and made Wilmington College what it is to-day, a magnificent contribution to the up-lift and well-being of all the community, for a whole half century. They have not, of themselves, now, the resources of people nor of money to make the college what it will aspire to be within the next quarter of a century. Let my church therefore at this zenith hour of opportunity, establish itself even more greatly, more beneficially, more beneficently than it ever yet has done as a Friends force among all the people around, by opening the way voluntarily, and with gestures of good-will make the way open for Wilmington College to become in reality the foster child of the whole community. Make the way open for Wilmington College to become a non-partisan, non-denominational public institution. Besides the security and permanency vouchsafed through the voted support of public funds, this would pose a constant invitation, inspiration, and inducement for great legacies of private wealth to flow into the college to establish memorials for the donors or their kin or their friends or for the sheer spirit of public welfare and patriotism. The public child would find both fame and fortune.

The initiative is with the Yearly Meeting. Make Wilmington College a proffered gift to the City of Wilmington or to Clinton County or to some created public corporation, its buildings, grounds, equipment, organization, and good-will to have, to hold, and to operate as a public institution of learning. After all, the people are

one community, one body politic of Friends, Methodists, Baptists, Christian, Catholics, Presbyterians, all. We get along harmoniously in our several groups of different church fellowships, but we could cooperate best for the public weal, in which we all share, through the use of the elective processes of a democratic community.

As I contemplate the future of Wilmington College and what may its fortune be, one tragic story comes to my mind. It is the ghost-story of the old Lebanon University. It was once a great school, in the days of the old National Normal University, big, renowned, booming, having a thousand bustling students swarming the town the year around and coming from everywhere. But it was privately owned. If the owners of it had not hugged it and saved it as their own, Miami University might have arisen at Lebanon instead of at Oxford, for BEFORE Miami was, the hatchings of Lebanon were out and running in the yards. Had the powers that owned the National Normal (Lebanon University) when it was great, greater than any single owner could encompass and project to the future, proffered it, willed it, assigned it to the public, to the state, it might well be the great south-western university in Ohio to-day. The institution died with its owners hugging it to the death. I myself laid the last wilting wreath upon its grave in 1917.

I think I am hearing the tolling of the bells for many small denominational

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colleges all over the world as well as inside the Quaker fields, unless they see a way and make a way to fuse into the great system of public education now founded in America, and turn their denominational forces towards the leavening of our democracy with the teachings of the churches instead of trying to encompass it in denominational housings.

I have nearly played myself out trying to write this chapter. Someone is already saying I am trying to take the college away from the Quakers. I am not trying to take anything away from anybody. I am trying to load the college on the backs of everybody, so it can be hoisted easily and supported grandly for us to pass and profit by. It is hard for us to pass from the times of yesterday to the times of present years. But it is not now the role nor the call of the churches to own and to operate the institutions of public education, like it was even a hundred years ago, for instance, or even seventy-five years ago, when the public school system was a struggling infant in swaddling clothes. If the church, of illiteracy from wanted to lift the cloud, of illiterate schools, and its people, it had to devise schools, and elementary schools, academies, and colleges sprang up everywhere wherever Quaker communities settled. Quakers were forward and concerned in this matter of the education of children. The power of the Quakers has always been not so much in their populous numbers and their money as in their "principles", and education has been one of the great principles of the Quakers.

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But, NOW, the Public School System—and it covers colleges and universities as well as high schools and elementary schools—has grown swiftly and powerfully and has become the greatest single integrated system in this nation and has spread as a great mantle of light and protection over all the people. The role of the church therefore is not now to try to duplicate or imitate or cringe or rebuff against this great public system, but the role of the church is to mingle and to move within it, and to muster all its forces to Christianize public opinion and to imbue Christian citizenship among the leaders and makers of our nation: to leaven public education with the principles of a Christian democracy. If this is not done, all the private schools and colleges of the world cannot save us and keep us free.

This is the way I am seeing the relations of the Friends in Wilmington now, in respect to their beloved institution in their midst. They cannot keep it as a private trophy and save it. They can dedicate it, and thereby glorify it and themselves besides.

It has not been easy for me to write these things. It has well-nigh overcome me to do so. My courage has failed me often and I laid the papers aside. Then I picked them up again to re-read what I had tried to forget. Finally, I am letting them go to you. The destiny now is in your hands, not mine. But, let us keep our faith alive, our churches strong, and our hearts steeled to meet the duties of our trusts.

I have allowed myself to become far more profuse than I intended to do when I started these narratives. But it is a serious line that I have felt and spoken at times and I have measured my words. As I now review my years, my battles lost and won, and reconsider the pleadings and calls I made through twelve successive years before the Yearly Meeting and before the whole public, and survey in retrospect the growth and changes of those years, I contemplate with deep solicitude what may be the distant future of it all. I am moved with both hope and apprehension for the cause I served, whether it will be backward or onward, upward or downward, or What? If you have never contemplated thoughts like these, you have never truly loved your college. You would be like a parent that fondles and enjoys his child, but makes no will to perpetuate his love and protection for his child. What must Wilmington College be to be great? Ask that question and lose some sleep over it, for the day is coming when that question will be up, and the answer will be in your franchise.
