

Benjamin L. Chapman

████████████████████  
Lexington, Virginia 24450

December 11

Dear President Wilson,

Yesterday I received a communication from Jack Warner which has prompted me to write you a note of encouragement.

In spite of nostalgic claims to the contrary, when I was a student in the early 1960's Washington & Lee was asleep at the switch. Compared to colleges of the front rank our facilities were badly dated, our endowment negligible and our faculty riddled with doddering ancients. As an academic institution our chief claims were the various traditions and the memory of Robert E. Lee. We loved the place anyway.

However, since those days much has changed within and without. Because we now have the potential to be one of America's outstanding colleges, we no longer can be satisfied being merely a fine old Southern bastion living on memories and charm. We now have an obligation to excel also.

You have identified our problems and shortcomings. I support you in your efforts to correct them.

With best wishes,



Ben Chapman '64  
Reeves Center

December 14, 1983

Mr. Benjamin L. Chapman

████████████████████  
Lexington, Virginia 24450

Dear Ben:

Your personal note means much to me. I thank you most sincerely for taking time to write and in the way you have chosen. Clearly to have Jack Warner and other strong alumni deeply alienated is most disconcerting. I hope we manage to come out the other side and with the University in a strengthened position. That is the important thing. My own standing, or that of any other individual, is of little or no importance, next to the powerful mandate to make this place all it is capable of becoming. I share your view of the possible future and am deeply grateful to have your support in efforts to realize it.

Most sincerely,

John D. Wilson  
President

JDW/bcb