

Continuing the Tradition

In 1992, when Colonel Lanning P. Risher informed the board of trustees that he was contemplating retirement from his position as headmaster of Camden Military Academy, he also had the task of hiring a new commandant. Colonel Risher chose LTC William K. Orris, a West Point graduate who had earned a master's degree in education from Auburn University. After a successful Army career, LTC Orris was pursuing opportunities in education. The Camden opening was particularly appealing because of his military background.

LTC Orris assumed the commandant's duties in December of 1992. By the year's end Colonel Risher was so impressed by LTC Orris's leadership and administrative abilities that he proposed him to the board of trustees' search committee as a candidate for headmaster. The committee nominated LTC Orris and named him assistant headmaster in preparation for taking over the fulltime duties.

Quickly grasping the dimensions and details of his role during the 1993-1994 school term, LTC Orris displayed the qualities that the board of trustees had sought in a headmaster who would continue the Camden tradition: a heartfelt concern for the care and education of young men, a real understanding of the spirit and mission of Camden Military Academy, the ability to make intelligent administrative decisions, and possession of a sound business sense, a necessity for survival in a highly competitive environment. Before the school term ended, Colonel Lanning P. Risher officially retired, and Colonel William K. Orris became the new headmaster of Camden Military Academy.

Under the direction of Colonel Orris, the Academy is thriving. Enrollment is full, and there is a waiting list. The faculty and staff are strong, and graduates continue to enter the colleges of their choice. New computers have been placed in the library--with an internet connection--and in the classrooms. Moreover, the library has acquired many new titles. The most visible physical improvements are the Administration Building, the track and field facility, the swimming pool, and two new faculty homes; but the list is much longer: air-conditioning and renovations in the barracks and upgrades in the classrooms, the dining hall, and the gymnasium. Outside, there are new walkways, landscaping, and irrigation systems. All of these changes have enhanced the quality of life and learning at Camden Military Academy.

For these contributions, for his dedication to the care and education of young men, and for his forward-looking leadership as we embark upon the new millennium, we the Cadet Corps of Camden Military Academy respectfully dedicate the 1999 edition of *Excalibur* to Colonel William K. Orris.

