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Tim Sullivan '66 Named 25th President

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PRESIDENTS

W ill Tim Sullivan be the 26th or 27th president of the College—and if Paul Verkuil began his presidency as the 25th, how could he end it as the 24th? And why won’t Sullivan be the 26th? And who’s on first?

Until recently, the next president of William and Mary would have been the 26th since the College was founded in 1693. But last year, W. Wilford Kale ’66, author of Bark Upon the Gales: An Illustrated History of the College of William and Mary, pointed out that Benjamin Ewell had been counted twice—first as acting president from 1814 to 1849 and then as president from 1854 to 1888. Three others had served acting, or proton, terms—Kremer J. Heke in 1864 and James W. Miller in 1851 and George W. Healy in 1865—but none except Ewell’s term was counted in the chronology of presidents.

“May the presidential list be determined, the incumbent cannot be the 25th president,” Kale wrote of Verkuil. “He would either be the 24th president by correcting the one year Ewell served his pro tem term, or the 28th president with the inclusion of three other acting presidents.”

Based on Kale’s research, the Board of Visitors decided to eliminate all pro tem terms, making Paul Verkuil the 24th president and his successor, Tim Sullivan, the 25th.