

Call number: 02-00-64-07 CD 1

Narrator: William Cashen in San Diego, California. CD 1

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Place: San Diego, CA

Summary created by: Varpu M Lotvonen

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Notes: Originals on cassette tapes. Master copies on CD.

Series: William Cashen Collection

Recording starts with a lady's voice [later identified as Betty Clark] describing buildings [probably at the UAF campus.]: Their consultant Frank Knappi [?] is of the opinion that it's going to be an outstanding campus activity center. The committee has worked on the building for six years. They also have a new dining hall that is going to join three new dormitories on the upper ridge, Moore, Bartlett and Skarland. They are going to be joined by a common building so they will have commons as well as a lounge. Commons lounge and the dining hall are going to be open 15th of November in 1970. Kids don't have to go down to get meals.

Youth today are not as rugged as they were and so to walk for 5 or 6 minutes in 60-below weather is too tough. This way they can just go out of their rooms into a warm place [to eat]. Someone says they are getting soft. Betty gives Bill Cashen a turn to talk.

Bill Cashen tells jokingly about his wife's concerns about him traveling with Betty, and how they confused a hotel receptionist.

Bill tells that last night he told a story about how he met Marion [Hall Martin] the first time and will tell it again. Bill started at the college in 1933 and decided to go visit his family in Juneau in 1935. Rather, Bunnell suggested it to him. Cashen got to Valdez, and found out that the boat was quite full [but he got tickets for steerage]. It was the end of the canning season and about 250 Filipino cannery workers were going south in steerage. There was the gang there and the food was awful. Bill ate peanuts for a day and a half until he got to Juneau. On his way back Bill wanted to not have to travel in steerage, but found out in Juneau that the boat was full again. Again he was in the steerage. He found a way to get onto the main deck and cleaned up. Bill says that if you were dressed in reasonably clean clothes, they wouldn't send one back to the hole with the animals. This was the "schoolteacher's special" and Tony Campbell and a bunch of the professors were going back to the College, and Bill knew them all. They introduced him to several new students and among them was Marion Hall. Marion was introduced as a new co-ed. This was the second day out and Bill hadn't eaten and was starving, but he tried to make a good impression on Marion. When the dinner gong rang the lunch call, Marion suggested they take a couple quick walks around the deck to work up an appetite for lunch. Bill says he never forgave her for that.

Betty brought copies of picture Ziegler [Eustace Paul] made of Dr. Bunnell. Alumni Association had them made years ago. Dr. Bunnell didn't like them and Betty says the picture doesn't flatter him a bit. At that time he did look like the portrait. Betty has a photograph of him in her office that is delightful and more like how Betty wants to remember Bunnell.

Bunnell in the portrait looks ill, and the reproductions look better than the original. The Alumni Association commissioned Ziegler to make the portrait, says Bill. Betty has a bunch of copies and wants to give them out. According to Bill, the painting was made in 1949. It was painted from a series of Kodachrome slides and Bunnell was in his poorest health, "almost dead." Herb Hilser [Hilscher possibly, unclear ?] took the slides. He got Bunnell out of bed and robed him up, took the pictures, and sent them to Ziegler, who painted the portrait out of what he saw in the slides. A man's voice talks about Bunnell's appearances at the time: gray complexion, skin draping.

The picture was presented to the University on an Emeritus Day. Butch Butler [?] got up and made the presentation. They pulled the curtains aside and there were some mixed emotions: some people gasped and some people oohed and aahed. They weren't happy with it. A man's voice says Bunnell was a very dynamic person in his earlier days.

Someone has a photograph of Bunnell, taken in Seattle, that was very good.

A man's voice discusses how Bunnell became the president of the University. University was looking around for a president after it was founded and Bunnell was a judge at that time. Speaker's father was asked, along with several others, who they would like to become the president and they almost unanimously voted for Bunnell. Speaker's father was perhaps a bit biased because he was an attorney. They didn't see eye-to-eye in any legal affairs, so speaker suspects that there was a bit self interest in his recommending Bunnell.

Cashen tells that there was opposition too, and tells how he talked with Bob Bloom [ORAL HISTORY 02-00-64-02] who was the last surviving member of the first board. Cashen tells that Bloom didn't think Bunnell was qualified since he [Bunnell?] told he was only a second-grade teacher, and teaching Indians at that. Bob still goes around apologizing that he didn't get rid of Bunnell at that first meeting.

Bob said that him [Cashen], Lavery and Snodgrass wanted to get rid of Bunnell right away but Stevens let them down. Stevens would have been enough to at least stalemate the situation, but he went with Nerland, Richard, and Mrs. Hess. Cashen says he has [found] a resolution from the archives asking that he be dismissed for the good of the institution. It's in the hand writing of Robert Lavery, the grocer, and it's written on a sales-slip of Lavery's store. "Be it resolved that the resignation of Charles E. Bunnell hereby be requested for the good of the institution."

Gordon says that their chapter received a letter from Jean Bunnell Kennedy when Dr. Bunnell passed away somewhere maybe in a San Jose hospital in San Francisco area. Cashen tells it was 1st of November in 1956. A man's voice [Gordon?] discusses how their chapter was organized in October 21st in 1956 and he sent a letter for Jean Bunnell, requesting that Dr. Bunnell would be informed that they'd appreciate having him at their meeting [unclear, quiet].

Someone is asking people to tell any stories they know about Dr. Bunnell.

A man's voice [later identified as John Northrup] tells that on Mother's Day of 1938 they were in Unit 6. Terry O'Neill and some other gals threw a blanket down [unclear]. The sun was out and there was snow on the ground and they had a gallon of alcohol. It was only \$8 a gallon those days. There were 6 or 8 of them in the north-east corner of the Unit 6. That was the basement of Hess. They opened their window and talked to the gals and they were drinking "that stuff" with some lemon juice and little sugar that they liberated from the commissary, and they blended it all with snow. They started to pass these drinks to the gals and they were passing it upstairs. 18:53 "Pretty soon most of them were pretty well [unclear]." That evening the speaker went to his room and most of the fellows went to town. The speaker was writing letters and his [room] was right above the house mother's room so they couldn't have a party there. The light was on and Doctor [Bunnell] knocked on the door, entered and said, "What was going on here today?" The speaker answered that they just had a lemonade party, and asked if Bunnell would care for some. He said "fine," and the speaker "fixed him up" making him a drink. He drank that and Bunnell wanted another one. He wiped off his chin with a handkerchief and said, "That was a hell of a good lemonade party you had". Cashen identifies the speaker as Dr. John Northrup.

A man's voice tells a story about how Dr. Bunnell was working [unclear] in the garden one afternoon. A car drove up and a few tourists got out and they walked around the building and asked Bunnell where the president's office was. He gave them directions to the Eielson building and where the president's office was. As soon as they were out of sight, Dr. Bunnell went the other way to his office to greet them.

Dr. Bunnell was always concerned about the well-being of his students and also of the expenditure of the University funds for coal. He was going around campus on winter evenings, closing windows. One would see him going to every room and closing windows that students had opened for fresh air. University was on an old power system at that time, and you couldn't turn off the heating units in any one room.

Dr. Bunnell was [unclear] one time that the when the post office was established on campus. It started as a fourth class post office. Remuneration was so little, only about \$400 a year that it was difficult to hire anybody to run the post office, so Dr. Bunnell had to take a title of a post master sometime in 1920s. He held the title until 1947 when the speaker became the post master. When Dr. Bunnell retired, he got a pension from the Post Office Department as well, something like 28 dollars a year.

Another man's voice tells a story from the times when he was going out with Bunnell's daughter. He was living at a house towards the bottom of the hill and one of the windows there used to have a view to his office window in the main building. Mrs. Bunnell would keep an eye out, looking at the office window, and the minute the light went out there, there was quite an exodus out of the Bunnell House. Everybody left because he was on his way down.

A woman's voice says that the portrait is just about how she remembers Bunnell been when she met him. When she came onto campus around 1940, there was a feeling about Dr. Bunnell's incompetency, like the earlier stories have told. Every day a rumor went out that the "University is being closed, Dr. Bunnell is out, Dr. Bunnell is in again, Dr. Bunnell is out". Then there was a lack of money, and people

wondered if the University would be able to stay open through those set of exams and they were “wondering about units and credits all the time”. Meanwhile, there was the idea among the students that they could get rid of the president, that they are the establishment. The speaker didn’t understand what good Bunnell stood for until Holly took a class in law from him. He used to come home every day for lunch and tell the stories Dr. Bunnell had told in law class that day. The speaker could tell that Dr. Bunnell knew where his position in the history was and it came through even when he was an old, sick man.

A man discusses how in the early years Bunnell kept the University running by his own money raising efforts: Bunnell would go to the legislature and lobby for money for the University. After the appropriations were passed, they usually were shy so many thousands of dollars that were needed to keep the university running on a bare minimum. Every year Bunnell would go east after the legislative session and he would personally raise the remaining money among his friends in Pennsylvania and New York area. The legislature would maybe appropriate \$150,000 and he needed \$200,000 to run and Bunnell would usually dig out the additional money. It was his own effort that kept the University running over those early years.

A man’s voice [sounds like Cashen] says that Bunnell had no qualms for raising money for whatever he thought was important. Another man’s voice says that he believed it was his destiny [?] and was working every minute.

28:04 A man is talking about expeditions [unclear] with Snodgrass. He remembers in fall of 1935 he [unclear] he was working at mineralogy lab and in metallurgy lab. Bunnell came in and had a little ivory penguin with its head sticking [unclear]. The speaker says he couldn’t miss it [unclear]. Bunnell told him the boys bought it back from St. Lawrence Island. The speaker told him there are no penguins there, to which Bunnell replied that he knew that, and gave a lecture on the history of the island.

He also remembers Collie talking about him closing the windows. In fall 1938 an upper classman moved into the women’s dorm. [Unclear joking.] Bunnell came stomping in sometime in November or December and the window was open and the radiator on. He came in without knocking, strode to the window and slammed the window shut and said “There is not enough coal in Alaska to keep all these rooms warm in winter” and then he turned around and went to the next room.

[Unclear] problem with Bunnell because they were living in Yertchville [The speaker is probably Arnold “Arnie” Hoehner]. It wasn’t really a hippie movement at the day, but they lived off the campus. After the speaker was on better terms with Doctor Bunnell he [unclear] compensate, and put the speaker on an expedition to the St. Lawrence Island. It was maybe in 1935 or 1936. Doctor Huber [C.R. Huber] came in one night with a bunch of maps and said that Dr. Bunnell had asked the speaker to draw the maps.

It was Olli Kukkola [Olavi “Olli” Kukkola] who finally, after many days of foul weather, had been able to get a new reading from the sun and realized that on the map they had drawn for Washington, they had turned the island about 10 degrees.

31:10 Down in the bottom of the island there were a bunch of little capes and Huber was “trying to butter himself up” so he said “draw a little bump there and paint that cape Bunnell.” [Laughter.] Someone [probably Cashen] asks if Cape Bunnell is still on the map? It should be found from the official map that they drew in 1936. Cashen [?] confirms that it was on their maps, but wonders if it ever made it to Geological Survey maps. The people agree that someone should look it up. [It can be found from USGS database and maps from south-eastern end of the island, but it also exists on satellite images of the island.]

Someone has a story that doesn’t involve Bunnell, but it involves Betty Caro [sp?]. She came to one of “these meetings a few years ago” and told a beautiful story about a mouse in a rain barrel: A little female mouse was in a rain barrel and it was running around and around. Pretty soon there was a little male mouse and the female mouse asked him to help her out of the barrel. “Sure, if you sleep with me,” said the male mouse, and the female mouse did. Next morning when they woke up, they were still in the rain barrel. Next day this happened again. Mail mouse approached the female mouse and said he would help her out if she sleeps with him. Second day the mouse was still in the rain barrel. Now Betty asked if they liked to know how the little female mouse got out of the barrel, and told them that she will tell if they will come and sleep with her. The punch-line is that then Betty married, and the speaker wonders if she ended up telling what happened to the little mouse.

A man tells a story: Hardcore-Palmer, Harkie Palmer. South Pole-Miller, who was with Bird expedition and was down there with Bramwall, and Barney lived in Unit 5 and they were “screwing around” and [unclear] so they [speaker and his friends] decided to get with them. Barney and South Pole-Miller went to town and so the speaker and his friends filled their room with half-full with shredded newspaper. It was a big project. When the guys came home 2-3am, they couldn’t find their beds so they flopped down on the newspapers and went to sleep. This was on Saturday night and on Sunday morning some dignitary came to campus and the dean was showing them how students lived on campus. They walked into Unit 5, picked Hard core-Palmer’s room, opened the door, and all the paper fell out. “And here’s these two characters out here, passed out completely. He says, ‘I think we chose the wrong room.’”

36:13 One other occurrence happened in Unit 5: they were having a party and everybody was inebriated. They were having the party and Unit 5 was up [stairs] from the post office. [Something about the upper deck.] They started singing By the Waterfall and some of the crowd decided that in order to make it realistic, they needed to have a water fall. The steps went to the post office, and they got a couple of tubs and had them up there, so while they sang By the Waterfall, a couple of guys dumped the water down stairs. At this time when all the water was flowing, The Prexie [As they called the University President] walked in to get his mail. Water hit him, running over his shoes. He looked up and had a questioning look on his face, walked over to get his mail and walked back out, and didn’t say a damn thing.

Cornetts had the laundry at the time. The speaker tells how he was at one of these meetings [Alumni Association Meetings?] Girdwood [sp?]. Cornett had a place underneath the stairs where they poured the water where they had shelves for all the white shirts. As they poured the water and it leaked to the steps, it screwed all their white shirts. In one of these parties after not seeing her in 25 years she was

introduced to George Dickey, and she remembered him. The speaker thinks it is characteristic of Prexie that he looked at everything he had to tolerate, all the screw-ups very philosophically.

Walls were priced at \$2.50 per square foot in any of the dormitories, so if you got rowdy and broke a wall [you had to pay]. They had fights with “these guys” who went and locked themselves up in a room so they decided to go get them in order to prosecute them for whatever they had done, so they measured the wall, and draw a line and approximated the cost, \$15, put the money on the line and busted the wall out. Next day the carpenter came up to put a patch in, and they paid the price.

40:59 When the fall [?] came around, around May [unclear] the main dormitory, one could see how many parties they had: “10 high, cases of beer, snow melted, bottles all over the place”.

One morning Butch Butler, after fresh snow, walked up the stairs at the girls’ dormitory backwards, and then he walked back to the sidewalk on his own footsteps. Miss Evans who was one of the people living in women’s dorm, “almost had a fit trying to figure [unclear].”

Someone else [his voice sounds like Arnie Hoehner] tells that that started many years ago when there were only two dormitories, one for men and one for women. He can’t remember her name, but she later married Noel Wien [Her name was Ada Bering Arthurs]. She had the room at the top of the fire-escape and every time there was fresh snow, there was one-way set of steps clear out the [unclear?] fire escape always.

Somebody in the men’s dorm had a brick of Limburger cheese [sp?] and the speaker doesn’t know what really happened, but something happened and the cheese fell behind a hot radiator. After a lot of scuffling and getting it out, they flicked it out of the window but it was mid-winter and the thing fell down on the window below [unclear] and then everybody forgot about it. Then the spring came. Someone laughs that the story was all over the dorms again [unclear, could be: you could just smell it?].

In spring of 1936, after break-up, when the summer started shining again, they were waiting to play soccer one night. They used to mill [?] on the sidewalks in front of the dorms and one evening the Judge [Bunnell?] came over from the main building and they were standing there so Bunnell stopped to talk with them and when the discussion got to the point where he wanted, he told his story. He had argued with colonels about the railroads 44:11 He [unclear] and the coronel said “no, it’s to help develop the territory.” And they argued and argued. Then, Bunnell said, “Finally I gave the coronel my argument [unclear.]” He said “I told that it was [unclear]” and the coronel said “I don’t see how it can be.” He said “Well, look at it this way: When the Japanese take over Seward, they go to the railroad station and they price the ticket to Fairbanks, they are going to turn around and go back to Japan.”

Cashen’s voice: Sounds typical, and this was quite a bit before Japanese tried to invade. [unclear talking]

A man is speaking: Dr. Bunnell had an interesting thing happen to him. Before she went to Stanford, Bunnell’s daughter Jean had a room in the dormitory and that year they had hired this new teacher who was also supposed be the matron of the dormitory. She [unclear] over the women’s dorm. She came to this one room where the bed was diagonally across the corner and figured it was a little odd so she

looked over it too see what was behind and it was a marvelous collection of empty bottles. She immediately rushed to Dr. Bunnell, pointing out that there was something going on at the dormitory and that there must be some terrible people in there, and that she had found this room with tremendous collection of bottles. Dr. Bunnell asked whose room it was, and the new matron mentioned the name to which Bunnell replied by saying it was his daughter's room.