

Call number: ORAL HISTORY 02-00-64-08 CD 2

Narrator: William Cashen in Bill and Jean Kennedy's party

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Summary created by: Varpu M Lotvonen

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

Series: William Cashen Collection

[Unclear party discussions, serving gravy.]

Around 02:00 discussion becomes clearer again and a woman's voice tells about his uncle, John Kilbuck's family who lived around "there" years ago. Killbuck mountains are named after him says a man's voice in the 1880s. The western mountain range in Alaska is called the Kilbuck Mountains.

Cashen mentions that he grew up in Douglas. [Unclear conversation.]

Roberta Frazer and her sister May are mentioned briefly. [Unclear conversation and food-serving discussion.]

In 4:06 Bill Cashen asks if Elizabeth Romig Daily] has ever been to Nome. A man's voice answers that she hasn't and that's the only advantage he has over her. Elizabeth tells that she has lived in Valdez, Kodiak, Seward, Anchorage, Fairbanks, Nenana, but that she never went to Nome. Cashen tells that he went to Nome 2 years ago for a Pioneer Convention.

A man's voice tells that the official population of Nome is something like 1,600 and 40%, more than 20% of them are school age or pre-school age. The town supports 11 bars, all supported by taxpayer's money while the families starve to death while the Eskimo spend all their money at the bars. There are only 3 of those bars where white man dares to go in. Cashen says [unclear, probably the Board of Trade Saloon] is quite nice. A man's voice says it depends on the time of the night when one goes in, and Cashen replies that perhaps he was early enough.

A man's voice continues that he's been to Nome in 3 occasions, for 3 months or more at the time. He went to Nome the first time [unclear cross-talking. Dorothy Young mentioned].

10:20 Cashen asks Jean [Bunnell Kennedy?] when the house was built, and where was her home in town. She says she lived on 8th [Avenue] and Lacey [Street] in a house that was still there 2 years ago. Kitty Corner [?]. The Abbeys and Marquam's Cake Corner [?] mentioned. [Unclear.] A woman's voice tells about meeting somebody [Mrs. Marquam] who said that he/she is going to give a brunch party and

that the speaker would be the first one they are going to ask [to come]. [Unclear] couldn't say no to the Mayor's wife. Another woman says that she was a kind person. [Unclear, cross-talking.]

Mrs. Carter mentioned.

Cashen asks if they were there when President Harding visited and if they remember it. A woman's voice [Later identified as Elizabeth Romig Daily] tells that the night he was coming to town by train they sent a message ahead from Curry [?], asking if there was a technician in town. Elisabeth was the only technician.

They requested that she meets the President Harding. Mrs. Harding had one kidney [?], and she had to have continuous urinalysis done. She went right to her dad's office and did the urinalysis. The next morning Dr. Doyle Thompson, who was commander in the Navy at that time, and was one of the physicians, [unclear] Dr. [?] army man named [?], came to the office. He and the speaker did the urinalysis together. Their conversation revealed that Thompson graduated from the same medical school with Elizabeth's father [Joseph H. Romig] and they had the same preceptor.

They had an invitation to meet Mrs. Harding at the hotel, but by that time Elisabeth had gone to the creeks and [unclear]. The President got a message and had to leave Fairbanks immediately without spending another night. Elisabeth rushed from the creeks and got to the railroad depot just when the train was about to leave.

Commander Boon [Boone?] came off the train and told her that the president would like to meet her, so she stepped in [unclear, cross talk.] And the president put his arm on her shoulder and said [unclear, cross talking.] The speaker got letters from Boon. He recommended several laboratory [unclear?]. He and Elisabeth had the common ground through her father: they had shared a room. The President stayed shorter time than expected, and he died in San Francisco, California [1923]. It was quite the scandal, notes Cashen. She confirms by mentioning the rumors that Mrs. Harding poisoned him.

Discussing a book that was written about Harding and all his political scandals. [Unclear dinner conversation. Chemist by the name of Hood mentioned.]

In 26:40 intelligible discussion resumes. Someone asks if Cashen knew Dr. Romig, and he says that he did. He knows Howard [Dr. Romig's son] well and when he met Dr. Romig, he was practicing with Howard in Anchorage. Cashen went there in 1937. Romig was a railroad doctor there. Cashen also says he knew Elisabeth's brother who has passed away, and tells that he saw Howard a while ago.

Howard quit practicing [medicine] for a while and was going to go homestead in Kenai. He lived there and was going to be a bush pilot.

Elisabeth tells how they were sitting in a room when they were seniors in high school. Howard had helped his dad take out an appendix, brought the test tube [into the classroom] and handed it to Elisabeth, expecting to get a shriek, but Elisabeth wasn't bothered but found it quite interesting.

[Unclear conversation.]

Cashen asks how Elizabeth got into the medical field and if she just learned by working with her father. [Unclear answer.] [Cashen asks more questions, but Elizabeth's answers are inaudible because of other dinner-table conversations. Only Cashen's voice is clear.]

35:23 Was Elizabeth living in Fairbanks when the College [Alaska Agricultural College and School of Mines] started? [Unclear] to take up her labwork and she came back with the idea of going to Fairbanks with her father. That was in 1922. [Unclear.] His father, who was a railroad doctor, was one of those people who drop everything and do something immediately. Elizabeth was in Seattle and [got a message from her father] in early morning that she was to be on board the Victoria that night at 5pm. She had to go to the academy where she had her room and her clothes, and then to where Lucases lived to get the rest of her things, and board that ship, which she did. That was in April of 1922.

That was the year when the American Bridge Company built the bridge across the Nenana and one stipulation they made was that there must be a doctor, so they transferred Elizabeth's dad to Nenana. Instead of allowing Elizabeth to go to University, which was what she wanted to do in the first place, he took her to Nenana. In 1923 they returned to Fairbanks and Elisabeth was able to [unclear]. Elizabeth's father was old-fashioned and for him women's education was of secondary importance. The important thing for him was to have Elizabeth there.

Bunnell [unclear]. Cashen asks if she had been to Valdez too and tells that Elizabeth's father had come to Alaska as a Moravian Missionary. As a medical Missionary he went to Bethel first. [Elizabeth's answer is unclear.]

Elizabeth tells how in 1905 her father practiced in San Francisco, and then left San Francisco. In the meantime [unclear]. Then after the [unclear] they went back to Bristol Bay in 1909 and back to Seward.

Elizabeth went out for school and after she finished, she worked for the railroad. Then she came to Fairbanks to live. She was there [at the College?] for a full year and then started her second year. [Unclear]. When she came back, she took lots of special courses. [Unclear. Unclear discussion about Howard.]

39:42 Cashen tells that Howard came up and he attended in 1927-1928, and was there at least for one year. [Unclear.] He went to pre-med in Pennsylvania to get [unclear] in Alaska. Elizabeth tells that he was two years at the pre-med and four years at Stanford [University]. Cashen asks if he went to Europe. [Elizabeth's answer is unclear.] Cashen asks if Howard came back to practice medicine with Elizabeth's father and she confirms that he did. Cashen continues by telling that they had a practice at the First National Bank –building [in Fairbanks]. When he came up in 1937, Elizabeth's father was still around and Howard was the young [unclear, what Elizabeth says is inaudible]. Providence [Hospital] was built while Cashen was there, in 1938 or 1939. [Elizabeth says something inaudible.] The railroad hospital was getting too small. [Unclear conversation about a fire escape. Then about Bunnell.]

Cashen talks about the Alumni Association meetings he has been attending at Palo Alto and San Francisco and how he's got a little bit of different sidelight to the story [of Bunnell]. [Elizabeth unclear.]

[Serving coffee, unclear socializing.]

[Tape ends.]