

TELLURIDE NEWS LETTER

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ITHACA, N. Y.

JANUARY, 1932

P. N. Nunn

My Dear Kuder:

Acknowledging yours of December 22nd asking for my impressions of the biography, I would say that my impression, in a word, is that the text as it now stands is a dignified, clearly expressed and readable statement of the facts and purposes which gave character to L. L.'s accomplishment and personal influence; is a far more acceptable production than I expected, and, in my opinion, the best that can be produced.

This is not to say that I think that the members of the Association are, or ought to be "satisfied." It is not my impression that they are to be satisfied this side of Paradise, if ever. They represent no consensus of viewpoint. Few, if any, have given enough thought to know what they want. What would satisfy one would be anathema to another. One dreams of an inspirational valediction; another of a best seller. One group calls for more effulgent idealism and complains that the present text does not do "justice to the spirit of the man"; another wants more humorous stories.

When the subject was first broached, I was not enthusiastic and, I believe, wrote Mr. Johnson to that effect, pointing out difficulties. Now, it seems to me, Mr. Bally has taken a very happy middle course and followed it with gratifying judgment.

My impression has been that all questions had been settled, the writer paid and discharged, and the manuscript delivered to a publication committee, and I have begun to look for my copy. Why, then, this recrudescence of doubt and hesitation?

Sincerely,

P. N.

S. N. Whitney

Dear Bill:

I would advise against the publication of the manuscript life of Mr. L. L. Nunn. In this day a biography must meet very exacting tests in style, manner and interest to compete for the favor of the reading public. The manuscript, despite its merits, does not possess these particular qualities. After reading it, I am convinced that only an experienced biographer or other author could write a book on Mr. Nunn that would hold the attention of the people who did not know him or have not had intimate connection with the organizations he founded. If there is a risk of an unfortunate reception from critical readers, it

seems to me that we should consider the matter very carefully before publishing.

The author has, it is true, brought out a great many interesting facts which no one else could have gathered so successfully. For this reason it would be worth while if the manuscript were circulated more widely among association members and alumni. It might perhaps be mimeographed. But as a definitive treatment of Mr. Nunn's life and character, it does not seem to me sufficiently complete, coherent or illuminating. Even for association readers, therefore, I do not think its actual appearance in book form is required.

Very sincerely yours,
SIMON N. WHITNEY

H. R. Lamb

The appraisal of Mr. Stephen A. Bailey's manuscript for a proposed biography of Lucien L. Nunn presents the question, what is the purpose to be served by this book?

Is this work intended to be only a collection of memoirs which may recall in some respects the man L. L. Nunn to those who knew and worked with him during his lifetime? Or should the book represent an interpretative study of a great personality whose significance may be made known to the world at large?

The author repeatedly makes reference to "this memoir". Presumably, therefore, it is the intention that this book shall serve as a memorial to the man who founded Telluride Association and the Deep Springs Ranch. Admittedly, the publication of a book would be of inestimable value to that group of persons whose privilege it was to have had some personal contact with Mr. Nunn during his unusually active life.

There is, I believe, a greater purpose to be served in the writing of a biography of this remarkable man. From a comprehensive study and a well written book intelligent people everywhere may learn something of the life, work and the many contributions which Mr. Nunn made to the spiritual and material welfare of mankind. For my part, I would like to see this larger purpose fulfilled in any volume that is published under the auspices of Telluride Association. For either of these purposes, especially the more limited one, the work which Mr. Bailey has done may serve as a good beginning. It is apparent, however, that it was not intended so much for the general public as it was for the alumni and friends of Telluride Association.

By far the greater part of the
(Continued on page two)

C. Grandy

Dear Mr. Kuder:

(He began formally.) The data for the biography of Mr. Nunn has been very sympathetically selected, edited, and written down, and presents to Telluride men an excellent background against which they may review and renew their impression of the Association's founder with most interesting freshness.

Through Mr. Bailey's kindness I had the manuscript long enough to read and consider it thoroughly about a year ago and I find that my reactions to it at that time are substantially unchanged today.

By careful selection from the mass of biographical data, prepared and collected by the collaborating agencies, the author enlarged enormously my own intimate knowledge of Mr. Nunn and his activities and, in like degree, enlarged my appreciation of Mr. Nunn's qualities.

However, (hateful word) as I appraised these reactions from the practical point of view of the book's publication and prospective circulation, I could not overlook the possibility that this interest would be shared largely by such persons as had been associated with Mr. Nunn during his lifetime, or by those who might subsequently, through contact with organizations founded by him, have special reasons for learning about his extraordinary personality. For such as these Mr. Bailey's MS. performs a most valuable and appreciated service, but it would be an error, I believe, to consider that it would enjoy a wider circulation.

But if it may be conceded that the biography of Mr. Nunn would find only a limited number of readers (and those of Telluride "ancestry"), then I would be tempted to suggest that to the present manuscript might profitably be added a mass of interesting details and stories which obviously had no place in Mr. Bailey's orderly presentation in the present manuscript, and were therefore deliberately omitted.

If this smacks of a too meticulous examination and report, I do not apologize for the suggestion. I only wish I could read an actual diary of Mr. Nunn's keeping. It would contain few matters too trivial to warrant my entire interest, I'm sure.

In other words, I have received a distinctly favorable impression from the biography as written but like Mr. Dickens's little boy "Oliver", I want more—a companion volume of "Notes on L. L."

Cordially yours,
CLAYTON GRANDY

TELLURIDE NEWS LETTER

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ALBERT E. ARENT PARKER BAILEY
Asst. Business Manager
CHARLES M. GILBERT

JANUARY, 1932

The Trouble

By P. N. NUNN

The whole world is in trouble. Our trouble lies in our economics. Economics is the foundation upon which our social order has evolved. While the more intelligent of us are assumed to live within the superstructure—Science, Art and Religion, rather than within the foundation—economics, yet when that foundation crumbles beneath us, as now, it behooves us to look to it and build a new and, presumably, better foundation. That is the undertaking to which we are brought by this period of depression, loss, unemployment, suffering and despair.

The new foundation must be broader and deeper and built up from the more solid sub-soil of collective well-being instead of upon the loose surface of individual gain. Because our early race when emerging from its primitive caves and savage ancestry in animal competition, found it expedient to adopt a code of morals which regulates its phallic relations and minor disputes but leaves its economics open to the unrestrained play of cunning and greed, is no reason why we, now ten or twenty thousand years later, should continue that one-sided code after it has brought us to our present impasse.

It is futile to point out that the idle and starving are so situated because of their improvidence so long as superior intelligence among men is so exclusively devoted to the arts of acquisition, thus precluding providence from the less intelligent. Exploitation is fundamentally unsound and short-sighted. It is as futile in economics as in corporal slavery. The distinction which we draw merely exhibits our blindness. Individual well-being is fundamentally a product of collective well-being. We already have an abundance for all, if only it were shared with enlightened regard for the general good including our own, and such enlightened sharing would still further multiply that abundance. The new economics is to be conceived in no spirit of condescension or sanctimonious self-righteousness, but in that of an enlightened sense of civic sanity. That new order need be no more than the practice of enlightened self-interest.

The remedy lies in a more realistic rationalism; "realistic" meaning an attitude of mind—a clear-thinking discrimination between the facts and

the fictions of economics, between fundamentals and mere conventions; and "rationalism" meaning an intelligent compromise or reconciliation between the unbridled license of our present economic individualism and its complete suppression under Russian collectivism. Each of those extremes contains factors of value readily reconciled. Our Nordic jealousy of prerogative and our mental strabismus are our chief hindrances. We are blind with greed.

The coming social order awaits the young. Since our old fellows now in control of economic affairs are too "set in their ways" voluntarily to accept that enlightened self-interest, it may remain for the rising generation here, as in Russia, to actualize that new order and make it effective. It is to that end that young men are now training themselves at Deep Springs studying the History of Mankind, examining the evolution of present human institutions, thus broadening their grasp of the trials and errors of the past and clarifying their vision of the promises of the future.

H. R. Lamb

(Continued from page one)

present manuscript consists of extracts from letters written to Mr. Bailey by former associates and acquaintances of Mr. Nunn. In these letters the writers have stated primarily their general impression. Much of this is interesting especially where the impressions are amplified by a statement of specific facts and experiences. A notable example in this respect is the letter written by Mr. Malachi Kinney, which sets forth a fairly long narrative of his own experiences as Mr. Nunn's partner in their various enterprises operating restaurants, contracting for buildings, gold-mining and practicing law under the pioneer conditions that existed in Colorado as far back as the early "eighties" and continuing into the early "nineties".

A book written more along the lines suggested by Mr. Kinney's letter would make fascinating reading. It paints a picture. It describes a portion of the background against which the man moved and acted. From such accounts the world can better know and understand L. L. Nunn. It suggests the value to be derived from further research to develop a narrative which will show the background of Mr. Nunn's youth, his school days, and his college days, especially at Harvard Law School and at German Universities. Surely there are many who will recall Mr. Nunn's own stories of his living quarters in an attic room in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and what a popular rendezvous it was for legal and philosophic discussions. Diligent research may result in locating some of his classmates and law school cronies who gathered in L. L.'s attic room and witnessed some of the scenes in the mental development of a man who regarded

himself as a "Napoleon".

In Mr. Bailey's pages one fails to find anything at all of the romantic side of Mr. Nunn's life as a vigorous young man. It was commonly believed that in his later years he had no great liking for the feminine sex generally. Possibly Mr. Nunn's attitude on this matter may have been different as a younger man. From bits of information gathered here and there, one suspects that this very important part of a complete story of his life may become known.

The court records in Telluride ought to disclose interesting facts concerning the clients represented by L. L. Nunn in Telluride, Colorado. Where is the story about the former client for whom Mr. Nunn once obtained an acquittal from a criminal charge and who, on meeting Mr. Nunn years later, was denied the privilege of a handshake because after the trial Mr. Nunn had learned of the guilt of his client?

Is it a fact that the late J. P. Morgan made an exception in Mr. Nunn's case to the requirement of formal evening dress for dinner at the banker's house?

Did a street urchin in New York refuse to believe that L. L. resided at the fashionable old Holland House on Fifth Avenue, in New York?

If my memory is correct, these may be taken as indicative of numerous incidents which might help in building up an interesting and understandable story of Mr. Nunn's life.

In short, there is little color in the proposed book,—where there might be so much.

Many significant items in Mr. Nunn's career have been touched upon by Mr. Bailey and everyone should be grateful for what he has produced. The task is no doubt a difficult one. My own feeling is that the book fails to provide that interpretative study of Mr. Nunn's life which the subject warrants.

In my opinion, also, there is not sufficient literary value and style for an important book sponsored by Telluride Association. As now compiled, the ancestry of Mr. Nunn, which should form an important part of the background, is rather dull reading. The same is true of other parts of the manuscript.

A conscientious attempt has been made by Mr. Bailey to explain the sources of Mr. Nunn's fundamental ideas regarding the purpose of Telluride Association and Deep Springs Ranch. To these institutions and their present and future members, the importance of having this study presented fully and carefully cannot be overstated. An authoritative account of Mr. Nunn's purpose in founding Telluride Association and the Deep Springs Ranch, I believe, would go far in eliminating controversy on this point and would provide a valuable guide to the formation of a more definite and effective plan for the execution of the trusts which constitute the chief legacy left by Mr. Nunn.

It is perhaps too much to expect

perfection in the short time which has elapsed since Mr. Nunn's death. In my opinion, however, the job is worth the effort. I believe the Association and the trustees of Deep Springs Ranch could well afford to appropriate additional funds for the employment of a qualified person to continue the work which Mr. Bailey has commenced.

It is my suggestion that the present manuscript be printed only as an inexpensive pamphlet and the publication of a volume by the Yale Press, which I understand is under consideration, or some other publisher of standing, should await the completion of further study and research from which a more comprehensive and interpretative biography may be written.

J. E. Meehan

Dear Bill:

Now that I am back on the job again after a good rest during the holidays, I am feeling full of ambition, so before the mood wears off, I'll get busy and get a few lines off to you. My intentions along these lines have been the best but I am really working hard and find myself pretty well swamped with things to be done at all hours. In addition to my usual line of jobs here, I am teaching English in Notre Dame College—for women!—which is not far from here. I teach nineteen hours a week, have a couple of classes in music, four or five hours of study hall, and a house full of boys to look after. I offer this as evidence that I am working.

The News Letter has been fine this year and you may be sure that when an issue arrives, everything else waits until it has been read from one end to the other. Just now I should like to express my sentiments on the question of the L. L. Nunn biography. In general, I second the sentiments expressed by McRea Parker in the October issue. I have read Mr. Bailey's manuscript and found it thoroughly absorbing. I believe that it should be printed as it stands. I am opposed to turning the material over to a "ghost writer" for I am afraid the results would simply be a fictionization of Mr. Nunn. It is not necessary to take Mr. Bailey's work as the last word ever to be said about the subject, but I do believe that what he has done should be available as soon as possible in permanent form. Mr. P. N. Nunn has suggested the publication of a group of personal memoirs as a supplement. This seems to be an excellent idea. I see no reason why the years should not bring a good many writings for such an outstanding and unusual life offers much in the way of material. Mr. Bailey has produced an excellent foundation and it is my opinion that we should take advantage of it at once.

Better get this off to you at once so you'll have something. I might

ramble too long and be late. For instance, I feel inclined to get sentimental when I see a letter from Jim Draper and hear him talk about Gordon Pollock. Even a reading of the directory could set me going. I had a Christmas card from Prof. Jandl which gave me a thrill, but I'll spare you my reactions and do some personal corresponding. Best regards to all at the House.

Sincerely, JOHN MEEHAN

C. N. Whitman

Dear Mr. Editor:

I have not had a manuscript in my possession long enough to study it. I discussed portions of it with Mr. Bailey. I have been greatly pleased with the loyal and earnest effort which he has made to discharge a very difficult task. I do not believe that any pen untrained in biographical work could have accomplished any more than Mr. Bailey's. It has, however, always been my conviction that the object which we are seeking in this matter could be best attained by an experienced professional biographer, such as Ida Tarbell. You are undoubtedly familiar with her biographies. In this connection, Professor Burr told me during my visit in Ithaca last June that he believed Miss Tarbell would be available for biographical work such as this.

I have no special point of view in this matter as a relative. I am looking at it from the viewpoint of a Trustee of Deep Springs and a former Telluride scholar. I believe that all of the members of either institution who were personally acquainted with Mr. Nunn have felt that his death deprived those institutions of their most valuable inspiration, and left a void that we have not been able to fill.

Since you have invited my opinion on this subject, I have no hesitation in stating it is my conviction that the Association and Deep Springs would be well repaid for any outlay it might be required to enlist the biographical skill of Miss Tarbell. I believe that we need a biography which can be read with interest and pleasure by those who have been total strangers to Mr. Nunn. Both institutions will soon be composed of such total strangers. The educational plan will not be understood unless there is an understanding of the founder.

I trust that this will be a satisfactory answer to your inquiry. I do not intend it to indicate that Mr. Bailey's work is in any way inadequate insofar as I myself am concerned, or others personally acquainted with him. It is rather that I have in mind, as I said, total strangers joining these institutions in future years, and whom I believe could more effectively be reached by the different type of a biography which an experienced professional pen would accomplish.

C. N. Rakestraw

Dear Mr. Editor:

It is true that I had the privilege of reading the manuscript of the L. L. Nunn biography. It seems to me that this work was very well done. Those of us who knew Mr. Nunn could probably add a wealth of incidents which do not appear in this manuscript, but I doubt if any of them would serve any better than those which have been used, or if they would further the purpose of the biography.

Although I was quite close to Mr. Nunn for several years, there was considerable matter in the biography which was new to me. I read it with a great deal of interest and certainly would want to have a copy when it is published.

As one of the "Old Guard", I can give it my unqualified indorsement. With best wishes to yourself and the present members of the association, I am

Sincerely, C. N. RAKESTRAW

S. Davis

Dear Bill:

You ask me for a short note containing my impressions of the L. L. Nunn biography. I expressed my opinion of Mr. Bailey's work in my report to the 1930 Convention of the Association. Let me quote the following excerpt from that report.

"Mr. S. A. Bailey, after several years of painstaking collection and preparation of material, has completed the manuscript of his life of L. L. Nunn. In my opinion Mr. Bailey has produced a splendid short biography full of color and presenting intimate glimpses of the "Old Man" at various stages of his career. . . . Of course, in this organization any biography of L. L., whom many of us knew so intimately, is certain to arouse interesting discussion of substance and interpretation."

Mr. Bailey did not attempt to produce a complete biography in the sense of an exhaustive chronological account of Mr. Nunn's life. He did produce a series of vivid photographic impressions of the dramatic incidents of Mr. Nunn's career and of the circumstances surrounding them. I believe that the biography will prove of great value to us as a permanent medium for preserving material that would otherwise be lost. Furthermore, it may well serve to inspire some other associate of Mr. Nunn's to attempt a larger work with greater emphasis on the later years of the life of the "Old Man".

Yours sincerely, Sherlock Davis.

C. H. Yarrow

Dear Bill:

You ask for my impressions of the L. L. Nunn biography. As long as it is only impressions you want and not criticisms, I may be able to reply. For the latter I am not qualified, not having read the work carefully enough and not having known Mr. Nunn.

My impression, then, is that the first two chapters, though improved by revision, are still rather unsatisfactory, but the rest of the book is quite readable and interesting. It is a book which I would not expect to have very general interest and I would not especially want it to have such. I do, however, think it well worthy of circulation among Telluride members and friends, at least until somebody writes something far superior. I do not consider it the final word. It is probably not an altogether true picture, perhaps it is too idealized, or something else, I do not know, but at any rate it is a picture, and one that I find well worth viewing.

In short, I am in favor of publication in some form, but only for a limited circulation. I would not definitely restrict the circulation, but neither would I force it by sending copies to libraries, reviewers, etc. As for the form, a pamphlet might be less expensive and acceptable, but I rather think it had better be done up in print and binding, if and when the money is available.

Such, then, are my impressions, to be discounted for reasons mentioned above.

Sincerely yours,
MIKE YARROW

H. Davidsen

Dear Jim:

My summer at home was rather uneventful, although the development of politics and finance in Germany and the world was rapid and interesting enough. We had just begun to recover a bit from the tremendous shock when the English crisis and the inflation of the pound came along. This blow was especially severe for Germany as many of our foreign contracts were and still are on pound basis, so that they cannot be fulfilled without a very heavy loss to the manufacturers concerned. It is hoped that the new decree of the government will stabilize the budget of the Reich, although it is not at all certain that the Brüning government will be able to weather the storm which will inevitably break out after the Christmas holidays are over. It is even possible that an extra session of the Reichstag will be called, which would very likely seal the doom of the government of Brüning. But so far the probability is that Brüning will remain in power until spring, and that by

then the political conditions will be such that even a government of the National Socialists cannot do much damage to public finances. But all depends on the outcome of the coming Reparations conference and of the Disarmament conference in February; for it is very unlikely that the German people could stand a failure of this conference. The conditions under which it will have to convene are certainly as bad as they could possibly be, especially after the dismal failure of the League of Nations Council in the Chinese-Japanese affair.

Please give my best regards to Dick Robinson, if you chance to see him and to the fellows in the House.

Armand Kelly

After being unmolested by cloud-bursts for several years, the valley has had a "normal" season. In the middle of August, Jupiter Pluvius staged a sensational comeback by dumping on Cedar Flat enough water to rip Westgard Pass apart from the crest to each end. Traffic was impossible for several days, and as soon as the road was rebuilt, new floods roared through the pass. The destruction was complete. Where, through several years of undisturbed effort, the federal and state road workers had built an excellent highway, there was only the dry bed of a capricious torrent. Huge boulders were torn from their beds and hurtled down the canyon accompanied by trees, sagebrush, and other debris. The water scoured narrow parts of the canyon clean of every scrap of loose material, leaving the bare rock. In the unresisting sandy sections, deep channels were gouged in the floor of the valley. At either end of the pass where the water began to lose its velocity, the heterogeneous mass was roughly assorted and deposited, forming fans whose composition graded from huge boulders near the mouth of the pass to fine silt far out in the valley. After the second flood the State Road Commission began work with commendable promptness. So many men were working that perhaps this phenomenon should not be regarded as a misfortune, but rather as God's share of the unemployment relief. Within two weeks the road was passable, and now much of it is high on the side of the pass, safe from anything short of another Noachian deluge.

Not content with destroying our main line of communication with the outside world, the rains also tried to wreck our water system. Floods rushing from Wyman Canyon made a miniature Grand Canyon parallel with the headwork where the water enters the ditch. The gate was left high and dry, and it required numerous sand-bags and considerable ingenuity to redirect the stream into the ditch. These same floods from Wyman ruined our private road to the lake.

Cornell Branch Notes

Professor Oscar Jaszi, professor of Political Philosophy at Oberlin, was a guest of the Branch on December 14.

At the conference of the Inter-collegiate Student Council of the League for Industrial Democracy, held in New York City on December 28 to 30, Albert Arent gave a short speech on "The Essentials of Social Planning."

Members and friends of the Association will remember the announcement last year that our alumnus and ex-president, William D. Whitney, had become a junior partner in the firm of Cravath, de Gersdorff, Swaine, & Wood, of New York City. During the Christmas vacation the same firm assured our fellow-member and Branch president, Julius Brauner, that his services would be measurably valuable to them immediately upon his graduation from Law School next fall. To state the matter more bluntly, Julius is to be congratulated for landing an indisputably good job in this, A. D. (anno depressionis) 1932.

Notice

The following is a list of addresses which have been changed since the last issue of the News Letter, and also a few additional addresses which were not published in the previous issue.

- Anderson, A. A.—Pacific Coast Bldg., Loan Ass'n., Pacific Finance Bldg., Los Angeles, Calif.
Coville, Cabot—American Consulate General, Tokyo, Japan.
Daly, LeGrand F.—1820 Asbury Ave., Evanston, Ill.
Dickinson, C. L.—Dryden, N. Y.
Ashley, C. M.—Girard Place, Maplewood N. J.
Falconer, D. W.—2423 Virginia St., Berkeley, Calif.
Falconer, Robert T.—40 Crossman St., Buffalo, N. Y.
Houtz, E. L.—Netherelms, Woodside Ave., London, N. 12, England.
Landon, Benson—554 Meadow Road, Winnetka, Ill.
Johnston, W. D.—Mtn. States Power Co., Casper, Wyo.
Munroe, T. B.—Vice-Pres. Celotex Co., 919 No. Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill.
Robinson, Casey—1 Fifth Ave., New York, N. Y.
Sachse, Martin—Kerby, Oregon.
Schraivesande, John B.—205 Union Bank Bldg., Grand Rapids, Mich.
Sharp, Huntington—304 East 41 St., New York N. Y.
Warneke, P. N.—1424 F St., Napa, Calif.
Whittle, J. A.—16 Phelps Ave., Rochester, N. Y.

The following addresses are still wanted:

- Bird, F. S.
Washburn, R. C.
Yaggy, Bradford.