

TELLURIDE NEWS LETTER

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ITHACA, N. Y.

FEBRUARY, 1932

C. H. Schaaff

Dear Bill:

Many things have prevented me from sending you a reply to your request for an opinion on the Nunn Biography before now. Not the least of these was and is a feeling of unfitness for any such task.

I am sure that Mr. Bailey is not anxious to have us sing his praise in print; and while I have no doubt he has been with us long enough to have become accustomed to being criticized by his juniors, I fear some of us are running the risk of being misunderstood in trying to express our opinions in writing. Mr. Bailey did his work in response to our request; he has done his best, and it is a good job. I hope he will not feel that now he is to be put through the wringer.

Few of us are qualified to pass upon the literary style or structural merit of his work—I perhaps least of all—and the facts are certainly accurate; so it appears that my comments at least will be limited to the question of whether I favor a formal printing and distribution of a book, as is now planned.

My answer is no. But the skill or lack of it with which Mr. Bailey has done his job has little to do with that decision. He has done well; the story is simple and clear, and the whole is well assembled. I think that the way in which he has worked in the mass of quotations and many extracts from letters is rather remarkable. The manuscript was most interesting to me, because it related many things which I was interested to learn about Mr. Nunn and the early organization of Telluride Association. But that very statement explains why I do not favor a more formal printing and wide circulation of the book.

Frankly, I do not believe it would be of great interest to persons unfamiliar with Mr. Nunn and his organization, but I do not consider that this is the fault of the present author. There is a real question in my mind as to just what we do want in the way of a biography, whether the subject is suitable for wide general interest, and what we intend to do with it.

If it is our wish to publish a biography that will have popular appeal (popular, even in a very restricted sense) I think either of two things might be done to improve the present work. The first, along the line of "Hod" Lamb's suggestion, is to add more color and detail, to make it more of a fascinating story which will appeal to and perhaps inspire a larger group of, shall I say, less sophisticated readers. There is considerable question in my mind whether this is what we want, but if we do not want this,

I see no reason for publishing a formal book for general circulation.

My second suggestion is that a good deal more emphasis be put upon the foundation, organization, ideals, and workings of Telluride Association and Deep Springs. Mr. Nunn will be remembered principally for either of two things, or both; for his pioneer work in the transmission of electric power, and for his pioneer work in a unique and somewhat revolutionary idea of education. The former is well brought out in the work under discussion; but the latter could be set down a good deal more strongly, more dramatically, and more significantly. Even if we intend to limit the circulation of this work this last criticism or suggestion stands as my opinion.

I doubt that any of us could have done as well in this task as Mr. Bailey has done, and he deserves our thanks. I also doubt whether a Tarbell, or another, would accomplish just what we want. She would possibly compile a book more apt to be a best seller, if that is what we are after. Until we reach such a conclusion, I favor a printing in pamphlet form, no more.

Very sincerely,

CHARLIE SCHAAFF

J. J. Nunn

Dear Mr. Kuder:

The manuscript of the Biography of the Life of L. L. Nunn came to us on February 1, was carefully perused, and after five days forwarded to J. B. Tucker at Santa Ana according to the instruction of Paul Ashworth.

I most sincerely thank you for the privilege of its perusal. I wish I could have seen it very much earlier for personal gratification.

I think it a most excellent one and value it highly for its genuine worth and the true and most excellent estimate of his character. Another reason for my valuing it very highly is, I think it would meet with Mr. Nunn's approval could he see it, because it is a plain and true statement of facts and incidents in his life without flowery over-statements. It brings out so well the noble character of the man and his life work.

By all means, I hope you will conclude to have it published as soon as possible and not turn it over to any one to make it a larger or more flowery work of less value in the estimation of those who knew him best.

Again I ask, please do not delay the publication.

Sincerely,

JOSIAH J. NUNN

E. M. Johnson

Dear Editor:

I can write little about the biography of Mr. Nunn which I haven't already said at Convention and discussed with Association members. I trust, therefore, that my statements here will be passed over by your readers who have already heard them, and that they will not be entirely incomprehensible to the many who have not yet read Mr. Bailey's typescript.

Mr. Bailey has all the factual material of Mr. Nunn's life; he participated for half a lifetime in the daily affairs of our founder, and no other man, with the exception of Mr. P. N., could lay finger on a greater richness of detail. Mr. Bailey, with his "forthright craftsman's hand," has sifted this infinite detail and has written it briefly and compactly. Perhaps something has been sacrificed to this brevity. I doubt, however, that a biographer materially profits from personal association with his subject; a thousand years has separated writer and subject of some of the best biographies I have read.

Mr. Nunn left thousands of letters in his files, and from these Mr. Bailey has painstakingly sorted a few revealing illustrations. The book is not burdened with the repetitious letters one so often finds in biographies, and each fills a specific purpose. I think that Mr. Bailey has shown excellent judgment in his selection of letters.

My chief surprise was the formality of Mr. Bailey's approach; where I had expected a deal of personal observation and friendly, genial warmth, enriched by revealing anecdote, I find a studied, factual recital of Mr. Nunn's life. Emil Ludwig says somewhere that the anecdote best defines the personality. And anecdote this book sadly needs. I didn't expect a volume of silly anecdote or irresponsible gossip; but I did expect more flavor of the Old Man whom we loved and still cherish, perhaps because of his inconsistencies, his weaknesses, his strengths. After all, a sentence whispered by a world-thumper in the ear of his mistress often reveals more of the inner man than a score of sober pages about his military campaigns or his messages to parliament.

The facts, it strikes me, could have been enhanced by more interpretation. There is much difference between two acts in a man's life, one forced upon him through outward pressure and the other the result of deep, inner conviction. A delineation of the basic, personal motives of the Campbell squabble and Mr. Nunn's costly litigation over an ideal of state's rights

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TELLURIDE NEWS LETTER

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FEBRUARY, 1932

H. Mansfield

Dear Bill:

In belated response to your letter about the biography, I think there is nothing I can say that will be news to anyone at the House. As you know, the committee appointed last June was selected for the purpose of raising money and arranging for the publication, not for deliberating about the wisdom of publishing. During the summer, however, what had been an undercurrent of opposition to publication of the biography came to the surface and was reinforced by the opinions of several members who had not read the manuscript until that time. It turned out that a majority of the Association members on the committee appointed were opposed to going ahead.

While the question was in this suspended state, what might be called a "force majeure" intervened. I mean the depression. We were apprehensive about several of our investments in June, and since then things have been getting steadily no better. When I made my trip to Ithaca just after Thanksgiving there were too many uncertainties to speak definitely, but it seemed that possibly as much as a third of the income we have been accustomed in recent years to spend would be in jeopardy next year. With that prospect in view, the committee was unanimous in feeling, and members at the House seemed to agree, that publication of the biography was not a first call on our financial resources, and should be deferred until we were clearer as to how much we shall have to spend next year. There the matter rests for the present. The committee will try to make a more detailed report to Convention, and I for one hope that there will be many more individual minds made up on the subject this time than last when the Convention decision is made.

Sincerely yours,

HARVEY

P. P. Ashworth

Dear Mr. Kuder:

I have just finished with Mr. Bailey's biography of Mr. Nunn and I am sending it to Mr. J. J. Nunn as you suggested.

As to the matter of publishing this biography, I recommend that it be published in mimeographed form and distributed to the members of the Association and others who were best acquainted with Mr. Nunn. I think Mr.

Bailey has done a very fine piece of work and is to be congratulated. However, I do not think that the biography is suitable for general distribution. After it has been distributed in mimeographed form, those receiving copies should be asked to contribute to the Association Committee, anecdotes and other items of interest, together with more critical and detailed comment on the manuscript. This to the end that sufficient material might be collected to complete the story and justify a more pretentious presentation at some future time.

In connection with Mr. Bailey's manuscript, it would be valuable if a brief chronology was given at the beginning or end of the manuscript, and also if the names of the persons quoted and referred to in the manuscript were given. This would materially aid in further research work.

Sincerely,

PAUL P. ASHWORTH

Walter Welti

Dear Bill:

You know I just could not help finding myself very agreeably surprised to discover that you have my name on your mailing list. I have now received three successive issues of the News Letter, and must say that it is a refreshing experience. And what was even more surprising was to find my name listed among the alumni members of the Association, in your December number.

The trend of the notes from other alumni members seems to be to give some account of themselves and enquire after the pursuits of their one-time associates. There was for me a kind of thrill in looking through the list and noting that despite these perilous times of too much fast driving and gangland activities all of my old cohorts are still alive. Take for instance Chet Dunn. The way he tears around; who ever would have expected him to last this long? I could name a lot of happy surprises in the list; but my main purpose in writing you is rather to say that I appreciate your acknowledgement of my former association with the Institution you represent.

I note that the active personnel is practically all new. I am sure that it continues to get better. I hope it will be my privilege to visit the House next year and get acquainted with you, as it is my hope to spend the next school year in New York City, in continued study. Although I came here originally to teach English, my assignment was changed at once to music. As a consequence I have gone either to New York, Chicago, or Los Angeles every summer for additional work in music. For next year I am given a Sabbatical leave, and will study in New York.

It pleases me to see the enthusiasm displayed in the articles written by young Telluride men. Keep it up.

Best wishes,

WALTER WELTI

E. M. Johnson

(Continued from page one)

would illustrate my point. Also, the mere fact that the Reverend Finney profoundly influenced the young Nunn is to me less revealing than why he did so.

I once discussed with a young psychologist friend the various aspects of Mr. Nunn's life, and his interpretation of impulses and motives back of the acts of Mr. Nunn's life was indeed revealing. While I by no means swallow everything a psychologist tells me, I think there is much that a biographer could learn from one. When I read a biography, in addition to the statistics, facts, and episodes, I want as clear as possible a picture of the subject's inner emotional self; I am more interested in why a man did something than I am in what he did.

The biography strikes me as dull and quite prosy in spots—somebody said something of the sort about Homer—but this is doubtless a matter of personal taste, as are most of the things I have here discussed. If one hundred Association members and Alumni were to write one hundred biographies of Mr. Nunn, we would have one hundred Mr. Nuns, or better still, one hundred aspects of the same Mr. Nunn. But when one hundred of us try to write one and the same biography, the result is the same as the soup when a hundred cooks jostle about the pot, each following his pet recipe. I have read eight biographies of Christ, and no two have portrayed the Galilean in the same way; Renan, Farrer, Papini, Barton, Schmidt, Fouard, etc., have flavored their books, each writer according to his own mental and spiritual characteristics. We have a biography of Mr. Nunn, written from Mr. Bailey's slant. It is up to us to publish or not to publish, as we see fit. I am personally far from satisfied with the book; it doubtless is not the definitive biography. However, I am sufficiently interested in the book to have agreed at the 1931 Convention, when an Alumnus canvassed the group for signatures, to help underwrite publication. I would prefer this to having the Association bear the expense.

E. M. J.

Notes and Clippings

Cabot Coville, who was at the American Embassy in Tokyo for some years, has recently been assigned Consul at Harbin, China.

An essay by Mr. P. N. Nunn, entitled "Coordination, the Coming Social Order" has recently been printed in Ithaca, and will be distributed to those who are on the News Letter mailing list.

Morgan Sibbett

Dear Editor:

At a time when we are hearing rumors about drastic reduction in the income of the Association, it might be well to inquire how we may most easily curtail our activities with, at the same time, the least danger to our essential purpose. To some the answer is apparent, that we should reduce the amount of money spent on scholarships outside of Telluride House, that if this is not sufficient we should pare down the budget in various other places, always with the important exception of the appropriation for the maintenance of Telluride House and for the tuition and fees of its members. In fact the very mention of a cut in this item along with others brought many members to their feet in holy terror at the June Convention. We are treated to the spectacle of a reduction of over a thousand dollars in outside scholarships (substantial in the case of some individual grants), while the generous appropriation for members residing in Telluride House was untouched. Why should there be this discrimination between those whose interests or self-interests brings them to Cornell and others who are pursuing equally laudable goals elsewhere?

The proponents of this discrimination contend with some force that the Cornell Branch is at present the center of Association life and activity, that to reduce our expenditure for this central agency is to endanger the Association itself. But this does not imply the impossibility of our having small groups elsewhere which can be just as much centers for Telluride Association and fully as valuable to it as the larger but sometimes more complacent group of members in the House. We are not increasing the effectiveness of the Branch by pampering it at the expense of outside scholarships. No one is proposing that economy should go to the length of curtailing the activities which now characterize Telluride House, that is, the maintenance of an environment where resident members may live and breathe and have their being while at Cornell. The proposal which this letter is intended to convey is merely that the appropriation for the tuition and fees of Association members in the House should be reduced along with outside scholarships. Twenty-two thousand dollars were appropriated last year for the maintenance of members at Cornell, while seven thousand dollars were assigned for all the other educational work of members. Under this arrangement nineteen men are not only given the luxurious and valuable privileges of the House, but they are made almost independent of outside finances by having their tuition and fees paid for them. On the other hand a member at some other college is given perhaps enough to cover tuition, but probably no more than is enough for a year's board. I am not yet convinced that there is sufficient difference between the pecu-

liar training offered at the House and the more independent training which a member gets elsewhere to warrant such a discrepancy. The amount spent for the tuition and fees of resident members could be substantially reduced without changing any of the distinctive characteristics of Cornell Branch (except for financial equality among the members, which can never exist in fact, unless all of their expenses are paid). But the appropriation for outside work cannot be reduced without impairing the variety and vitality of our educational program.

Sincerely,
MORGAN SIBBETT

Julius Brauner

Dear Editor:

As reports from our investments indicate that our income for the year 1931-1932 will probably be curtailed, it may not be amiss to consider the relative merits of the various association activities for which we have appropriated our money in the past years.

Certain items of expenditure such as salaries are essential. It would seem that the only appropriations which are capable of being reduced are those for Deep Springs, the operation of Telluride House, Tuition and Fees for members of Cornell Branch, and Scholarships outside Telluride House.

I, for one, am heartily in favor of giving all the support necessary to Deep Springs. Without our assistance it will be almost impossible for that institution to continue in operation. It is our only primary branch, and at present most of our best applicants for membership appear to be coming from Deep Springs.

The appropriation for the operation and maintenance of the house at Cornell should be adequate to allow the continuance of Cornell Branch and to cover all reasonable costs of maintaining the House and providing facilities for entertaining as has been the custom in the past. It may be possible to reduce the appropriation for the house next year to a slight extent in view of the lower price level. But I do not believe that the reduction should be such as will curtail the activities of the Branch.

Of the other two items capable of reduction, I should favor awarding preferment of tuition and fees to members of the Cornell Branch before any outside scholarships are granted. The Branch is the only place at which the activities of the Association are centralized and maintained during the year. Any diminishing of the preferment to members of the Branch might result in making it necessary for some members of the Branch to work during the school year. I think this would be unfortunate as detracting from the possibility of those men getting the most out of Branch and University life.

It is argued that members of the Association residing at the Branch

already receive more than do our outside scholars, and should not be thus favored if expenses have to be cut. I think that this argument proves little. Although most of the men now at the Branch would continue their work at the University, even if they were granted no preferment at all, the activities of some would be considerably restricted, and the Branch would suffer.

While it is true that some of the members pursuing their scholastic work at universities other than Cornell, may stand in greater need of assistance than do most members at the Branch, it has been our policy in the past to award preferment on the basis of the merit of the individual and the value to the Association of such preferment. I grant that the merit of many of those members obtaining their training elsewhere is at least as great as that of the members at the Branch. But I do not believe that the Association, as an educational organization, benefits as much from these preferments as it does from those granted to members of Cornell Branch.

I sincerely hope that those members of the Association residing at the Branch will consider the matter carefully and will not vote outside scholarships instead of tuition and fees for Telluride House purely from a spirit of self-sacrifice.

Sincerely,
JULIUS F. BRAUNER III.

CORNELL BRANCH NOTES

On January 19th the Branch entertained Professor I. G. MacIver, of the Department of Social Sciences at Columbia University. Professor MacIver lectured here on "Civilization versus Culture," apparently a case in which litigation will continue for some time.

Frank Jewett Mather, Jr., Marquand Professor of Art and Archaeology at Princeton University, is delivering the Messenger Lectures at Cornell this year, his topic being "Great Venetian Painters." Professor Mather and his wife have been guests at the Branch since February 14th. We must resign ourselves to the loss of Mrs. Mather's company this week, but fortunately Professor Mather will be a fellow-member here until his series of lectures is over, March 9th.

Mr. C. Douglas Booth, who is on a lecture tour under the auspices of the Carnegie Peace Foundation, was our guest on February 15th and 16th. He delivered a lecture on various phases of the disarmament problem.

Pursuant to the authority granted by the 1931 convention, giving the Branch authority to invite additional students to reside at the House, the members invited Hugh Davy for the remainder of this year. This action was deemed proper by the members in view of Hugh's excellent record at Cornell during the first term. P. B.

C. B. Sabine

I read Mr. Bailey's biography of Mr. Nunn with a great deal of pleasure and interest. Influenced as I had been by adverse criticism, I was agreeably surprised when I finally read it. In my opinion it fills the purpose for which it was intended, namely, a straightforward account of a man's life. It is certainly not explicitly psychological, nor does it attempt to analyze the man in terms of his environment or his intellectual background. This I think to be good. To conduct such an analysis would be extremely difficult, and of doubtful value even if it could be accomplished without a great deal of controversy.

Some of the material contained in the Supplement is perhaps superfluous, but this is a matter of no great moment. The quotations from Mr. Nunn's writings are of importance in attempting to delineate his character, and enable each reader to bring his own analytical powers to bear on the personality described in the biography.

I should recommend that the biography be published as soon as possible. In view of the financial position of the Association, it does not seem advisable to pay for an inexpensive edition in book form. I see no objection to publication in pamphlet form together with a few of the available pictures; this pamphlet could be distributed at cost among those who are interested. Mimeographing is unsatisfactory because it is bulky, illegible, and does not, it seems to me, possess the dignity which a formal publication of the Association should have.

GEORGIE BURR SABINE

P. H. Reinhardt

We are resting comfortably today in a government chalet or fjeldstuer as they call it in Norwegian. Yesterday Bob and I hiked twenty-two miles up the Tana River from Vtsjok in Finland, while the rest of the party was travelling by sleigh and Russian pony. For a good many miles we could keep up with them as they went along a portion of the river where the ice was very weak. I had to direct the sled while the Lapp driver went ahead with a stick to test the ice. Sometimes it would be so weak we would have to go along the edge on the steep rocky bank. Bob and I would have to hold the sled up from slipping into the water. Twice while on the ice, the horse and sled broke through, but luckily the water wasn't deep. Part of the way we had to climb over a high ridge that came to a cliff at the water's edge. The only trail was that made by a reindeer and pulka (that is the funny little canoe-like sled that is used with reindeer). The big sled tipped over many times and then caused a lot of trouble on steep downward slopes. The Lapp and we two would have to practically sit in the snow, while we slid, to hold the sled to a

moderate rate of speed. The Russian pony is an amazing animal. We have used them several times and every time their marvelous endurance and speed for their small size has astonished us.

The Lapps are like creatures out of a weird dream. They all wear the native clothes and pretty much live as they always have. On their heads they carry big hats filled with elder-down. They have four corners and look much like a mortar board hat with a star fish on top. The corners slop over in every direction. As shirts, they wear a black, closed necked affair that reaches down in back to the back of the knee, in front, to about a foot above the knee. This shirt is trimmed with yellow and red felt. They wear a wide leather or cloth belt that hangs on the hips. From the belt at the left hangs a long home-made knife about a foot and a half long. They all wear a knife. On their legs, they wear reindeer leggings with the hair on the outside. They are tight and reach from the thigh to the ankle. For shoes, they have reindeer fur moccasins (or they say scalls) with the hair outside shaped so that the toe of the shoe points upward. The scalls are filled with straw, which makes them comfortable and soft. When it is cold they wear great slip-on furs (reindeer) that they call pesks. We are using pesks and scalls. Over this they wear a highly colored cape with a hood, that they can pull over their faces in the cold.

These people are usually, from what we have seen, short, stocky, bow-legged, black-haired, slant-eyed, high-check-boned, drooping black moustached, cheerful, kindly, but awful bargainers. Some look very Chinese, others Japanese, some like pictures of Hungarian peasants, some with much white blood in them, almost like the Norwegians and Finns.

But the astonishing thing is that they live so much like their ancestors, and that their numbers are increasing in spite of the ever-increasing proximity of Norwegian, Swedish and Finnish settlements. We have seen lots of reindeer. The post goes through here once a week and always goes by reindeer caravans. They are a beautiful sight to see. But the trouble with reindeer is that only one person can ride in a pulka and you need two reindeer for each pulka, one in front and one behind. You need extra baggage pulkas. In other words for our party of five we would need about twenty reindeer and ten pulkas. Besides all this they are almost unmanageable except by their master. We will do a good bit of that travel through where we can't use horses in the mountains—but must cover large distances.

My last letter I think was written after leaving North Cape. We have done a lot of travelling since then. From Honningsvaag we went by boat to Kjollefjord. We stayed overnight and started out afoot the next day a-

cross the mountains toward Nordkyn. We had steep climbing and no trail and an icy gale. The second day we got onto a high plateau that, except for the desert, was the most desolate place I have ever seen. Not a tree or bush or sign of animal life all day. Toward night (2 p. m.) we came down to a little fishing harbor called Mehann. There we got a fishing trawler to take us around to a point not distant from Nordkyn. It was an experience in itself to go out with the Norse fishermen in the Arctic Ocean in the little bobbing trawler. It was cold and bleak upon Nordkyn. Mr. North and Mary had lots of flags and things to bring out and take pictures of. There were almost some frozen fingers because of them. From Nordkyn we took a boat around to Kirkenes and walked up to Boris Gleb—for centuries a Russian Greek Catholic church. Then back and across the Varanger fjord to Vadso. We stayed there to write letters and get provisions for our present lap. Then we set out up the Tana river by pony and sleigh. The second day we got along about thirty-eight miles on good smooth solid ice. It was a thrill sliding along in the fresh, vigorous, wintry air, well bundled up in furs, being driven by a colorfully dressed, oddly chanting Lapp. The next stop we were held up for an exorbitant sum, so we set out afoot. There was no ice in the rapids and the travel on the birch covered hill sides was not very good. We slept out two nights in the snow. On the third day we came to a little hut. We crossed the river the next day into Finland and spent an interesting time at Vtsjok. The government representative there spoke German. The population of the town is 600—570 are Lapps. Then followed the day to our present lodging. Today we rested and got some writing done.

It is two days since I have had a chance to write. In that time we have traveled a good sixty miles. Bob and I have done it on foot, while the other three have ridden in a sled with our packs. We have travelled mainly up the Tana river. When we reached the end of the Tana we struck off up a branch called the Karasjokka and are now resting at the biggest Lapp settlement in Norway, Karasjokka. There are about 700 here and perhaps forty Norwegians counting the government officials. Everybody wears the Lapp clothing and speaks their language. We expect to stay here about a week to take movies and see all we can. Then we travel on by reindeer to Kautokeino, a four-day trip over the mountains to a settlement near the Swedish border.

(These are excerpts from letters written by Paul to his Mother last December, before he left Lapland. This article will be concluded in the next issue. Get yours EARLY! Just try.—Ed.)