

Lipsey, Julia Frances Hassell, 1894-1984
Colorado College Class of 1917

CASSETTE ONE - SIDE ONE

FINLEY:

This is Tape Recording Number 15 of the Colorado College Archives Oral History Project. I am Judy Finley, interviewing Mrs. Julia Frances Hassell Lipsey in her home overlooking Cheyenne Creek at 1920 Pine Grove, where she has lived for half a century. The date is May 3rd, 1977. Mrs. Lipsey is a lifelong resident of Colorado Springs. Her father operated the Hassell Ironworks for many years, and was known for his fine craftsmanship in wrought iron fences. Mrs. Lipsey graduated from Cutler Academy in 1913, and from Colorado College in 1917. She married John J. Lipsey in 1924, and with him operated a small antiquarian book dealership, specializing later in books on Western history. Her class of 1917 is celebrating its 60th reunion this spring, 1977.

Good morning, Mrs. Lipsey. It's lovely to be sitting here on your deck overlooking Cheyenne Creek in this lovely home that you said you have lived in for 50 years.

LIPSEY:

Yes.

FINLEY:

I'd like to ask you to go back even farther than 50 years. You are essentially a native of Colorado Springs?

LIPSEY:

Yes.

FINLEY:

Now, can you tell me--

LIPSEY:

My older brother was born here, and I happened to be born in the South.

FINLEY:

I see. And you were brought here then as a baby?

LIPSEY:

My father had lived here since 1885, so I came here when I was a few months old, and have never had another address in my life! You know, most people have lived all kinds of places! But I've never left Colorado Springs as a home. If I went away, it was just for a vacation, and I never even went away to school or college. So that I actually went 16 years to school and college within five blocks--five or six blocks--of my family home, always walking to school. So that I was so close to home that I had no real college life, which is, I think, a great loss.

FINLEY:

What are some of your earliest memories of Colorado Springs in the 1890's?

LIPSEY:

Well, as I say, one of my earliest recollections is when the big Antlers Hotel burned down in 1898, in, I think it was October. And my father had a small shop dealing in electrical iron materials and electrical supplies, directly south across what was then Baltimore Street--now Colorado Avenue--from the hotel, so his place was completely burned up.

I remember I was playing down on the porch, I think, of my parents' home, 1424 Wood Avenue, and suddenly, my father appeared, and even to a child not quite four years old, he was excited, saying, "My!" But what I particularly remember is a great smudge of black on his cheek.

And he had outside a closed carriage with two horses, I think, which he had hired because he thought the town was burning down, and he was going to get my mother and brother and me, and take us to Denver out of danger.

So we got into the car I think very hastily, and my mother grabbed me up a few clothes. But very shortly--I don't know how it was determined that the town was not burning down. So then we rode a few blocks on the periphery of the fire, and that is my memory of the big fire in the fall of 1898.

FINLEY:

Could you see the flames and--

LIPSEY:

Oh, yes, there were flames. It was daytime--it was around noon or early afternoon, as I remember.

FINLEY: And was your father upset gravely that his Hassell

ironworks burned down?

LIPSEY:

He didn't seem to be. I don't remember; I was too small to know any private conversations. But later, of course, we had a much bigger fire, when we had a bigger shop, and that was on the 500 block of Sierra Madre and South Wahsatch Street, and that burned completely down.

FINLEY:

Yes. Now, you have detailed the history of the Hassell Ironworks rather well in a paper that you read to the Historical Society of the Pikes Peak Region on June 18th, 1957. That's a fascinating story; I think I will refrain from asking you questions about that, unless we have time towards the end of this tape. I happened to pass the Denver Equipment Company this morning--

LIPSEY:

Oh, yes!

FINLEY:

--I guess that was the firm that bought out--

LIPSEY:

It's a little central [?] brick building facing west on Sierra Madre Street, a little irregular shaped building, the little [can't understand] story was their office, where I worked until I was married.

FINLEY:

And then later the Denver Equipment Company--

LIPSEY:

They take it, I believe, until about 1936 they bought it from my brother and me, bought it then. My father had died.

FINLEY:

Yes. Well, now, your recollection of the Antlers Hotel fire--you were about four or five years old--

LIPSEY:

I was almost four years old, I think; a little under four.

FINLEY:

Where did you go to elementary school?

LIPSEY:

The Steele School there, which has been replaced in the same lot by a new school. It's in the 1700 block of Weber.

FINLEY:

And wasn't it a brand new building when you were a child?

LIPSEY:

It was. It was the swell school in town. I was most proud to be going to Steele School. It was not as large as it later was. It had exactly eight rooms, for the eight classes, and a little principal's office. And it was probably arranged with great wide halls. It always astonishes me how much hall space they used to put in buildings.

But anyway, this was so arranged that there came up from the center of the building a wide stairway which branched off right and left. The idea was that the platform and the wide stairway, which couldn't have been more than half a dozen steps, I should think, from the first floor, would serve as a stage. And the audience would sit in the big wide hall, looking toward the stage, which would be facing south.

FINLEY:

That's very interesting.

LIPSEY:

Isn't that interesting? [laughter]

FINLEY:

Well, it is important. My children went to that old school before it was torn down, and they are now in the new school.

LIPSEY:

Oh, you have children like that?

FINLEY:

Well, they're older now, but I remember that wonderful old building. You lived on Wood Avenue all those years of your childhood?

LIPSEY:

My parents had earlier lived awhile on Spruce Street-- Spruce Street and Dale, I think it was. And then in the Fall of 1898, they bought this house which was only about maybe three years old itself. It was in what my mother said later was the only poor block on Wood Avenue; everybody else had much handsomer and finer houses than that was.

FINLEY:

Do you remember any of your neighbors along Wood Avenue? Was P. B. Stewart in his home at that time?

LIPSEY:

He was down there, yes. That was the show house of the

street. That was the 1200 block. One time at Cutler we had a party at that house. It had a--oh, you know how it is, of course--it had this balcony. That was very exciting. We were--P. B. Stewart and I were both freshmen in Cutler Academy, and his mother very kindly gave a party to--I guess our class. Yes, I think P. B.'s class.

FINLEY:

When you say freshman at Cutler Academy, you would have entered Cutler Academy in the equivalent of what we would call ninth grade now, right?

LIPSEY:

Yes, uh-hum.

FINLEY:

You go four years?

LIPSEY:

Four years--1909 to 1913, I was in Cutler Academy.

FINLEY:

Okay, now why did you go to Cutler Academy instead of a public school? Was there some social prestige involved in going to Cutler Academy?

LIPSEY:

There was some, but I don't think that that was the reason I went. It happened that my principal girlfriends in Steele School in the eighth grade and earlier were going there, and here I was just four blocks from Cutler Academy. No going out; no having to go and wait for the streetcar and walk down to the high school, which is the present Palmer High School, you know. But it isn't the present building, because the old building with the clock tower on it was very nice.

FINLEY:

Uh-hum.

LIPSEY:

So that they decided that though my brother was then in high school, well, it would be nice for me to stay with my friends, and just walk those four or five blocks to school. Which I did, for the next eight years! [chuckles]

FINLEY:

Was the education at Cutler Academy considered superior in some ways to that of a public high school?

LIPSEY:

Oh, I think not. The public high school--I remember my father saying, "As a matter of fact, you have much more educational advantages in the high school--more courses." And perhaps the teachers were paid more. It would be interesting to me to know how much those teachers at Cutler Academy and high school were paid in those days. It must have been very small.

FINLEY:

Oh, very small. The teachers at Cutler Academy must have also been many of the same teachers who taught at Colorado College--right?

LIPSEY:

Not entirely. Professor Gile, Moses Clement Gile was the one I most admired, and had the great advantage it seemed to me of having beginning lessons taught by him. He was a really fine professor.

FINLEY:

I think he also taught at Colorado College.

LIPSEY:

He would teach at Colorado College, but he came over and--

FINLEY:

Well, I have here a book of the course of instruction from Cutler Academy, published in 1912, and it sounds as though you really went through Latin, four years worth, on up through Cicero, and you read Ovid and Caesar, of course. It sounds as though your classical education was extensive.

LIPSEY:

Well, that was the proper thing for people who were going to college, Ovid. I think I took either two or three years of Latin, and then I transferred to German and French, which I liked much better.

FINLEY:

Were all your classes held in Cutler Hall?

LIPSEY:

Yes; would you like for me to talk about what Cutler Hall was like?

FINLEY:

Yes, please do.

LIPSEY:

It was not the very earliest form of that building

which had been built as, I think, the new fine classroom building for Colorado College in--I couldn't say just what date, but--you know. Anyway, then it--great waste. Then they later added a little wing with one room on the north side and the south side.

Before that, it consisted of just four rooms and an upstairs. Four rooms on the ground floor and a little basement. When I was there, it had a kind of a ramshackle little chemistry laboratory--a very cellar looking place, as I remember it.

Then it had the old two rooms, and then what had been-- I don't know what it had been used for originally, but it was simply a way of getting to the new wing. Here was this great wide--it was a great wide central hall going east and west, entered from the east side, of course. And that branched off into a kind of a perfectly unused big space which--all that we used it for was to gain entry to the rooms at the side, which consisted of one large room at each side.

So that those four rooms were--and the basement chem lab, and the upstairs chapel and study hall, which was a big room covering most of the second story of the old part of the building--all of the second story of the old part of the building except a small headmaster's office. I think we called him the headmaster. [chuckles] No, we called him Hezzie--for Hezekiah.

FINLEY:

What was his real name?

LIPSEY:

His name was James, I think. James Williams Park. James William or James Williams Park. But for some reason, all the students--I haven't the slightest notion why--called him either Hezekiah or Hezzie--not to his face.

FINLEY:

[chuckles] Well, now, did the academy occupy Cutler Hall exclusively, or were there some college classes held there, too?

LIPSEY:

None in my time. All those four rooms, study hall and chem lab were taken up completely by our students. I don't suppose there were ever as many as a hundred students in there at one time, were there?

FINLEY:

I don't think so.

LIPSEY:

Our class, at graduation, was only 13.

FINLEY:

Can you describe a little bit of the routine of your day at Cutler Academy? Was it very strict and rigid, or was it rather informal?

LIPSEY:

It was perfectly informal, except in the classroom. In the classroom, we were completely respectful to our teachers. There were two women there that were teaching there all the time I was there, and later, and when Cutler Academy was discontinued, they went to the high school. Cutler Academy was discontinued in June, 1914, one year after I graduated.

And that was Miss Ella Taylor, who taught--she taught German and history, I believe. And Miss Lillian Bateman; she was the younger of the two teaching sisters. She was just, I think, finishing either her A.B. or her M.A.--probably A.B. degree in college, I remember.

FINLEY:

She must have taught English.

LIPSEY:

Yes, she taught English, and she also taught some math classes, it seems to me. Then we had one man who was--his name was Flaherty, and I don't know his first name now. We were so formal in that time that--

FINLEY:

You called him Mr. Parker--

LIPSEY:

We called him either Mr. or Professor Flaherty, and his first name was unknown to me. He was a small, rather joking little Irish man--not with an accent.

FINLEY:

What did he teach?

LIPSEY:

And he was a bachelor, I think, and he must have been--he seemed to me very old in those days. He must have been in his fifties. He taught mathematics and science. I had one year of chemistry and one year of physics under him. He was a good teacher, I think, and liked the students, joked with them. I remember one person saying to me, "You know, I think Professor Flaherty tells such childish jokes now; don't you think he's changed?"

I said, "Well, no, he's just as he always was." But he was very nice.

Then there was, my final years there, there was Homer Woodbridge's sister, Elizabeth Woodbridge. She was teaching French there, and I had French under her.

FINLEY:

Professor Woodbridge taught in the college--

LIPSEY:

He taught English in college. He was, really, I think, one of the most interesting professors I had. May I digress here and say why--why we had such good professors in Colorado College and Cutler? Maybe--I don't think everybody would realize that.

FINLEY:

Please tell me--tell me why they were so good!

LIPSEY:

Here was this struggling little independent college--they didn't call them independent then; they called them nondenominational, I think. It was started, of course, by the Congregational Church, but it was protestant, nondenomination--struggling to keep alive year after year, almost going down to nothing in the early years except through the efforts of James H. Kerr, a professor there.

And I would like to know what their salaries actually were--these women and Professor Flaherty. But there were fine teachers in the college and in--mostly in the college--because that was big days of Colorado Springs as a resort for tuberculosis. It was the health place for tuberculosis. So when a professor's wife broke down with tuberculosis, as they did so much in those days, he was willing to come out here and accept this very small position, with, I suppose, very little hope of advancement, more than this particular college.

So Colorado College and Cutler both had exceptional professors like Mr. Gile, and Homer Woodbridge, [Edward Christian] Schneider, the science professor, and others.

FINLEY:

Oh, many, many, many people.

LIPSEY:

So it seems to me that if there is an advantage in small schools, and these were certainly small schools, I certainly enjoyed that.

FINLEY:

Yes, indeed. You were asking about the salaries these

people earned. I notice that the tuition at Cutler Academy here for a whole year was \$50.

LIPSEY:

Yes!

FINLEY:

Was that considered a lot of money to your family-- probably not?

LIPSEY:

Well, it was considered worthwhile--not a great amount--worth the difference in convenience and staying with friends, and a certain prestige of being with those college people, which my parents--neither one of them went to college. In fact, I don't think either one of them graduated from high school. But things were different in those days. They were not ignorant people--they were reading people. But we had absolutely no connection with academic people.

FINLEY:

Well, \$50 tuition certainly didn't pay very high salaries for the teachers.

LIPSEY:

It couldn't have! [laughter] And the endowment must have been small in those days.

FINLEY:

Oh, I'm sure it was.

LIPSEY:

You know, the reason why they had that preparatory school?

FINLEY:

I'd like to know why they did have Cutler Academy.

LIPSEY:

I was told that the reason was that when it was started, which--of course, when Colorado College was started, there were plenty of young people who were worthy of college educations, but they had grown up in isolated places or small towns on the western slope, or in eastern Colorado, where there were no high schools. So if they were going to get to college, they had to have the last years of high school, or some high school education, or filling-in courses.

So that was why they established this preparatory school. And then by 1914, the small towns had high schools, and it didn't seem necessary. The rule was, I think, that they wouldn't take any girls unless they either lived there, or were with relatives, or persons, friends approved by their parents.

FINLEY:

So there was no dormitory?

LIPSEY:

There was absolutely no dormitory. I think maybe some of the boys--I don't know whether any of them lived in Hagerman Hall, the only boys' dormitory, or they may have been able to--they may have permitted them to go to boarding houses in town, which the town was full of. But the girls were very--very strict rules about the girls.

FINLEY:

Most of the addresses seemed to be Colorado Springs. However, there are a number from places like Indiana, New Mexico, Illinois. Now, were these people who wanted to go to Colorado College, that came all the way out from that far away? I notice Clifford Sumner here in your class is from Atlanta, Illinois, and there's a man named Frederick Dass from Albuquerque, New Mexico, and a lady named Julia Conner.

LIPSEY:

Oh, those are just names to me!

FINLEY:

You don't recall them?

LIPSEY:

Some of them, I suppose, just had the thrilling new west idea. Others, perhaps, had relatives in town. Some of them may have had tubercular parents out here.

FINLEY:

Uh-hum, possibly.

LIPSEY:

I really don't know.

FINLEY:

Did most of them then go on to Colorado College, or did they go to other colleges, many of them?

LIPSEY:

Well, there was some difference in that, too. The reason there was such a preponderance of girls in Cutler Academy was simple enough. There were in my graduating class ten girls and three boys. The reason was that the families that would send the boys to college, and college was, of course, much rarer than it is now. A college education was rare. The kind of people that we always referred to as the "society set" and they were completely distinctive. It was a snobbish, snobbish bunch. Now, most families would send

their sons east to these celebrated boarding houses, you
know--boarding schools--

FINLEY:

I see. Of course, to go to the Ivy League--

LIPSEY:

--the schools, yes, and the prep schools--they'd send them to--whatever the prep schools are [can't understand] Whereas the girls, for some reason or another, they kept at home. Maybe they just thought it was more dangerous for girls--

FINLEY:

Yes, I can understand that.

LIPSEY:

A few girls would be sent to boarding school. And it was not--you could be--well, in those days, the, as we called them, society women--a woman in the society set was rather more likely not to be a college graduate than to be a college graduate. They went to finishing schools, and some of the girls in the more moneyed families here might go a year or two to Cutler, even finish Cutler, and then go to a finishing school in the east for one year. Whereas the boys would go east to both school and college. Then the girls, if they were going to college, would go to college--instead of Colorado College, they would go to Wellesley and Smith, and places like that.

FINLEY:

Yes, yes.

LIPSEY:

So many of them. Agnes Donaldson, now, she had--she went to Agnes Scott College, which was founded by her grandmother, I believe, and named for the family name.

FINLEY:

Can you tell me something about the social life at Cutler Academy? If girls were so protected, did you have dances and parties? What kinds of things did you do?

LIPSEY:

Well, my mother was a very timid and retiring person, extremely Puritanical. I was also timid and I had, it seems to me, almost no social life. There were--in college, there were the fraternities. Sororities were not allowed--no, no. Boys could have the fraternities, but in my day, no sororities.

And at Cutler, if there were any parties, I think it was almost entirely private parties. It seems to me I do remember that in the graduating class, we once had a hayride,

it was called. We'd hire a big wagon with hay in it, and we went to Star Ranch. It seems to me that was about the most elaborate of the things I remember at Cutler. I seem to remember a graduating class going to have a meal at Bruin Inn up here once.

Then, in this class of '13, my graduating class, we did have a series of parties. Most of the people, and certainly all the girls--almost all the girls and their families lived in town--gave a party to the boys and girls in the class. And if they needed more boys, why, they'd reach down into the lower grades and get some other boys in the younger classes. My mother did not, because she just--she couldn't give parties; it just wasn't in her nature.

But I can remember one--well, it was at Helen Minnescheiner's [?] house. She was in my class, a doctor's daughter over on Bott Avenue, a big house, and her family gave a graduating class party, and you probably, considering the sophistication of high school people in this day, you could never imagine what the entertainment was.

FINLEY:

I can't imagine.

LIPSEY:

Pulling taffy!

FINLEY:

Pulling taffy! [laughter]

LIPSEY:

That was social life--at least for me! [laughter]

FINLEY:

No, I think that may have been entirely the norm, because--

LIPSEY:

I can't remember what we did at the others. I suppose we played some sort of parlor games, as they called them. But there were quite a number of those parties.

FINLEY:

Do you remember any romances at the Cutler Academy level?

LIPSEY:

There were some, I suppose. To me, I was not in that at all. I was--as I say, a Puritanical mother--not inclined in that direction. [chuckles] One scandalous thing I

remember--well, it was really shocking to me. It was, I think, senior or junior year, in Miss Taylor's history class. There was a very romantic-looking, good-looking eastern young man--I don't even know his name now. But he was not a town boy; he was the dashing kind, you know, and very good-looking.

One time, Miss Taylor called on him to stand--we always stood, I think, for recitations. I don't know what they do now. He was to stand and answer questions on the history. He stood up, and began to stutter and stammer, and stagger around, obviously drunk. I don't remember what his name was--oh, call him Chumley, say. She said, "Mr. Chumley, leave the room."

That was the last I ever heard of that episode! That was my ignorance in those days. I was sort of lax, because I just went to class and went home, with a few little associations with a few of the girls. That was the last I ever heard of that--how he got drunk, where he was when he got drunk, what happened to him afterwards, I haven't the faintest.

FINLEY:

But he must have been dismissed from the school, do you think, or not?

LIPSEY:

I think he probably was. I'm not sure whether he came back to class or not, but that was the total I ever heard about it. I never remember anything like that.

Everything was totally formal. The men teachers would call the boys by their last names, "Smith" and "Jones." The women teachers would call them "Mr. Smith" and "Mr. Jones" and the girls were always called "Miss Smith" and "Jones." That was the way it was done then. How is it now?

FINLEY:

Well, it was that way when I was in college, but not any more. Most of the students call my husband, who teaches at Colorado College, by his first name.

LIPSEY:

Do they, really?!

FINLEY:

Uh-hum.

LIPSEY:

That would have been utterly unthinkable in my day!

[chuckles]

FINLEY:

Well, can you recall the ceremony of your graduation from Cutler Academy, and what it consisted of?

LIPSEY:

I think it was a sort of a chapel service, and a baccalaureate sermon by somebody brought in. Actually, now, I don't remember what it was. The event that the students took part in was something called Class Day, a day or two before that. Do they still have that?

FINLEY:

No, but I notice here the Class Day exercises, and you participated in some sort of fantasy called "Fond du Lac," by Miss Julia Hassell. I don't know what that consisted of. Can you recall?

LIPSEY:

Oh, that was something--this Fond du Lac had to be explained to me by Jo van Diest--Jo Dean van Diest; she married a doctor and lived in--I don't know, St. Louis? So she said that that was a--that Fond du Lac, meaning that I was to say something about each of the students in class.

And so I wrote them a poem, and I mentioned everybody, and I think I said rather complimentary things about each of them, as I remember. But the only lines of that poem I remember, I said, "Ours is the class with the luck, 13 in the class, and '13 in the year." Then I mentioned each person by name, and said something about that person.

So--I don't know what that was. Stratford on Avon, Mr. Basil Quayle--now there's a romantic name if you ever saw one. He was a practically silent boy, and to me--he came from vaguely somewhere in the East, which was an odd designation--was alone here, and not any family here. And I looked upon him as a remarkable intellectual. Jo van Diest was one of the most known in class. She was [can't understand] van Diest-- [Edmond van Diest's daughter].

FINLEY:

Yes, indeed.

LIPSEY:

But the middle of his three daughters. Great Divide was Ida Blackman, and she was the very shy, retiring daughter of the famous college physician--oh, I mean he was famous around here--Dr. Alfred Blackman.

FINLEY:

Was she--you know the Haney family--was she Gratia Belle Haney's mother, or--

LIPSEY:

Gratia Belle Haney is her half-sister. Ida's mother

had died when she was quite young, I think, and she had an aunt who just was--Ida was treated like a royal princess. She would always have somebody with her, and guard her, so that if you played--if you came down and played basketball, the girls in my back yard--my father put me up a basketball net--why, along came Aunt Julia. And Julia would sit in the yard and watch the basketball game.

Wherever Ida went, Aunt Julia went, and Ida was actually a timid person, and remained so. She married rather later than most people married, because . . . and she, I guess, is not living now, I suppose.

But none of these things mean anything at all to me. Star Point, Mr. Mortimer Pugh. He was sort of the--oh, he was the class clown, I think, he was a kind of amusing. Fair Report--I have no idea what that was. These seemed to have been Jo van Diest's inventions of what these things were. Well, anyway--

FINLEY:

--must have been a sort of a ceremony--

LIPSEY:

--some original gift or act of some sort, stage act of some sort, and that was what the students did.

FINLEY:

And where did this Class Day ceremony take place, do you recall? Was it indoors or outdoors?

LIPSEY:

It would probably be indoors in the study hall upstairs. What's upstairs now, I wonder, in the administration building offices?

FINLEY:

I think it's the education office now--I haven't been up there for awhile! [chuckles]

LIPSEY:

But is offices? One big room, it was then.

FINLEY:

Yes, yes, right.

LIPSEY:

Yes.

FINLEY:

After you graduated from Cutler Academy, you went

directly to Colorado College the following September?

LIPSEY:

Yes, uh-hum.

FINLEY:

Now, was that a big change, or was it just more of the same atmosphere? Had you gotten to know the college students as a high school student?

LIPSEY:

I don't think I had any acquaintances. As I say, I was utterly . . . well, what would you call it . . . seclusive? I knew very few people, and remained that way, I guess, all my life. I didn't know--I might have known somebody in college who had been at Cutler the year before. But it was a great difference to me. It was going from a sort of a childhood supervision to a college. I had always been among the top in academic ratings in the school, and I remember I fell back somewhat in college, until I got used to it.

FINLEY:

And you led a much freer life at that point?

LIPSEY:

No, I never lived a freer-- [laughter]

FINLEY:

You still lived at home?

LIPSEY:

I lived at home! [laughter] As far as my social life was concerned, it was just--well, it didn't exist, really, for me. Which was nobody's fault but my own, and my mother's, I suppose. My mother didn't go in for that sort of thing, and I was too retiring to initiate anything for myself.

FINLEY:

What was your first impression of the--you were familiar, of course, with the campus, but what was your first impression of the classroom situation with your professors at the college level, and your classmates? Do you recall?

LIPSEY:

Well, there was a little feeling of unfamiliarity, I think; it was different. At Cutler--well, that was an odd sort of feeling. I believe I neglected to mention that there were no toilets in Cutler Academy. [chuckles] Because the girls could go next door to Montgomery Hall, and the boys, which was never mentioned to me, but I presumed that they must have gone to Hagerman Hall, which has later been torn down. [chuckles]

FINLEY:

That's very interesting! [chuckles]

LIPSEY:

We didn't have gym--that is, we had gym, we had gym classes, and you had to go, and you could play tennis, or you could play basketball, or you could do gym exercises, about once a week. And that was held in the college gym.

We had no library in Cutler Academy, because we could use the Coburn Library, which was a good library for the situation. So that was the way that thing was. So that this was going to college, and the atmosphere was different. And I had no plans for college. My parents, not being college people themselves, they left it entirely to me, and it seemed to me that I walked into college hardly knowing what class I was to go into--it was to begin on September such-and-such--with no plans for any course of anything.

And, of course, in those days there was no preparation beforehand for "Can I be accepted?" Somebody asked me recently, "Well, what were the rules about being accepted in college?"

And I said, "There was absolutely nothing, except having an accredited high school diploma or its equivalent, and being about to pay the tuition." That was the total. And it still seems strange to me that you can't say, "I wish to go to Yale or Harvard or Bryn Mawr," and have to start a year or two beforehand. We just went to college.

In fact, my notion had really been to stay out and work for my father until I got enough money to go East, but then I felt so lonely out of any school that I just weakly gave in, and didn't do that. Which would have been a lot better for me, I think. I would have [can't understand] separated myself from the family and gone away, but I didn't have the guts to do it.

FINLEY:

Uh-hum. You said you didn't have any particular plan of action in the courses you took. At what point did you decide upon a major, and what influenced you to choose your major?

LIPSEY:

Well, I was a person who loved to read from childhood, and so English seemed to just fall naturally into what I was interested in. I liked all languages--I was good at languages --German, French, Spanish, Latin. I always had some knowledge in them.

FINLEY:

I noticed you were in the French Club for several years at Colorado College.

LIPSEY:

Oh, yes! That was the largest distinction I ever arrived at! President of the French Club, because I guess I got higher grades in French than anybody. We might have had eight people in it--I don't know.

FINLEY:

Do you recall Charles Latimer?

LIPSEY:

Oh, yes! He was--how was he--

FINLEY:

He graduated from Colorado College a year ahead of you.

LIPSEY:

Oh, yes! Yes! I remember! I was in some classes with him. I thought he was a very interesting intellectual; that's about as far as I got with him. I always liked the intellectuals--the quiet, impressive ones.

FINLEY:

You know he went on then to become a professor of French at the Colorado College in later years.

LIPSEY:

Oh, yes, yes, yes, I remember!

FINLEY:

Now what particular people at the college, particularly your professors, do you recall as having the most influence upon you?

LIPSEY:

I think it was--Homer Woodbridge I admired, and Dr. Schneider, we always called him. Right now, I don't know his first name. I suppose I did maybe sometime. I admired him greatly as a teacher.

FINLEY:

Why?

LIPSEY:

I don't know.

FINLEY:

He taught English?

LIPSEY:

No, no; he taught sciences.

FINLEY:

He taught sciences?

LIPSEY:

It seems to me he was fairly interested in the individual student. Oh, yes, and then Elijah Hill--Elijah Hills, the French teacher; I liked him very much. I stayed with French as long as I was in college. I liked that better than any other language. I suppose if I had been inclined to become a teacher, I would have become a teacher of French, more likely than an ironworks bookkeeper! [chuckles]

FINLEY:

Did you see any of the professors on other occasions besides in the classroom? Was there any social interaction between the students and the faculty?

LIPSEY:

Not in my memory. I suppose in some people there were. Once in a long time there might be some social occasion, and might even be in the professor's house, but almost never. I seem to have practically no associations any way with the professors except in the classrooms. But I think that they really did have an influence on me. And I was extremely, always, pleased that I had gone to college, because I felt more at home with educated people, and I liked educated people.

FINLEY:

But you essentially just sort of went to class and went home, and went to class?

LIPSEY:

That was me, yes.

FINLEY:

Did you belong to a literary society?

LIPSEY:

Oh, yes. I probably wouldn't even have gotten into a literary society, except it was obligatory if anybody was the president of any club in the college, you had to put them in the literary society. I was put in the best and oldest one I was allowed to join, called Minerva, because I had been president of the French Club. Otherwise, I don't think I would have--I was just--what do you call it when . . . it's the opposite of outgoing! [laughter] Ridiculous! [can't understand]

FINLEY:

Do you remember anything of the activities of the Minerva Literary Society? Were you really literary, or were you mainly social?

LIPSEY:

Well, it was--we had a . . . how often did we meet? Monthly, perhaps, and somebody gave some sort of literary reading from a book or--oh, and we had a clubhouse. We owned a little shack of a clubhouse there just on West Cache La Poudre, west of Cascade. It was just a perfect shack, and we had to go down there and clean it out. I don't know what it was built for. It had just one room, and [can't understand] And we were very proud of that, I remember.

Actually, either in college, or just out of college, writing persuasive letters to all the alumni. "Oh, my, do remember our fascinating days in the Minerva, and send us money to fix up the clubhouse" or something like that! [chuckles] What happened to it--it was later torn down, but then--sometime after I had been out a number of years, I suppose at least ten years out of college, they made it a sorority.

And then they said that the alumni of each of these three literary societies--Hypatia, Minerva and Contemporary--would be eligible to join a certain sorority. You weren't allowed your choice of any sorority--not that they meant anything to me. I wouldn't have known one from the other.

But we could have joined the Delta Gamma. So I considered that, and the meetings about what we would have to do, and shall I join, and talked it over with my husband--I was married by that time, and he said, "Well, you can do as you like, of course," he said, "I don't see that it would be any particular advantage to you." He was not a sociable kind of person, either, he was intellectual, and a person who had come here for tuberculosis himself. We lived very much in the style of life we wanted; we were happily married.

FINLEY:

So you didn't join Delta Gamma?

LIPSEY:

So I said, "Well, if I had a child, why then, you see, my daughter would go to college, and then she'd have an advantage in getting in the sorority, but I haven't any children, so why bother?"

FINLEY:

You say your clubhouse was torn down, so the later

Delta Gamma house was a newer house--it wasn't the same--

LIPSEY:

It is there on Cache La Poudre now, isn't it?

FINLEY:

No, it's moved. Since then, they've torn that one down.

LIPSEY:

That little old shack--it was just a little wooden shack of one room as I remember.

FINLEY:

Something's wrong here--I'm sorry.

LIPSEY:

Oh, my, my words are gone!

[pause]

FINLEY:

We're all set to go again. You were talking about the Delta Gamma sorority house. Did you have anything to add to your tale of Minerva?

LIPSEY:

No, I don't think so.

FINLEY:

All right. I think I'll change the subject here, and ask you to tell me something about your memories of President Slocum. He must have been a dominant figure at Colorado College the entire time you were there. What do you remember about him?

LIPSEY:

To me, he was a boring stuffed shirt. Maybe I was not in the caste of families which were accustomed to dine with him, or be invited to his house. He ignored my father, I think, because the college was so slow in paying its bills. It seldom had any need of any provisions of the Hassell Iron Works, but when it did, why they'd take months and months and months to pay it, and I think he may have heard rumors of the hypocritical nature of the president between what he said and what he did. Though he never hinted that to me, but I could see by his general manner that he had no admiration of him.

FINLEY:

You say you recall him as a boring stuffed shirt. Can you remember his presence on the campus? Did he give his ethicals in the chapel every few days to the students?

LIPSEY:

Well, every once in a while, which--at least I can--I was much more religious in those days than I am now, but I don't remember ever feeling any sense of inspiration from any of his religious or ethical remarks. I got into trouble, I think, because I found chapel so boring that I was called before him once--the only time I ever talked to him personally, to ask why I didn't go to chapel. And I said, "Well, I--you see, it comes in between my classes, and I'd have to come down and go back home, and--"

"Well, why can't you come? What do you have to do?"

"Well, you see, I have to be at home and help my mother with the housework, and so I just didn't come when I didn't have a class right after it, or when it came between classes, so I didn't come."

"Well, you've disobeyed the rules. You have had so many cuts--"

Oh, they took notice--I never supposed they were paying much attention to me. I always supposed, well, you know, I never was watching for what was going to happen to me.

"So, to graduate, you have to have two hours more of credit."

FINLEY:

Ahhhhhh.

LIPSEY:

Oh, well, okay, that would suit me all right. I liked the courses; I was interested. So that I got free tuition for two more hours! Just because I missed over the number of permitted cuts, whatever that was. That was the only trouble I ever got into in college . . . and as I say, I got some free tuition for courses that I was interested in! [chuckles]

FINLEY:

Well, can you recall his physical appearance?

LIPSEY:

Oh, yes, yes. He was large and potent. He was a smaller edition of William Howard Taft--slightly smaller. [chuckles] I remember one boy in school one time joking about his little electric. You know those little--you wouldn't know--maybe you've seen them in museums--an electric [can't understand]

FINLEY:

Oh, did Slocum have one of those?

LIPSEY:

Yes, he had an electric [automobile]. It just barely-- his bulk pretty well filled it. And of course, his wife was kind of bulky, too. The thing was like a little glass box on wheels, a little rectangular box on wheels.

And this boy said, "You know what they had to do with Prexy--" we referred to him generally as Prexy--said, "the steering post, the steering wheel came up so close to the seat that he couldn't get in behind it, he had to have the steering wheel reset to give him more room to get behind." [chuckles]

FINLEY:

Were the students often disrespectful of him behind his back? Did they make jokes about him?

LIPSEY:

I think they always--I don't know, I never talked to them particularly about it; I just took it for granted everybody had my notion of him--he was just [can't understand] and . . . I never thought of him as being--it was utterly astonishing to me, these remarks about all these improper advances towards the secretaries or the college girls, but--that was utter news to me; I never had such an idea in my life. Such things were not talked about in my part of society.

FINLEY:

Now, when this kind of scandal came out, was it a very sudden knowledge, or had there been whispering?

LIPSEY:

To me, it was utterly unknown. I think from some sentence or so of my father's, that he had had some notion of it, that somebody had said to him, "Oh, yes." Oh, he had said, I don't know, some--almost nothing, you know. Something about my father seeing Dr. Slocum with a female senior walking up the canyon from the end of the car line, saying to the streetcar conductor, "Isn't that President Slocum of the college?"

And he said, "Oh, yes, that happens all the time." [chuckles]

That is the total remark of mine--how much that meant, I do not know. This is going on tape?

FINLEY:

Yes, indeed! [chuckles] No, I think this is fairly common knowledge now. When the scandal did break, was all

the student body really shocked, and--

LIPSEY:

I was, completely, but--I think that--I realize my total ignorance in such matters, and between that and my mother's general Puritanical talk, I simply didn't talk about it.

I suppose most of the college students, they would gossip, gossip, gossip, and laugh, or be horrified, whichever was their nature, among themselves, but it really wasn't--I do remember that the students got up some kind of a meeting.

This must have been in very short few weeks in that same summer I was graduated, and all the students [can't understand]

It seems to me it was after graduation, because it only broke graduation week, it seemed to me, and we were to go to that meeting and express our opinion that he should not be kept as the president, or something of that notion. That met at somebody's house--I forget where--some little talk about it, nothing very--no details mentioned.

I suppose the general consensus was that the students should join with the faculty. That may have been after every single professor except Homer--no--can't remember his name now, professor of English, that I never liked as well as the others--he had been the only one who was a full professor, and who had kept his position and gone on as a professor in the college--just one of whatever number of full professors they had. He was the only one who did not resign!

And I think that this meeting was probably that the student body, or the alumnus, should support the faculty, that we admired the faculty for their resignations.

FINLEY:

They were resigning--

LIPSEY:

[both talking at once--can't understand] --the college.

FINLEY:

--because they were upset that Slocum had--

LIPSEY:

No, I think the thing was that they said to the trustees, "Look how this man is--he's a perfect hypocrite, and look at these actions with these secretaries," and so forth, "get rid of him."

And the secretaries, or some of the trustees would say, "Well, look at what he's done for the college. He's built up the college; he has a vast number of local friends, and [can't understand] for the college. That sort of thing happens in offices, business offices all the time, now let's just don't talk about it. [can't understand] talk about it, and we want him as president." And I suppose at the time they [can't understand] the idea, I later got the idea, from hearing some conversation, that the professors regarded him as tyrannical, domineering, too much--they hadn't--not enough [can't understand]

FINLEY:

Uh-hum.

LIPSEY:

I don't know, in those days was this association of college professors and [can't understand] and all that?

FINLEY:

AAUP?

LIPSEY:

Is that the name of it?

FINLEY:

Yes--

LIPSEY:

There may have been that. Anyway, they had--no, I don't think that was this, because they didn't say, "Now, we've got tenure, and you can't throw us out."

FINLEY:

No. There wasn't tenure, but there was a case, I think, the so-called Parsons case, Professor Parsons.

LIPSEY:

Oh, yes! Professor Parsons was an extremely pious man, very Puritanical man, and--I don't know that I ever was in his classes--I may have been--I didn't like him as well as I did--didn't have that same feeling of personal admiration for him, but he was there, and his children were in college. He was the one that broke the story! So he was to be thrown out--I guess that was what happened--he was to be dismissed for having not kept his--the well-known secret.

And then, in sympathy with him, every other professor but this man--strange, I can't think of his name right now--resigned. So then, this meeting of the alums and the students was to stick by the college.

"Look, you either throw him out, and if you do throw him out, you should not dismiss all these--well, you should not dismiss Dean Parsons"--he was the dean--"but you should not dismiss him, we're behind him." That was the point. "We're behind him." The students and the alums and the professors were all behind him.

The trustees said, "No."

The professors all resigned in a bunch. And wasn't it remarkable that they could get a new faculty, and opened in the fall with the necessary number of teachers, which is--I don't know how anyone managed it--must have scrounged around a lot. Had you ever heard anything about how they did it?

FINLEY:

Well, I do think that the morale of the college must have dropped considerably and there must have been a good deal of dissension, and it took many years to recover from that, when Slocum left.

Do you remember sort of the last farewell of Slocum, or how he left the campus, or any talk about him by the students as he left? If they were in support of the faculty, they must have not been too upset about Slocum?

LIPSEY:

Yes, they were pleased to see Slocum go; they felt, at least the ones that--the general feeling of the ones I knew.

As I said, I felt so ignorant of the subject that I think it was not only any Puritanism, but it was the idea that this was--I wouldn't want to talk about this thing, but I had no experience of it. So that I--and also my [can't understand] except in classes, that I really scarcely talked with anyone.

I remember one girl there who worked in his office, and some mention of it, about all this business here. And all she remarked was, "I worked in his office. I have absolutely no respect for him."

And that's really all I remember. It seems impossible, the fact that with me there should be so little talk about it. But I immediately went to work in my father's office, and that was the end of my real association with the college.

But they had a very fine new faculty, I think; people like Lewis Abbott, and many others. They certainly got good teachers, it seems to me--the little I knew about them. I had no further connection, really, with the college, except to join, be a member--well, this was '17.

In 1922 or so, Mrs. Lewis Abbott, Helen Abbott, realized--she said that she felt--I did know her--that the more wealthy and influential people in the town--we called them always the "Society Set" and the "College Set"--the town people who supported the college, that they were friendly with Dr. Slocum--they admired him. He was their dinner guest, and they were very angry with the trustees for having thrown him out. They stood with the trustees and not with the faculty.

FINLEY:

Uh-hum.

LIPSEY:

So, but she said, these new professors and their wives came in, and they felt that they had no--they lacked association with a good many of the influential and wealthier people in the town. So, she said, we thought, how can we get acquainted with these people? Well, let's start a society, start a women's society, a book club, and we'll have half either women teachers in the college, or wives of professors, and then we'll have the other half--I think they started with 16 members who were interested in reading, and they were to meet and talk about books. We'll have eight town women, and eight that are connected with the college, either as teachers--Mrs. Bryson, [can't understand] Bryson, was one of them, one of the few still living--

FINLEY:

Is that the Reviewers' Book Club?

LIPSEY:

And that's the Reviewers' Club.

FINLEY:

Ahhhhh, uh-hum.

LIPSEY:

So that I had a friend, a very good friend, who was one of the town women, Mrs. Barrage, who started and ran for many years the Upton Gardens, a nursery garden business. That was her [can't understand] He was very helpful to her, but it was her initiative and her management that built up that nursery garden. And I knew her, and she thought, well, we'll--Julia, she's a reader, and interested in books, I'll ask her to be one of the town women, so I did, and I've enjoyed that club for the following fifty years!

FINLEY:

You've been a member of it then? That's wonderful!

LIPSEY:

Still attend it!

FINLEY:

Oh, I didn't know the genesis of that club. [Both
talking at once--can't understand]

LIPSEY:

One or two of the others--one was . . . practically all dead now.

FINLEY:

Yes. Well, your association with Colorado College must have had a great influence, really, on your later life, just through your friendships that you made with people. Do you have any comments to finish this tape--we're coming near the end--about what you feel your past history of the residents of the community--

LIPSEY:

As I say, as far as either close friends in college--I had--I haven't been going to class reunions, and my class is to have a 60th reunion--because I just felt that awful --that awful failure of any effort to be in the social part of the college, or possibility of being in it. I just felt I was--just--introverted, interested in the intellectual content of [can't understand] studies, more than in people, which was, I think, a great lack in myself.

FINLEY:

Well, I'm not sure, because you went on to deal in books and--

LIPSEY:

Well, that was with my husband--I would not--

FINLEY:

Yes, but a wonderful way to spend your life, and to make a contribution to the preservation of western history.

LIPSEY:

He wrote some few things, including the life of James John Hagerman, the builder of the Midland Railroad, [can't understand] --I hope the college has a copy of it. It's an interesting [can't understand]. Parts of it are--parts of, the business parts, I had to write to so-and-so, and I think he ought to put so many thousands of dollars into the railroad, and I wrote to him this and that. And there was so-and-so, he was such a mild-mannered man, you know, and [chuckles].

The worst thing he ever said in the letters--these letters were his personal business letters, not his personal family or friends letters. But the ones that he got from Percy Hagerman, his son--his personal letters on business. And he had once or twice--there were no female secretaries, stenographers then.

He said, "I had a young man who was a typewriter. I had to give him up--he was no good." Here was a proud man who was president of a railroad, and he wrote all his business letters by hand.

And he always--everybody was Mr. So-and-so. Dear Mr. So-and-so. Dear Mr. So-and-so. And he said to one other crony, he said in his letters, "I have tried to do business"--this was the harshest remark he ever made, let alone any profane or vulgar remark, which he never did. But the most harsh things he ever said in those--if you understand what I mean by personal business letters--

FINLEY:

Uh-hum.

LIPSEY:

He wrote them by hand. He said, "I have tried to do business with Mr. So-and-so. I wish I could, but I couldn't.

He was just trifling." Trifling was the worst thing he ever said about anybody. [chuckles] He must have been a very--

FINLEY:

He was just trifling!

LIPSEY:

A very high-minded kind of man, and a very honest man, I think. My husband had a great satisfaction in his friendship with Percy Hagerman, and in getting these letters and in writing his biography, The Life of James John Hagerman which was published by a Denver publisher, and it was worthy of commercial publishers, not a vanity publisher, but it was not very much of a publisher. Golden Bell Press in Denver in about 1963. My husband was a greatly interested man, and I was so glad he was able to--in fact, he was--oh, my--it was much--they issued an edition with, in each copy--this was the--oh, what do you call it--special edition?

FINLEY:

Yes.

LIPSEY:

Each one had an original stock certificate of the Isabel gold mine [can't understand]

FINLEY:

Yes.

LIPSEY:

--they have now.

FINLEY:

Yes.

LIPSEY:

And then a few months later, why, they issued--there were only, I think, 1500 copies of the regular issue, without the certificates--the stock certificates--and my husband was--well, it was the last thing he ever did. He was almost, I think maybe some of them he might have even autographed in the hospital bed, in the hospital in his last illness, something like that. But it was a great satisfaction to both of us that that was published.

FINLEY:

Yes, indeed. Well, you had a, I'm sure a--

LIPSEY:

What I loved was the specialized. You know, first we just bought any cheap books we could, and there being a lot at the time we started that--do you still want me to go on?

FINLEY:

Yes, we have about one minute. [laughter]

LIPSEY:

All right! We started every single book--you know, a lot of the Cripple Creek millionaires, the families were moving away or dying out, so we could buy some good libraries very cheap. So then it was Mrs. Kernochan, Mrs. Edward Kernochan, who suggested, "Why don't you deal more in western history?" Which we did, and then we got the best, the top collectors, once in a while, they would come here to the house, you know, like the Poe collection at Yale--

FINLEY:

Oh, yes!

LIPSEY:

Archibald Hammer. Why, we became very good friends. That's what I loved.

FINLEY:

Well, certainly a fascinating life dealing with books. You have great knowledge, not only personally, but from reading of western history.

LIPSEY:

[can't understand] and I both loved western history. He was a Mississippi man; he didn't come here until after he was in his twenties, but he got extremely interested in western history. Is that all right, then, is that a closing-

up?

FINLEY:

Yes, indeed.

LIPSEY:

Thanks for letting me do this, because I feel much better about the college asking me to do it.

FINLEY:

Well, it's been delightful to listen to your personal recollections. I've found them fascinating, and I'm sure they'll be of use to future scholars.

LIPSEY:

How about the two of us going over to the [can't understand] Tavern for lunch? Could you do that?

FINLEY:

I wish I could, but I have to go back to the office! Thank you!

THE END