

Aud. 238

Side A Lynn Wilkinson and John Woodland – “Oral History Interview”

Side B Lynn Wilkinson and John Woodland – “Oral History Interview”

[Summary]

Lynn Wilkinson interviews John Woodland, longtime professor at Trinity Western College (TWU). Woodland discusses his experiences in World War II as a soldier in the Signal Corps and the effect that the war and the army had on his predominantly Christian view of the world. He tells the story of his conversion at age twelve after attending a sermon given by an on-air personality, First Mate Bob of Haven of Rest. He briefly tells about his childhood, as well as his relationship with his mother and father. Wilkinson and Woodland devote a great deal of time to discussing the story of how Woodland came to be at Trinity, a story which included teaching unruly junior high school students for five years and a fateful meeting and interview with the first president of Trinity Western University, Calvin Hanson.

Woodland reveals several aspects of his nature in the interview, including his affinity for preaching and teaching, his relationships and interactions with students, and his abhorrence of unproductive meetings. In relation to this last topic of interest, Woodland reads selections of poetry from his collections, *Terse Verse and Worse* and *The Epic of Castor and Other Poems*.

Woodland also offers his opinion concerning the leadership, past and present, at Trinity Western Junior College (TWU), specifically commenting on Dr. Ken Davis, Dr. Cal Hanson, and Dr. Neil Snider. The financial state of the institution, as well as Woodland’s opinion concerning the possibility of starting a seminary in connection with the college, are discussed.

Finally, Woodland talks about his family, his wife and his children who are, as he puts it, “scattered to the four winds.” Woodland and Wilkinson exchange comments concerning international students at Trinity Western College (TWU) and an incident that occurred at Trinity in which a student from Ethiopia died in his sleep. In connection with this incident, the resourcefulness and assistance of Dr. Robert Thompson in consoling other Trinity students from Ethiopia as well as the community at large is mentioned.

[Transcript]

[Start – Aud. 238c]

00:00

LW: An oral history interview, conducted by Lynn Wilkinson on March the 4th, 1983, at Trinity Western College in the library building. And today I am interviewing John Woodland, a member of the faculty since 1965. John is in his nineteenth year at Trinity Western College and we're very happy to have him here today for the interview. He is also known at the college to be a bit of a poet and he's brought two books along: one is called *Terse Verse and Worse* and the other, *The Epic of the Castor and Other Poems*. He is donating these two books to the archives today. [tape cuts]

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LW: --and then I had that tape-- [tape cuts]

LW: Well, thank you very much for coming John, and you had to wait for about fifteen minutes there while we were busy doing things.

JW: Well, we have more time than money, I guess--(LW: I think so)--so no problem. (both laugh; both talking at once)

LW: Well John, can you tell us a little about your background today, your family background, where you were born and raised?

JW: Well, let's see, I came from southern California. I have three brothers and no sisters and, incidentally, I married a girl who had three sisters, but no brothers--

LW: Well that worked out all right--

JW: --so our education really began once we got together (LW laughs). But, I grew up in southern California and had some, let's see, I went to Biola after getting out of high school-- (creaking sounds)

LW: Where did you attend high school?

JW: --uh in Van Nuys, San Fernando Valley--(LW: oh, that's very pretty)--, Los Angeles area. And after entering Biola, well the war, World War Two, interfered or intervened and I spent a stint in the military, two and a half years, some of it in Europe, and then returned to Biola and eventually graduated from there in 1949. Then following that--let's see--

LW: --so you were interrupted there by two and a half years, had you gone two years to Biola?

JW: No, I had just gone actually one semester, and then we had the interlude with the war and came back and spent another few years there before graduating in 1949.

LW: What did you do in the war?

JW: Well, aside from winning the war (both laugh)

LW: --you did that single-handedly of course--

JW: --I was in a radio outfit, we were part of the Signal Corps Army and basically we were a little bit behind the scenes. We were what Bill Malden, the cartoonist, would call geratroopers [sp?], I guess, we were close enough up to get a lot of battle scars, and far back enough not to get shot. (creaking sounds)

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LW: I see--what countries did you visit in the war?

JW: (creaking sounds continuing for an extended period of time) Well, a number of countries in Europe, we were in England for a while, and then crossed over into France, and in the course of our travels shall we say, spent some time in Germany, a little bit of time in Belgium, even touched into Czechoslovakia on a one day pass or one day leave. And then came back through the Mediterranean and back to the USA at that time.

LW: Um, I guess the war gives you a certain kind of training too, there's a lot of discipline and--

JW: Well, I wouldn't want to do it again (LW: no). I'm thankful for having been through it and believe that it had sort of a maturing effect. I wouldn't want to--I wouldn't recommend it to myself or anybody else as far as that goes unless it's an imperative, which it seemed to be at that time.

LW: What did you learn out of it then, you said it had a maturing effect.

[5 min]

JW: Well, I had grown up in a Christian home, and of course I had gone to Bible school. I hadn't really come into close quarters, shall we say, or close contact, with what you might consider the "big bad world outside" and the military tends to bring one face to face with that kind of situation, whether he likes it or not. And so I felt that I came back with a, with a measure of comprehension that I didn't have when I entered.

LW: Um-hm. Did you appreciate--or what was the comprehension? Of life or what--?

JW: Well, when one is confined, or I won't say confined, or when one's contacts are strictly in the Christian environment, he tends not to appreciate the--or realize the severity of the depravity of man. The awful things that people are capable of doing and the kinds of moral deterioration that exists generally and I felt that well, one could not go through the military experience without realizing that aspect of human nature.

LW: That was quite an eye opener--

JW: Well, I shouldn't have been surprised, (both speaking at once) I'd read Romans one and some--theologically I wasn't surprised at all, but nevertheless, to see it and live with it at close quarters and over a sustained period of time is something that does make its impact on a person. [pause] But it was nice to have-- someone has said that all I want in my military career is a faint recollection; I'm not quite in that category. I like to tell those army stories, especially some of the funny ones, but by and large, that's a chapter that I'd just as soon not refer to very often.

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LW: Right. Well thanks, that's quite interesting though just to have your insight. And you did come from a strictly Christian environment, did you say--

JW: Well, my mother was really the, shall we say, the spiritual light in our family; my dad sort of went along. And -- we had opportunities at an early age to come to know the Lord and I myself became a Christian when I was twelve, I believe, in a meeting which was being conducted by First Mate Bob of the Haven of Rest; maybe some of the people out there--

LW: What was his name?

JW: His name was, actually it was Paul Meyers, but he went by, his radio name was First Mate Bob and then the crew of the Good Ship Grace, you know, that sort of thing. I think they are still on the air, but someone else is at the helm now. But that was quite a while back.

LW: And you had your--you came to know the Lord at age twelve--

JW: --um-hm--

LW: --and that was through the radio program--

JW: Oh, well actually he was conducting services at a church just up the block from the one that we usually attended, so a bunch of us fellas played hooky--we could hear our preacher anytime, but we could only hear First Mate Bob once in a while. So--at least, we could only hear him in person very very rarely and so we took that opportunity. And it was the best hooky job I ever--

LW: Yeah--he had a good message for you--

JW: --yeah it did, I still don't know what he preached about but it was for me that night. (both speaking at once)

LW: And did that change your life much at that time or--

JW: Well, as I indicated earlier, my life was fairly well structured anyhow and so outwardly there may not have been that much noticeable or discernible difference, but inwardly I found a new joy.

[10 min]

I knew I was going to heaven and I was released from an enormous burden of guilt and it was for me a very transforming. All things passed away and all things became new, at least this, I felt that the--it was the greatest thing that ever happened to me.

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LW: That's a nice testimony. What about your father then? (faint train sound in background)

JW: Well, dad was a, he was--

LW: --What was his background?

JW: Well, my dad has a--his background, you could write a book on it. He was an orphan at an early age and he actually spent quite a bit of time just riding freight cars around from place to place and I guess picking up odd jobs and subsisting any way he could as a young man. Something that I recall telling my mom once after hearing dad tell some of his hobo stories. I said, "Mom, you know what I wannabe when I grow up? A hobo!" And she wasn't--

LW: --She jumped for joy of course-- (both laughing)

JW: --yeah, she wasn't, I don't know, I guess she picked up-- the intensity of her prayer life probably picked up a little bit at that stage. But dad went on; he lived to be ninety-one and he passed away just recently down in California.

LW: Really a hardy soul then--

JW: Yeah, he was tough. He was uh always, always busy. He was quite a gardener, and I'm a failure as a gardener. But I would try and that would sort of make him happy.

LW: What about your mother, did she live long?

JW: No, she died right about ten years before, ten or fifteen years before. --Let's say ten, I think that would be closer to it. Ten or twelve. And she died after prolonged illness. Dad remained much alive and quite ornery right up to the last.

LW: Is that right? (laughs) Good for him. Now, I'd like to hear more about your years as you--after you got out of Biola and graduated in 1949.

JW: Well, let's see, I may not have all the dates right in order, but following that, my wife and I believed that we were on our way to the mission field.

LW: Now you mentioned your wife, did you meet her at Biola?

JW: Oh yeah, that's right--

LW: --well, we'd better talk about that then-- (both laugh)

JW: --That's right. I met her in, I think, forty-eight, and well let's see-- I met her at the end of my junior year there. And then we both graduated the next year in June and we

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were married in October. And we lived happily ever after. (both laugh) But anyhow, both of us felt that we were on our way to India as missionaries and had actually made application and been accepted by the mission board, by a team, and were preparing to go but then a sort of conspiracy of circumstances changed our plans quite dramatically. Her health broke, we couldn't get visas and actually we were having a little bit of difficulty getting enough support too, though it did seem as if we were going to make the grade on that score. But in any case it became quite apparent-- oh yes, and our first child was on the way at that time also. And it just seemed as if a number of things were telling us that, The light is not green. So, after working a short time down in southern California I attempted to pastor a church, [15 min] had news of some mountain work up in central California, a place called Challenge just out or Orville(??) or Marysville(??). So, to make a long story short, we went up there and I enjoyed immensely the preaching and teaching aspects of it because that, I felt, was where, uh, well that to me was very important. But I had a great deal of difficulty with this business of keeping people happy. Visitation was the bane of my existence. Somehow or other I just had great difficulty with the PR part of the church management.

LW: Are you an ‘outdoors man’ or--would you say--

JW: Uh, no, I wouldn't say that. I'm more of a loner, maybe too much of a loner. But I enjoyed the study. I would work on sermons and messages and this part of the ministry and revel in that, but when it came to shaking hands with people at the door and saying little trite nothings or somethings--

LW: --(laughs) saying the same thing over and over again—(both speaking at once)

JW: --it didn't come through very well and I think probably people noticed it. So in any case, after being in the church for about eighteen months, which incidentally was a new record at the time (both laugh), a record for longevity at that time, I felt that, or tended to realize that I just wasn't a pastor. I may have been a preacher, but I wasn't a pastor. So, the thought of the possibility of going to further schooling and going into teaching appeared quite attractive to me. It seemed as if that way I could actually do what I liked to do and what seemed to be fairly well received as far as the public was concerned without having to contend with the problems associated with church management. So, I went from there, or we went from there to Chico, California, or just outside Chico, California, and I enrolled at Chico State College, now they call it Cal State Chico University. And got into the education and teacher training program there and after two years got my BA and then after another year got my masters and eventually a job teaching at the Chico Junior High School, where I taught for five years.

LW: So then you were out in the world again, weren't you-- (inaudible)

JW: --Well yes, well this was a very fine teaching situation and I'm very grateful to have had that experience. We had a good principal. We had--we had pretty good kids

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generally. I enjoyed what I was doing, though there were times when I kind of wondered whether I could really hack it with eighth graders--

LW: --oh, eighth graders (both laughing)--

JW: --eighth graders they're well--

LW: --especially the little ones, or maybe the girls now, too--

JW: --anyone listening to the tape I trust will forgive me if I say somewhat with tongue-in-cheek that eighth graders-- at times one tends to question just how human they really are--(both laugh) they're very interesting, but it takes a very special type of person, I think, to cope properly with eighth graders--seventh graders, they behave more like children and ninth graders a little bit more like adults, and eighth graders don't know where they are

LW: They're a really mixed up time aren't they? (both talking at once)

JW: As long as I could talk sports with them or something like that, well we got along okay, but try and teach them English or Geography or something and it becomes—you know—a game that they sometimes, you know, that they would frequently win.

LW: I think their attention span just isn't too long again there, they seem to go through a time--

JW: It, uh, I wouldn't want to go back to working with eighth graders--they're fun to watch--

LW: Yeah, that's true, they're interesting. How many years then were you then at Chico High School--?

JW: I was there for five years.

LW: And it was eighth graders all the time?

[20 min]

JW: Oh no, I wound up with quite a composite of seventh, eighth and ninth graders. It was a junior high school.

LW: I see. Well, I think you did quite well to stay there five years.

JW: Well, it was a, we had a, quite an agreeable situation. But during, well after being there for about three years, I began to kind of churn inside. And I felt that this somehow, somewhere I would have to make a change. And I recall praying rather intensively that

somehow the Lord would deliver me from that situation into a--into one that I could be much more comfortable with. Then somewhere along the line, I don't recall-- I started teaching down there in 1959; I guess I had been teaching there two or three years when Cal Hanson, our founding president - whose father, incidentally, pastored a church in Richvale(??) about, oh, twenty miles from Chico - came to the Chico area on a promotional trip for what was then Trinity Junior College. And I had followed the development of the school with some interest; it was just getting underway at that time, but since we were attending the Free Church in Chico, we had input of information with respect to the college and it was a fascinating sort of thing for me (LW: You liked that, eh?) and-- but I felt that I wasn't qualified, though I did have a master's degree. It was-- I just felt that, it was out of reach at the time to expect to come up here. And so I was somewhat reluctant to even introduce myself to Dr. Hanson.

LW: How did he find out about you then?

JW: Well, a friend of mine, a fellow named Dick Murray, said, "Hey look, I want to introduce you to Cal." So he did. And I guess I got on the mailing list or I got on the, I got in the hopper somewhere, and Dr. Mattson, who was the Registrar then, Dean and Registrar, I believe he wore two hats at the time, had an occasional contact with me so that the communication was maintained. Well, meantime, I had been taking extra courses at Chico State. I would go there and take math courses of all things, in the mornings, and then go teach all day, then study in the evening. And I guess I was on a math binge of sorts--

LW: --that was quite different then--

JW: --well, yeah it was, because my previous work had been in social studies and education, that sort of thing, although I was interested in math and I had done fairly well in it in high school, and so I picked it up as a, oh, sort of an obsession for some reason or other, something I wanted to do--

LW: --a real interest then, um-hm.

JW: --though it didn't seem to be leading me anyplace. But then after, well, after working with math classes at the Junior High level, this was a part of the motivation for going to pick up math courses. I liked the math courses and I didn't want to be boxed out of them for lack of background so I went to college to build some background so that I would sort of safeguard that opportunity. So I took a number of courses at Chico State in Mathematics and applied for two or three years, I think two years at least, for National Science Foundation Scholarships, which were being offered rather abundantly down in the States at the time, and so after teaching in Chico after five years, I was awarded one of these scholarships to the University of Arkansas for a full year, twelve months, solid program in Mathematics.

[25 min]

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So it was a bonanza as far as I was concerned (LW: mm, twelve months) and actually I made more money going to school at government expense than I had made any year teaching. Not by much, but it was a pretty nice way to go to school--

LW: --that's incredible, isn't it?--

JW: --well, it was providential, I'll say. Because by that time (LW: That really helped.) it was to me a marvelous answer to prayer; so we went to Arkansas. And about that time I got a letter from Dr. Mattson and he said, "You know, if you weren't already tied up or committed for this next year, you could have come to Trinity!" (both laugh) We had communicated earlier and so he was aware of some of what I was doing. But I hadn't-- I had earlier received a communication saying there were no openings, but apparently someone had, something had opened up, and by that time I was committed to this Arkansas deal, so I thought well--

LW: --well, that was really too good to pass up, wasn't it?--

JW: --it looks like it's just not God's time. So, I went to Arkansas but after being in the program for some time, I got another letter from Dr. Mattson, I believe it was from Dr. Mattson, and he said, "Dr. Hanson will be in Minneapolis in January,"-- I forget which year it is, sixty-three I think. Sixty-three or four. Anyhow, would it be possible for me to come up from Fayetteville, which is where the University of Arkansas is located, to Minneapolis during the Christmas break, or during that time, and interview with Dr. Hanson, confer with him with respect to the possibility of coming to Trinity? Well, as it turned out, my final exam schedule had a big gap in it which would enable us to go all the way to Minneapolis and back between exams. (both laugh) So we went to Minneapolis, interviewed, and eventually came to Trinity for the opening of the school in year three of what was then TJC, Trinity Junior College. So, it came out--incidentally we sometimes think that our salaries are not as good as, say, some of our counterparts at other universities, but compared to what they were in year three, they look pretty good now.

LW: (laughs) I guess that's true. I've got some of those statistics in the archives, I know what you mean. You had to be dedicated to want to work here.

JW: Well I think those of us who were there at that time would almost have paid for the privilege, it was that important to some of us. I felt that it was just the end of the rainbow as far as I was concerned because down inside there was that yearning to do something like this, I didn't really know precisely what was ahead, but I felt that it had to be something other than just teaching Junior High School.

LW: --especially when you had done some pastoring too, right? And knew that you liked the preaching and he teaching end of it--

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JW: --yeah. Well, I don't do much preaching now, but the teaching is still a lot of fun. I guess I'm a bit of a ham at heart. I like to work with a group of people, work with an audience. I suppose that's a mark of-- vanity or something, but it's there and I have to confess to it.

LW: That's interesting then, because you described yourself as being quite a loner at times, and yet it doesn't bother you to get up in front of people.

JW: On the one-to-one basis I'm a flop--

LW: --oh yes, I understand--

[30 min]

JW: --I don't easily do that sort of thing and just to go and sit in meetings where there's nothing to do but listen to somebody drone-- I mean somebody talk. It, to me, becomes just almost insufferable.

LW: Can you get excited about the plans that are going on in a meeting--

JW: Not particularly, not particularly; well I better not get into how I feel about that because--

LW: --oh, well, let's (both laugh) in five seconds or less--

JW: No, I enjoy working with an audience, but I know that I have difficulty handling the, you know, the um, the chit chat sort of thing or the, or the oh, uh, the make-believe that goes on in so many little meetings. [tape cuts]

LW: Are other people aware that they are doing that or is it just so much a part of them that—[tape cuts]

[End of Tape 1, side A – Aud. 238c]

[Tape 1, side B – Aud. 238d]

JW: I think that really, the other folks are normal and the, I'm the unusual one and just have to sort of recognize that that's the case.

LW: What does go through your mind when you are at a meeting? Are you composing poetry? Or--writing-- (laughs)

JW: I have done that sort of thing too. It's, uh, in fact, I have a few lines that perhaps describe something of my feeling on that. Maybe I can run through these and see what

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happens. This is from the middle of a poem called "Operation Suffocation." (both laugh) Anyhow, part of it goes, "a speaker drones in monotones, his verbal ventilation/ But nonetheless we all express our deep appreciation/ At last a man presents a plan that has a lot of merit/ but common sense has no defense it's-dangerous to share it/ These men profound feel duty-bound to practice their invective/ And so we move to disapprove the scheme-it's too effective!"

LW: (laughs) That's very good. Is that a longer poem then?

JW: Oh yes, it's too long to, but oh yeah, it's about a ten minute, eight to ten minutes, something like that.

LW: Do you have these written down? (inaudible)

JW: Oh yes, I have a couple books out that, one of which includes that poem. I don't do that one very often in-- the circumstances have to be--appropriate.

LW: Yeah, well that certainly says it. I love the title, "Operation Suffocation," I must remember that one. I'm sort of the type that I can get very involved in planning. I guess my mind's rushing ahead with all these ideas. I find in meetings it's hard to get it all down. I'm probably one of the-- (laughs)

JW: I feel that frequently much of the time that is spent in meetings is irrelevant. It's relevant to some people in the meeting, but we all have to come together and so for every relevant minute there there are several irrelevant ones that are relevant to somebody else, but not to me. I guess maybe it's perhaps, oh, a bit of selfishness on my part, that I just hate to bide my time there waiting for the next relevant moment to come along.

LW: How do you get along with the students at Trinity?

JW: Well, I think pretty well. But often a faculty member's impression of how he is doing is not identical to the students' impression. We have had four children here at the college; we have two daughters and two sons and they've all come for at least two years at Trinity. Of course, two years were all that were available, so our first--our children one, two and three got the two-year treatment and then our youngest son got the four-year treatment, so this was a real plus. And I got feedback from them to the effect that I was doing reasonably well, so I felt that that was somewhat objective, or at least more objective than, say, perhaps a student opinionnaire or something that, where you fill in the blanks or check the appropriate boxes. But then on the other hand, that's input from a rather maybe from a biased source, so--

LW: --well I don't know, I think your kids are pretty critical. They're likely to be the most critical at times. Um, one other thing, have you had a chance to witness on the campus to students? Are there any stories to tell about that?

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JW: Well, nothing that I could really--I don't have stories that are as good as some of the other faculty members have, and I must confess that as an evangelist I'm probably less than adequate.

[5 min]

JW: I do feel that I have had a number of opportunities for counseling of a sort, though I'm not a counselor either; I wouldn't masquerade as such. But some students have come my way, and we've had times of, I think, significant discussion and prayer. I see myself much more comfortable in that kind of role than in the—well, the buttonholing or the sign-on-the-dotted-line sort of thing. I don't think I could sell nickels at six for a quarter.

LW: (both laugh) I see. Well, I think if you've been able to guide people--you know, they--do you ever have any alumni students come back? Get in touch with you?

JW: Oh yeah. That's always a very satisfying experience, when some of our people came back, especially if they go out of their way to look you up. That makes you feel as if it's worthwhile. Of course this is more likely to happen with the passing of years. I think some of us have been here a little longer time have advantages over some of the newer people because there are more alumni available. Though the ones that actually come back to school are usually comparatively recent alumni. But once in a while some old-timer will come along and wonder whether there's anybody here that they still know and so it'll be maybe Mr. Walters and Mr. Woodland and possibly Mr. Thompson or someone who's been around for quite some time.

LW: Well, how, what do you think that one of the major contributions, maybe, of the faculty have been over the years, to the school? Would you consider them men of vision or are they working more behind the scenes or--

JW: --by faculty do you mean teaching faculty--or--

LW: --teaching--

JW: --or administration?--

LW: --well, I guess I'm thinking you in your situation have been teaching faculty for most of the time--

JW: That's right. I'm not an administrator by any means. I think aside from the material that we deal with in our just carrying out our responsibilities, well it's necessary to do an adequate job there and prepare these kids so they can go to UBC or other places and-- shall we say, perform creditably. More importantly, the--modeling aspect I think is to-- I feel it's important. And if we walk in such a way, using it in the Biblical sense here, if they can see us be Christian in every aspect of our lives, if we can be genuinely Christian in our routine responsibilities, then I feel that we may be more influential in--that may be

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more influential than all of our sermons or little preachments or exhortations and so forth. I feel that's where our major influence stands firm. Now, that doesn't discount what we say, that's not to discount what we say, but what we are and what we do I feel are pretty important.

LW: Um-hm. What about some of the administration faculty? For instance maybe Ken Davis--

JW: Well, I thank the Lord for Ken. I probably pray for him as much as I do for any other one man because he carries an immense responsibility as you might say, a go-between, someone who is accountable or held accountable anyhow from, well, as far as relations to the faculty to the administration, to the board; he has responsibility in several directions, **[10 min]** and I believe that he has done a heroic job in keeping the school on course and keeping our perspective in focus and keeping us moving in the direction that we ought to be going. I think his academics are so outstanding that even our loftiest professors recognize that Ken is a scholar of the first order. And at the same time he seems to combine with that a spiritual dimension that is several cuts above most, above what the rest of us-- This is not to deify the Dean or anything, but we certainly should be grateful for a man of this stature in his office and also we do need to back him with our prayers and our support. This is my personal feeling on him.

LW: Do you get to know him quite well?

JW: I would say the pressures of his office make it so that very few will get to know him intimately. I lay no claim to that, I don't feel that I know him intimately, but I feel that we are one in the Spirit and that I can go to him and talk about very significant things whenever the situation seems to require that. I did have a rather special relationship with the administration under the Hanson Presidency. Dr. Asa, who was our Dean for some time, was a very easy man to warm up to. I feel that Ken is the same, but there were few of us, fewer of us in those days and so Asa was much more accessible because he didn't have seven or eight hundred students and a large faculty to keep track of. We would play chess together every once in a while and also the same thing held through with Dr. Hanson. Cal was a pretty good chess player and we would often play chess over lunch.

LW: oh--

JW: I could tell you a few stories about that, too-- (both laugh)

LW: Oh, I'd love to hear one, have I got time for one?

JW: Well, okay. We'd go in. He would phone and if the phone call came about noon, which it usually did, I'd figure out who it was and what was going to happen. I'd pick up my lunch and go over to his office.

LW: This was Cal Hanson?

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JW: This was Cal Hanson. This was over in what's now the Seal Kap house. He had windows that he could see anything that approached (both laugh) and so he'd get out his chess set and we'd go at it, and then someone would come up or be approaching it and he would say something like, "oh good grief" (both laugh) and-- some dignitary or someone coming and everyone who came on campus in those days had to see the President about something and it was quite important to our image and to our PR and everything that Cal be available, so he'd shove the chess set in the drawer and then just about that time there'd be a knock on the door and he would say, "come on in" and it would appear as if he and I had been in some important (both laughing) academic conference or something, and if the party could be handled or if it was just a routine matter, saying, "hello glad to see you," why, then we could wait five minutes, go through the formalities and then get back to the game.

LW: He didn't disturb any of the pieces, eh?

JW: If it became apparent that that was not the case, if we had somebody who had some really significant business by then I would—[tape cuts]

[15 min]

We would go at it about once a week or so. And I rather appreciated that, because if I did have anything on my chest I had sort of a built- in opportunity to communicate with the President. And I felt that that was well, that was a big plus, something that not everyone else had. Usually we'd just play chess, but once in a while we had some other things to do. It was a big advantage for me, and I came to appreciate Cal in that respect. He was a--he knew how to have a lot of fun.

LW: Oh, that's nice. I've seen a few pictures of him, a very nice smile on his face. He looked like he was really enjoying himself; that's nice.

JW: Even a couple of years ago we were back in the Chicago area and I had intended to visit an old classmate of mine from Biola but couldn't catch, he didn't answer the phone, so I thought, "hey, let's call Cal. Maybe he's home." And so we did, and we went to see him and we just had a glorious, a real good evening together. Stayed overnight there, and as you know Cal teaches now at TEDS in Deerfield. And his wife says, "You know what he's going to do in the morning?" (both laugh) At six in the morning, Cal gets his bow and arrows and goes out into some vacant lot or vacant area and practices his archery, because the hunting season for archery is longer than it is for other types of weaponry; and so he practices archery and then he uses it in an upcoming hunting season. But he was just like a little kid, like a big kid rather.

LW: He loved hunting, didn't he?

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JW: Yeah, he loved hunting. Something-- it was well known that he liked it, he liked to hunt--

LW: And he got the, that's something that I remember, he got the gun-- Winchester wasn't it?

JW: Yeah. Uh-huh. And I think they gave him big static on the border when he tried to take it across. I don't recall the details on that but it seems to me that he, he did have a problem that way.

LW: Well, that was interesting. Well he left--things were getting pretty busy when Cal Hansen left. I guess that was the turning point, wasn't it?

JW: Um-hm. See, Cal was sort of a freewheeling, easygoing type. And of course Dr. Snider is a little more business-like, a little more well, at least apparently more business-like, probably indeed more so. And compared to Cal, quite a bit more formal. And for me this took a little bit of getting used to.

LW: Um-hm. It would be a change, wouldn't it?

JW: But in my book, Dr. Snider has really done a heroic job, especially in recent years, in keeping the school properly oriented, and in fundraising. I think he's a very creative fundraiser--and--

LW: --most important to the position--

JW: --Cal was good too, but I think Neil can operate in areas that were a little bit difficult for Cal to access. Cal was great in getting through to the churches and all, and I think Neil is too. But I think Dr. Snider has a sort of a systematic approach to getting at the big bucks. (laughs) We could use a few now, I think. There aren't as many to be had in today's economy.

LW: That must be very difficult. Just a few people really do know how to go about that properly.

JW: And it's a thankless chore--

LW :--it's true--

JW: --we sort of expect the President to somehow produce the dollars that will make the school viable and I think we've had,

[20 min]

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JW: we've been blessed in having men at the top who are gifted along that line.

LW: Um-hm. I wonder how things go in a recession when people just aren't giving as freely.

JW: I think we're finding out now, aren't we. I think that they do what they can and it seem that we're going to need another set of miracles here to bridge the gap between the dollars we have and the dollars we need. And it will be interesting to see just how this develops, but I think it's going to involve probably a bit of sacrifice on the parts of--

LW: --are the finances at a very low end then?

JW: Well, I'm not the person to ask on that. Anything I would say would be conjecture on my part. I know that Christian schools generally are hurting--

LW: --I've heard that too, yeah--

JW: --and something was said in a faculty meeting the other day to the effect that we are having a shortfall that is serious, at least it's cause for concern and we're enjoined to really make it a matter of concentrated prayer. This is very much in order. Usually the administration doesn't bring these things to our attention unless they are significant matters. And they're coming to our attention now, so all the signs indicate that we're in for a bit of a stretch.

LW: Do things usually get better in September again?

JW: In September? (LW: Um-hm.) Well, we have the influx of tuition money in September. Again, I'm sort of a secondary source on that front, but September we get sort of a, well, we have an increase in the immediately available funds. An income due to tuition. I think the gift income tends to peak in December. But again, you'll probably have to ask the people in the accounting department on that.

LW: What about you ordering, or do you have to order much for what you teach? What exactly are you teaching?

JW: I'm teaching math and also-- I'm teaching finite math. It's an introductory math course with freshmen primarily. And many of the business students take it. Two sections of that with a total of eighty-some students, and then I have two sections of what we call quantitative methods which is a business course, statistically oriented. And personally, aside from textbooks and a bit of copy work, there isn't that much that I require. Now, it's quite a bit different for my colleagues in the natural sciences division, who teach physics or chemistry or biology--other things like that. Their expenses are-- that is, the cost of implementing courses in those areas is magnified by the cost of materials, equipment, and also laboratory-- (LW: Um-hm. And upgrading, I guess.) well, the expense of running a lab. With a math course you have-- it's just a matter of having a

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classroom available and so many hours of time. With a lab science you have the classroom and the time involved, but then you also have the lab sections which have to be monitored, so it becomes a considerably more expensive operation to, say, implement a lab science course [25 min] than say a math course or a history course, perhaps.

LW: What do you see for the future for Trinity?

JW: Well, I was one of the big foot-draggers when we went four-year. (both laugh) I have to confess that I rather liked the tame pace, low key profile that we had as a two-year school, but fortunately men with more foresight, wisdom, and vision carried the day and we went four-year and in the providence of God. I feel now that since Trinity is, in a sense, unique in Canada, that we have opportunity and responsibility which is difficult to quantify. The--I was telling my wife just the other night I feel that our survival, or our welfare, Trinity Western is more important to Canada than any one Christian school on the other side of the border is to the US. They have dozens, maybe hundreds of them over there and many of them are very good schools and we wish them well. But up here, aside from Trinity Western, there isn't that much to choose from, if anything-- And so I feel that we have an important role to play here. It's gratifying to be a part of it; you just don't know how things are going to go in view of the recession and all that. God has seen us through a number of crises before. And if we keep our priorities straight and make it a priority of ours--make it one of our priorities to maintain our Christian distinctives, it will come through the current difficulties, the current stress, in good shape--and actually provide the option that Christian students, perhaps others as well, ought to have up here in Canada. That is, we have many, many Bible-institute-type schools and people graduating from these schools, and formerly their only other option upon graduation was to either go into the marketplace or into the work world or go on to a provincial university or go across the border to school over there. And now, with Trinity Western here, we are a natural next step, we provide a natural next step for students who come from, who knows, from PBI or CBC or Briercrest or who knows where, and it's important that they have that option. I feel that this is one of our main responsibilities and opportunities here.

LW: Would you say then, uh--is--I've heard that Trinity might be having a seminary in the future, now would that relate maybe to these students coming from the Bible colleges?

JW: I just don't know, but there has been a fair amount of discussion on that and I don't think--I don't know what plans are really shaping up on that. All I've heard is preliminary discussion and I'd rather not comment on that.

LW: Would you like to see something like that at Trinity?

JW: I'm not as high on it as some others seem to be.

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LW: What would your reason maybe be? Are there other seminaries then that do the job?

JW: Well, I don't really-- I haven't worried about it very much and so I suppose I'm a foot-dragger here just like I was [30 min] when it came to going four-year. I tend not to be in the vanguard of those who are advocating change. So I'll let it go at that.

LW: We'll have to wait and see then what--

JW: Theoretically it looks good, but I think we need to establish ourselves a bit more firmly and do better with things that we are currently doing before branching out into new territory. But that's a personal tendency on my part, I tend to be quite conservative.

LW: Um-hm--um--well, we certainly have had a lot of changes very quickly. (inaudible)

JW: We have had and we need some time to digest these changes, but then it seems that in any organization, we have the visionaries and we have the very conservative types, and I'm not a visionary.

LW: Um-hm.

[End Tape 1, side B – Aud. 238d]

[Start Tape 2 – Aud. 238a]

Summary of remaining eight minutes of interview

Woodland as a dreamer but not a visionary

wife and family

- home in Clearbrook
- children "scattered to the four winds"
- occupation of children

international students

- increase in
- and quantitatively oriented courses [5 min]
- and difficulty of retaining foreign students over the long haul

boy from Ethiopia who died in his sleep

- and Woodland's oldest son
- and Robert Thompson consoling the Ethiopian community

time to go

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[8 min]

[End Tape 2 – Aud. 238a]

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