

This is a complete transcript of the oral history interview with **Merrill Dunlop (CN50, T3)** for the Billy Graham Center Archives. No spoken words which were recorded are omitted. In a very few cases, the transcribers could not understand what was said, in which case “[unclear]” or “[?]” were inserted. Also, grunts, verbal hesitations such as “ah” or “um” were usually omitted. Readers of this transcript should remember that this is a transcript of spoken English, which follows a different rhythm and even rule than written English.

. . . Three dots indicate an interruption or break in the train of thought within the sentence of the speaker.

. . . . Four dots indicate what the transcriber believes to be the end of an incomplete sentence.

() Word in parentheses are asides made by the speaker.

[] Words in brackets are comments made by the transcriber.

This transcript was created by Robert Shuster in August 1989.

Please note: This oral history interview expresses the personal memories and opinions of the interviewee and does not necessarily represent the views or policies of the Billy Graham Center Archives or Wheaton College.



Collection 50, T3. Oral history interview with Merrill Dunlop by Robert Shuster on June 1, 1979.

SHUSTER: This is a continuation of the interview with Reverend Merrill Dunlop on June 1, 1979. You thought of the name of a missionary?

DUNLOP: Yes, I wish I'd thought of it before when we were.... Bob Cook and I were over in China in, I think it was Canton, we were there under the auspices of Mr. and Mrs. Raetz. I can't hardly think of his first name. But they had a great orphanage work in that whole area and so Bob and... Bob Cook and I were in many of their orphanages and had meetings for the children, young people in orphanages. And then of course we were at the...the great [pauses] what the mission? Let me see. Excuse me. Open door....

SHUSTER: China Inland?

DUNLOP: China. No. We were at China Inland Mission, yes. We stayed in China Inland Mission in...there in...in Shanghai.

SHUSTER: But that's R-A-T-Z

DUNLOP: R-A-E-T-Z. Yes

SHUSTER: R-A-E.

DUNLOP: Florence Raetz was her name, I can't think of his name. I'm trying to think of the [pauses] great mission run by these ladies. Well, there again, my memory's not doing me any...any good right now.

SHUSTER: Well, it may come back later. I'd like to ask you a little about some of the other evangelists you've worked with, like Jimmy Johnson.

DUNLOP: Yes, Jimmie...Dr. Jimmie Johnson and I were together for about twelve years in evangelism. Jimmie....

SHUSTER: How did you first meet?

DUNLOP: What was that?

SHUSTER: How did you first meet?

DUNLOP: He was a guest preacher one time at Chicago Gospel Tabernacle. I think that was when I first...the first time I ever met him. And my good friend Clyde Taylor, not the NAE Clyde Taylor but the Clyde Taylor formerly of Wheaton and who was in music, his music director. It was through Clyde and also my first meeting with Jimmie Johnson that he asked me to begin...to...to be with him for one of his crusades and I did and that led to twelve years of ministry with him. He was

a roommate of Billy Graham at Wheaton College. But Jimmie has a real gift of evangelism. I think he's...he has the gift of...as an evangelist as Scripture in the fourth chapter of Ephesians speaks about these gifts and I think Jimmie has that gift particularly. He is a fine, fine preacher. And I know that he helped Billy in the early days of Billy's ministry with the development of some of Billy's messages. They used to sit together and work things out when they were roommates.

SHUSTER: What kind of preacher is Dr. Johnson?

DUNLOP: Dr. Johnson is a...he's a southern preacher. He has that southern background. His home is in the south of Raleigh, North Carolina. In fact, I think his home is in Fuquay Springs. He's had that upbringing and he had been, I think, a graduate of Bob Jones, at least attended Bob Jones and then he later graduated from Wheaton College. So he has that southern background. Many of his illustrations in his messages were very, very warm and wonderful southern illustrations. And many times they were...the words came...he put them in the mouths of...of black people, you know. But he was...he was talking about black preachers who would say this and some of his illustrations would.... And of course Jimmie had that accent, he could talk like a colored person without any problem at all. But since we later got to the time when the, I guess that the colored in the country in the country were objecting little by little to some of these things and we didn't call them colored anymore. We got to the point of calling them blacks and there have been protests about many, many things. And so Jimmie had to cut down. He felt he should cut down. He was never requested to but he felt he should cut down on these illustrations which had to do with the blacks, which he could do so beautifully. But he was a very forceful preacher and there again I would say a Bible...definitely a Bible preacher. He wasn't preaching on the basis of emotions or preaching on the basis of his illustrations but he was preaching because of the Bible and was always Bible based, which I always appreciated about Jimmy Johnson. Splendid man, splendid preacher.

SHUSTER: Did you...what were some of the cities you and he traveled to?

DUNLOP: Oh goodness.

SHUSTER: Or areas.

DUNLOP: For twelve years we were all over this.... Southern cities, in the Carolinas and Virginia and Georgia and of course we had meetings in other parts of the country too. We had a lot of meetings in Canada. We had...I have to remember campaigns in Calgary and in many...many times in Toronto, in Hamilton, in Niagara Falls, in Kitchner, in [pauses] oh, I just can't think of all the Canadian cities we had meetings in. Of course Buffalo, we had a number of crusades in Buffalo. And he's preached in Chicago, he's preached in...in Winona Lake. They had him for one of the big Winona Lake Youth for Christ conventions one time and he did a great job for that. And then all over the south and Florida and so forth.

SHUSTER: The south was the main area?

DUNLOP: Yes, I think probably. More meetings in the southeastern part of the United States than elsewhere. But....



SHUSTER: Now, you were the song leader?

DUNLOP: No, I was the organist and pianist.

SHUSTER: I see.

DUNLOP: Clyde Taylor was with Jimmie Johnson for several years as the song leader and platform man and soloist. Did a fine job. Then he left Jimmie to go into other work and then we had an interim man for just one year by the name of John Duff and...but he needed to take further schooling and so Jimmie urged him to go in to do some more of his college credit work, which he did. Then Ed Lyman came to be with...with us on our team. Ed Lyman is a very fine tenor singer.

SHUSTER: That's L-Y-M-A-N?

DUNLOP: L-Y-M-A-N. Perhaps one of the finest tenors we have in Gospel work in the country today. So the three of us were together for eight years and we not only had meetings in this country and Canada, but we were at...we had a number of meetings overseas too. We had a very fine crusade in the Bahamas. A big crusade in a big airport hangar there in [pauses] what's the name of the...?

SHUSTER: Jamaica?

DUNLOP: Not Jamaica. No. Oh.

SHUSTER: Kingston?

DUNLOP: Not.... No, oh, why am I missing. All these ships go back and forth to.... [Pauses.] Isn't that strange, I can't say, I can't say. What's the main town...these ships go over two or three times a week from...?

SHUSTER: In the Bahamas?

DUNLOP: Yes.

SHUSTER: I don't know.

DUNLOP: Well, that's all right. I can't think of it anyway. We had meetings in Britain and Scotland. In Kent Hall in Scotland, that's in Glasgow, and in [unclear] and Edinburgh. And meetings like that in various parts of Britain and Ireland also.

SHUSTER: And then you three made up the team.

DUNLOP: The three of us made up the team, yes. The three of us on the team. But Jimmie Johnson still preaches. A number of things that he has done is to take groups of people over to the Caribbean islands where he's had a number of contacts and he's had a number of tours, one of



which I was with him and we divided a team of about forty...forty or fifty people in two parts and he took half and I took half. We took them to the centers where there were missionary activities. Many of these people were preachers, many of them were business people, many of them were interested in missionary activities and I think in this way Jimmy had envisioned that he could help to get support for some of these missions, mission stations around those areas. And then he's run several trips to the Holy Land. I think at least one a year for quite some years now. While he still preaches, he doesn't carry a team with him anymore.

SHUSTER: But during those twelve years you were all fulltime?

DUNLOP: Yes, fulltime in the sense that two weeks out of three I was in the crusades with Jimmie.

SHUSTER: And the rest of the time you were...?

DUNLOP: The rest of the time I tried to get home, take care of my family. Too much time away, though, really.

SHUSTER: I can imagine

DUNLOP: For a growing family when they need their dad.

SHUSTER: Were there any unique features about a crusade by Dr. Johnson?

DUNLOP: Well, he used to like to have a certain five or ten minute segment in each...each evening service for children and he would conduct that himself. he would have some little children singing features. But he tried to get a little message out for children. I think this was a...a...the psychology behind that was to get the interest of the children who would bring their parents and maybe vice versa. The parents would bring their children. This was a part of each service and it got to be quite an interesting thing. Clyde Taylor in the early days was the singer, would always sing something special and I would be featured on either organ or piano and we would various things. Sometimes I would write a chorus publicly, as I've done all over the country at different times, We get suggested titles from the congregation and they would vote on the one they wanted me to write on and in five or six minutes I would write a chorus and present it. So we had various types of features in those meetings.

SHUSTER: How...how large was the sponsoring group for the crusades? Was it the entire city usually, the churches that invited him or one particular church?

DUNLOP: Well, we did it both ways. Jimmie was his own setup man and...and he had many many requests for services, but he, I think, felt his biggest ministry there for quite some years was with the citywide crusades. We used to use the term "citywide" in the sense that there would be a number of churches that would get together and sponsor the meetings and usually one or more pastors would be the leading sparkplugs, could I call them, to get a meeting going and would infuse others with the enthusiasm and objectives of a crusade and if possible get the ministerial or

ministrium, as it was sometimes called, behind it and if so, then you've got a lot of churches. And it helps to publicize a meeting because it is done through all the churches, through the advertising in the newspapers and all that. And it's a...that's the way we operated for a long time, for several years. We'd have meetings even as long as five weeks, Bob. I think one of our best crusades was down in Fayetteville, North Carolina. That was scheduled as a two week meeting, three Sundays. Well, at the end of that second week, we just felt momentum begin to pick up and the pastors got together and said, "No, you must continue a week." And although we had other commitments, Jimmie had to revise his schedule and we said, "Yes, we'll take a third week." And that was better than the other two weeks before. And we finally wound up having five full weeks in Fayetteville in a big tent seating about a thousand people which then pretty well got into the whole town of Fayetteville and the surrounding area. And that was...where we had many of the servicemen were stationed there and would come over to the meetings.

SHUSTER: How large usually were the crowds at the meetings?

DUNLOP: Well, these citywide meetings we'd try to have a tent that would seat fifteen hundred or two thousand people. And night by night, you wouldn't have that many people every night, yet on Sundays you would have. But the meetings would be several hundred night, I would say.

SHUSTER: And did you also train counselors in each town?

DUNLOP: That was part of it, yes. Now, I had done the advance work for some crusades and of course that was one of the things, to get counselors ready. But other...Jimmie had other setup men...Jimmie Johnson had other setup men who did this work for him and this was a very important part of any crusade. Of course, as you know, it is in the Billy Graham Crusades. I think perhaps we could have done a much better job if we had had the right people to do the advance setup work. I think this is the case with many evangelists. That's why I think Billy is so far beyond any of the other who, mostly, have done that type of work because he is set up way in advance. A full year and sometimes more.

SHUSTER: In going through the south, did you have special meetings for blacks, or was it the meetings or joint meetings....

DUNLOP: No, I think not. I don't think we had to deal with that problem in Jimmie Johnson's meetings. I think our meetings there were mostly whites. Very few blacks came in then. I think that was a later problem that Billy Graham had to handle.

SHUSTER: What...what about John Haggai? How did you meet...become associated with...?

DUNLOP: I worked with John Haggai on a number of his crusades. He then was holding mostly citywide crusades, also. And his meetings were quite large, very large. And....

SHUSTER: Excuse me a second, but what were the years you were together with Jimmie Johnson?

DUNLOP: I think I was with Jimmie Johnson from sixty-three to seventy-five. Twelve years.

SHUSTER: And what about your work with John Haggai.

DUNLOP: Well I have to stop to.... I don't know as I can quite pinpoint...pinpoint those exact years. I can think of the crusades, but I can't think of the actual years. They would be later than sixty-five, you see.

SHUSTER: The late sixties?

DUNLOP: Yes, I think so. But John Haggai had big meetings and mostly citywide and they were very fine. I think one of the finest meetings that I've ever seen was of John Haggai...was the one in Johnstown City, New York. Or Johnstown, I meant to say Johnstown.

SHUSTER: Johnstown, Pennsylvania?

DUNLOP: Johnstown, Pennsylvania. Excuse me. You're right. That's the place where the flood had been years ago, Johnstown flood. That was an ideal setup because there, in that meeting, the whole ministrium (they called it) was behind that meeting, solidly. This meant that we had no...no problems with...of a divisive nature because you had solidarity there represented by all the pastors, whether they were all completely evangelical or not. But at least the ministrium was in it. And we had a big arena. I...I'm not certain whether it was called an arena, but it was a big arena type building in the main part of Johnstown. They filled that place up. They had very large meetings, big choir and fine music and, you see.... The man who was the music man then was [pauses] give me a moment here. Felix Snipes was the man who lead the platform. The choir....

SHUSTER: How as that...S-N-I-P....

DUNLOP: S-N-I-P-E-S. He still is in evangelistic work as of today, working with an evangelistic team in another area, I think largely in Texas. But he was a gifted man and he did a nice work with the choir and was the platform man for John Haggai and I think John leaned heavily on him for much of the detail work. But John Haggai is a fine preacher. He's a Syrian and I think he has a great message of, what shall I say, optimism. He wrote a book which I think he's featured all over the country called *How to Win Over Worry*. And at noon time many times he would give lectures on the subject of that book and he did it in such a fine way that those crowds would, even though they started small, would always increase greatly, sometimes two or three times. Even during a week's sessions, till he had a church full for those noon meetings. And then, of course, at night he would have a big evangelistic service s and the invitation, for instance, in those Johns...Johnstown meetings were just so great and the final meeting, I think, seven or eight hundred people responding to the invitation at the evening service and there'd been a big afternoon service for...for young people and there had been a large invitation there. And there were over a thousand people that one day that seemed to be...come forth to accept Christ. It was like a Billy Graham evangelistic meeting. And we've had many others. And then we went from then, I think the next crusade after that, just as an example, was in Cedar Rapids, Iow...Iowa where it was a divisive thing because we did not have any of the so-called liberal pastors and churches in that meeting at



all, it was only the evangelicals. And unfortunately, it was just that kind of a meeting. We had good people who came but the people you wanted to reach were the ones who were not coming. And this was always the problem in this type of thing.

SHUSTER: Was that a common problem? Did it often happen?

DUNLOP: I think it's...I think it has been a problem right down through the years, yes. You...if a meeting is held by the Baptists, well, then the Methodists say, "Well, God bless them. They're having a good Baptist meeting over there," you see. So...

SHUSTER: But....

DUNLOP: ...you don't dare put the label on it too much

SHUSTER: But John Haggai and Jimmie Johnson, did they attempt this...

DUNLOP: Yes. Citywide. That was the reason.

SHUSTER: ...nondenominational....

DUNLOP: Yes, that's right. Yes. Although, of course, Jimmie Johnson did hold some meetings in churches. I remember we had a...one crusade which, well, we had one week in the Baptist church and the following week was in the Methodist church and the final week was a big buildup in the city auditorium, something like that. So those were things which were done to counter any feeling of denominational preference.

SHUSTER: What was his personal denomination?

DUNLOP: Jimmie Johnson? Southern Baptist.

SHUSTER: And what about John Haggai?

DUNLOP: But he's not a Southern Baptist evangelist. Let me put it that way. He's always been an independent evangelist, although he has held many crusades in Southern Baptist churches.

SHUSTER: And what about John Haggai.

DUNLOP: I don't know whether...what his present affiliation is, denominationally speaking. I don't know as I ever worry about that.

SHUSTER: Were....

DUNLOP: Saw him just recently.

SHUSTER: You three then made up the team. John Haggai, yourself and...

DUNLOP: Felix Snipes.

SHUSTER: ...Felix Snipes.

DUNLOP: Yes. there would be others in each place, of course, who would be very, very active.

SHUSTER: And were you...were these meetings be concentrated in one particular area of the country? The northeast or the south or the west? Or were they...?

DUNLOP: No, I don't think they were in the sense that Jimmie Johnson was in the southeast. But I think John Haggai had meetings in various parts of the country. California, the Atlantic coast. Had a big meeting in San Diego, citywide meeting in San Diego, for instance, and then in other places across the country. No, I don't think there was any special local for John. I should say one thing about John Haggai which always was a tremendous challenge to me. As a...he's always been a gracious man. I've never seen him in anger. I've said that about Torrey Johnson too, but I can say that certainly about John Haggai. And always seemed to be riding on top, so to speak. A wonderful smile and gracious to everybody. But the reason I say this is that he had a great, heavy burden weighing upon him all the time during those years of ministry. He was son who was born...John himself says that his son was born as a result of a doctor who was under...who was partly inebriated when he was attending the birth of his...his son. And he forced somehow...he pulled the boy's legs or muscles apart so that it was a...there was a reaction on the spinal column which made the boy paralyzed. And the boy...his spinal column was so affected he...the boy could not speak. And he could not move very much. He was almost a complete invalid from the time he was just a small baby till the time he was.... But he grew quite a bit and they tried all kinds of therapy for this boy but he was constantly in a wheelchair. And when we were in the meetings out in San Diego, they brought him out there so he could be in the meetings there. he was in a wheelchair all the time but he had that...his head would have to be resting back because he didn't have the strength to hold it up and he would just have a sort of strange look upon his face because of the effect of his.... He was really, truly an invalid. And I guess it cost thousands and thousands of dollars and his lovely wife Christine, who was a fine singer, beautiful person, practically had to give up her life in sacrifice to that boy over the years. And so she was not...she was very seldom able to be in the meetings with John. A few times when she was, she sang, sang most beautifully. But then she had the boy. And as a loving mother, she had to do everything and did everything, everything possible for that boy. And all during those years, he had that problem, but you'd never know it unless he'd volunteered to tell anybody about it. But there was victory and there was constant grace on the part of John Haggai. I don't know how I could have been so gracious through all that. But just about two or three years now that this boy finally passed away.

SHUSTER: What happened to the doctor?

DUNLOP: What's that?

SHUSTER: What happened to the doctor?

DUNLOP: Doctor? Oh, the doctor who delivered the.... I do not know. I don't I ever heard John say.

SHUSTER: Were there any features of a John Haggai meeting that distinguished it from others? That were unique to it?

DUNLOP: Distinguishing features. [Pauses] Well, I think we had a program of [unclear] music and all that type of thing which would be like many other crusades. A variety of musical features, always the big choir in the background. Sometimes the guest singers and artists would come in. But John Haggai is a fine preacher, excellent preacher, has a great sense of humor about him. And he gets down to earth with people. They enjoy coming. When they got to hearing John Haggai preach, they wanted to come back for more and I think that that's the reason why the citywide meetings with him were very successful. But his ministry has changed and so he's not conducting meetings in this country very much. He has a ministry overseas in setting up these counseling sessions and training sessions, I should say, in Singapore and Asiatic centers where his vision is they will minister to evangelicals (converts and others) who come to these special training sessions which may last two or three weeks and then they go back to their own people and preach and proclaim the message of the Gospel. And John is having a great success in that ministry right now.

SHUSTER: What about your work with Ford Philpot?

DUNLOP: I worked with, I suppose, not so long with him, perhaps over two or three years. I guess about three years in many of his crusades. There again, he is a very fine evangelical preacher, he is a graduate of...of the Methodist semin...seminary, oh [pauses] down in Louisville. Wait a minute. [Pauses.] There again, I'm stymied on a name.

SHUSTER: Asbury?

DUNLOP: Asbury. Yes. He's a graduate of Asbury. He's really a fine evangelical preacher, but there again I find that his ministry seems to be restricted mostly to the south. And most of the meetings I had with him were in southern cities.

SHUSTER: Citywide meetings?

DUNLOP: Yes, yes. Most of them were, although again we would have some meetings in churches.



SHUSTER: What were some of the cities that you went to?

DUNLOP: Well, there was a good citywide meeting in Jacksonville, Florida. Oh, goodness, I have to stop and think where we were. Lawrenceville, Illinois. He had one here in Park Ridge, Illinois. Oh, so many different...so many different places. Goodness, I'm at a loss to recall at the moment, Bob. I'm stuttering here.

SHUSTER: Who...who else was on the team?

DUNLOP: We had a song leader by the name of Howard Whitmore, who was the choir man and was the...one of the soloists. And he's still with Mr. Philpot. He's been a good man. He's a short, somewhat stocky man but a good man for choirs. He had a nice way on the platform. People seemed to like him. And then of course he used to feature certain other people. Now both John Haggai and Ford Philpot...we used to feature Ethel Waters from time to time. And I used to play for Ethel Waters on certain occasions when she'd come and give a program. But there were other soloists and singers who would come in. Susanne Johnson was used by Ford Philpot quite a bit. She's a very fine singer that's one of the Chicago area singers and quite a fine artist as a soprano. She still sings quite a bit just all over. She is a former Miss Illinois and runner up for Miss America contest. And then Ford Philpot used to use some of the former Miss Americas who were Christians and who were either singers or had some other fine talent that he could present in these public meetings.

SHUSTER: Somebody like Vonda Van Dyke?

DUNLOP: Yes! That's...she was one of them. I'm glad you got...thought of her name. And I think there are two or three of them that I remember we've had. I can't remember their names.

SHUSTER: Any special, distinguishing features about a Ford Philpot campaign.

DUNLOP: Well, he...he speaks like a southerner. I mean, he has a...he has a...his locale, his home and area is Lexington, Kentucky. He's a Kentuckian, he speaks like a Kentuckian, if that means anything to you. There are certain words he would...he would say.... If he was talking about a tobacco warehouse (you know, sometimes they used to have meetings in tobacco warehouse in the off season. They've had big evangelistic meetings in them as I've worked with these evangelists) but he would never call it warehouse, he would call it "war house." And other pronunciations would indicate he was...he was from that area. But always true to the Gospel. So true to the Gospel. And I just loved to hear his messages. he had a good sense of humor, he loved to tell a good funny story, get his audience well prepared for one of his messages. Sometimes I would note that he would start with a humorous anecdote or story and get his...he knew how to approach his audience, to get his audience in the pa...hollow of his hand and then get right down to...to home base with the message and oh I was just...lovely to see how God blessed him.

SHUSTER: How does his preaching style compare with somebody say like Paul Rader or John Haggai?



DUNLOP: Its a...its a little difficult to compare these men in a sense. The tone of their voice would be different. I think Ford Philpot has had problems with his voice on a number of occasions. I think I heard just recently that he's had some kind of heart surgery. But that's since...long since I've been working with him. I had to leave the evangelistic field and the travel field much in order to get down to Bibletown, because I was in Bibletown for the winter conference season. But another conf...evangelist I worked with was evangelist Ken Campbell, up in Canada and he is a very fine preacher, he is doing a great work. He is the man who started the movement to counter the educational features of the secular educational field where they have dis...completely discarded the Judeo-Christian viewpoint of creation. And evolution and humanism and relativism and this type of thing is substituted for anything that has to do with the Christian stand, so he has started an organization called Renaissance and this is with the object of appealing to the head of provincial and government educational...education...educators to establish similar schools for the evangelicals and allow them tax privileges, you see.

SHUSTER: What were the years you worked with him or traveled with him.

DUNLOP: Well, I worked with him until about two years ago.

SHUSTER: About seventy...

DUNLOP: Yes, until about seventy-seven, that's right

SHUSTER: ...seven. And what about Ford Philpot. I know you said you worked with him for three years but which three years were they.

DUNLOP: Yes, well I suppose I'd have to guess at that, unless I look...tried to haul out some records, Bob. But there isn't time to do that right now. It must have been about...in the early seventies, probably.

SHUSTER: And now, of course, you're associated with Bibletown.

DUNLOP: Yes, in the winter time.

SHUSTER: If you could give a summary of what Bibletown is.

DUNLOP: Bibletown is...is a...is a name given to one number of acres of...of...of buildings and property where the Bibletown Community Church is the center, the hub center of it all. And the Bibletown Community Church was established quite some time ago, I think about in the nineteen fifties I think this was started. The area in which Bibletown rests is a part of the town of Boca Raton, Florida and this particular section in Boca Raton was formerly an Air Force Base in World War Two and one of the streets which was formerly called Fourth Avenue Diagonal is actually a street which was the runway for the takeoff of the planes. You'd never know it right now, because its a...its a part of a city and all that's been built in. And Bibletown was originally started by Ira Eschelman, who was a Youth for Christ man for years. And he had opportunity...he got wind of the fact that the Air Force base there was going to be for sale because the government was closing it up

and he was astute enough and smart enough to see that this was a tremendous possibility of buying something and starting a Bible conference. And so he did. He arranged for the purchase of several of the buildings there. Which...one was the old hotel, another was the officers' club and I guess two or three other buildings, residences and so forth. And on that sort of a shoestring he started...and they started a Bible conference. But he got onto the idea of having musical concerts on Saturday nights. And they took the officers' club which had a dance floor, it was a sort of sunken dance floor, and they turned it into a beautiful auditorium and put seats in it and it had a little balcony section and they turned it into a Saturday night concert deal and that became so popular, these concerts, that he and his wife and a couple of musicians who were friends of mine, Neil and Pat McCowley [sp?] worked with him. They had a musical setup there where they developed and many guests, as we have done at many of the Bible conference today. Come in for specials every Saturday night, until they just crowded the place out. Then they got to putting dinners in the dining room and you'd attend the concert dinner and by attending the concern dinner you would also get a special reserved seat in the...in the...for the concert. And the thing was tied together in such a way that it was just a sellout all the time. And so Mr. Eschelmann decided to put up a big, new auditorium and tried to raise money for that. And they hoped that this thing would cost about two hundred and fifty thousand dollars. And they arranged to put this up after they had been going for several years with the old conference center, which had been the officers club. And the building was put up but instead of costing what they had planned, it cost well over a million dollars. A million, one hundred or two hundred thousand dollars. And it was put up as a seasonal affair, only for the winter conference season when people were down there in Florida, January through March and into April. And that's not long enough for a building of that.... They had to put...they put offices, and a bookstore and other things, but.... The point was that the mortgage on the building and the property was too heavy and it was almost on the verge of closing up because of the...of defaulting. And so the board that was running it decided that they would appeal to Dr. Jimmie Johnson to see if he would come in and take it over. Jimmie Johnson did I say?

SHUSTER: Yes.

DUNLOP: I'm sorry. Dr. Torrey Johnson.

SHUSTER: And when was this, approximately?

DUNLOP: This was...was...well, that was twelve years ago.

SHUSTER: That would be sixty-seven.

DUNLOP: Sixty...about sixty-six or sixty-seven, right around in there, yes. And he pondered a long time about that. He talked with many people before he made that decision to come.

SHUSTER: He was still in Chicago at that time.

DUNLOP: Yes. Well, he was...yes. He was located in Wheaton but he was an itinerant evangelist holding his crusades. There was an indebtedness of one million, seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars on that building, on the new auditorium, which was the thing which was thinking the whole

project. And he didn't want to take over somebody else's debt, exactly, and paid for what they sometimes refer to as a dead horse, because that's not easy. But he did feel as he waited upon the Lord that this may be the thing the Lord wanted him to do. And so with the proviso that he knew the debt was not his, he would come in and he would take over and head the work as president and if it pleased the Lord to reduce that indebtedness and get it out of the hole, he would...he would like to see that happen. Well, that was twelve, almost thirteen years ago. Not only has he gotten the debt of a million, seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars practically completely cleaned up, but the old conference center building (which had been the officers' club) burned down three years ago. It was a beautiful building, all redesigned, I mean revamped, so to speak, air conditioned. And it was just a comfortable, lovely building. But that burned. And since that time another building has been opened to take its place this last season. And a very very wonderful, gorgeous, spacious building which is of a permanent type, fireproof and all the rest of it. And that is not dedicated yet. They will owe...they still need to raise about four hundred thousand dollars before that is...is completely paid for. And the building is costing over two million dollars, two and a half million. But I think that some have said that Torrey Johnson has never put his hand to anything but what it has turned out to be a success. Well, I think this is not just something you want to say because it is Torrey but Torrey's method of operating constantly in checking with God upon His plans and His will for the day ahead, the days ahead. So Torrey Johnson has done a great job done there. And he said, "We're not going to dedicate this building," which was just opened in April. In March, in a limited way. "We're not going to dedicate it completely until it is paid for. I'll dedicate it debt free." So he said, "We are scheduling a dedication service for the season of 1980, Bible conference season of 1980." Which is next year.

SHUSTER: Who are some of the other people on the staff at Bibletown?

DUNLOP: His associate minister is Mr. Burt Reed.

SHUSTER: R-E-E-D.

DUNLOP: R-E-E-D. He's formerly with the TransWorld Radio as a missionary but he decided this was the ministry that God wanted to do, so he's given his work in.... But he is also missionary secretary because that's his first love. But he is associate minister there and he is the man who is largely responsible for overseeing the construction of the new building, under who the contractors are working, working with the contractors. He has a...a youth man by the name of Steve Bell who has...a young man, minister of youth and he has a Dan Allan [sp], who is his director of education and he has.... He's the son of Dr. Allan [sp] of the Det...Detroit.... Dr. David Allan's [sp?] son. Then he has a...a music director who now is Dr...Mr. John Shev [sp?]. And he has Mark Copland, also who's a minister...he's a...ministers to the college age youth section. these are all men who are fulltime there. Let's see if he has anybody else. [Pauses.] Oh yes, of course he has the minister of visitation too, which is [pauses] Crumley, Mr. Crumley. Now that I am out of Florida for a while, I have to grope again for names. You'll think I have a terrible memory here today, Bob.

SHUSTER: No, I think all the things you've remembered....

DUNLOP: But he is a former mission man and he's just so well cut out for this visitation work,

visitation in the hospitals and the homes. The sick and all that.

SHUSTER: How is his name spelled?

DUNLOP: Crumley. C-R-U-M-L-E-Y.

SHUSTER: And most of the people then who come to Bibletown are there January to April...

DUNLOP: Yes.

SHUSTER: ...on vacation.

DUNLOP: Can you stop that for just one second. I want to get a folder for you.

[Tape recorder turned off and on.]

DUNLOP: Yes, I had mentioned Frank Crumley as the minister of visitation and Mark Copland was the college and career minister, but he also has an important business manager, a very fine man by the name of David Florence [sp?] and he is in charge of all those who have business considerations and then from the music standpoint in the...during the wintertime, there's one other man who on the same basis as I am, just for the winter Bible conference. That's Hilary Halverson. He's the platform man and is the...directs the music for all the conference sessions, Bible conference sessions. And he also active in having parts in the Friday night Sacred Concerts. And I am always there in music and also I am a tour director there. I...we have wall to wall people in Florida in the winter time and so many hundreds of these people come to the Bible conference have free afternoons and have free Mondays and free Saturdays and so I've worked out tours that go out to the various interesting places in south Florida, like the Parrot Jungle and the Lion Safari and the Ocean World and the Paddlewheel Queen and the Jingle Queen and all those things. And I run one every week to Disneyworld and one every two weeks, about, to Kennedy Space center and another one to Cyprus Gardens. So people love those tours. Now, I don't go on those tours. I arrange them and I promote them and then I send them off, but I have a man who...who does all the driving for them. Hilary Halverson and I work together and we have a...every night after service. And that goes on every night of the week. We have a big sing time after the evening service is over in the dining room. People get their refreshments and sandwiches and ice cream so forth and they sit at the tables and we wait until they've finished their food and we have a sing time. We have a great, happy time.

SHUSTER: About how many people can stay at Bibletown?

DUNLOP: I suppose I would say, ballpark figures, about five hundred. We have two...we have three motels and we have a hotel and then we have two other buildings where there are efficient apartments. So we can conduct...we can accommodate quite a few. In the winter season though we really ought to have another place because we have to turn people away. It's very full there in the winter time.



SHUSTER: Finally, I wanted to ask you about some of your music compositions and your...your work in composing. You mentioned on the other tape you be...you began very young writing your own music.

DUNLOP: Yes. When I became a member of Paul Rader's staff in the Chicago Gospel Tabernacle back there in about 1925, music was featured a great deal under Paul Rader, so I came in under that staff. We had a large staff then and that staff grew until we had as many as eighteen on the staff at one time, music staff alone. So we had broadcasts that would...on Sundays that went from ten in the morning until...on Sunday until midnight. That was fourteen hours. We had to have much, much music. And then every morning we would have an hour on the Columbia network. And so that meant we had to have...where would we get the music? A lot of it we had to write ourselves. We made arrangements. We wrote original things. And many of us on the staff were writing our own songs. In fact, we put out a songbook of just staff songs, a couple of times there. And so that is when I started writing. I got to thinking about it in those terms as a young fellow and began to write myself. And of course you learn by the doing many times. And as we developed this and went on through the years, I kept writing more and more and through the days I was at the Tabernacle, even after Paul Rader's time, during Clarence Erickson's time, I was constantly writing and have published several of my own books and...and then of late years, since 1960, I have been associated with Singsperation, so I don't do my publishing anymore, they have published my songs.

SHUSTER: They do songbooks?

DUNLOP: They bring them out, yes, now and then. And they have published several of my songbooks, yes, records, and tapes, and special arrangements.

SHUSTER: What do you think have been the main influences on....?

DUNLOP: What is that?

SHUSTER: What have been the main influences on you in your songwriting?

DUNLOP: That question I think one man, a good friend of attempted to answer that question in *Christianity Today*. That was Don Hustad. He men...he was talking about things that influence people in music and he was talking about songwriters, composers and so forth and he mentioned me. He said that he felt that my music had been very definitely influenced by the pop music of the twenties. Well, I didn't know that he was going to say that until it was in print and I began to think, "But is that...why did he feel that way about it?" And then I got to say, "Is that true or not?" And I got to got to think, "Maybe it is true, in a sense." Because in...in the pop music of the twenties and thirties I think one of the great features was the magnificent melodies in ballads and romantic songs that were written. And some of those were very, very appealing. And there could be an influence there. But I think one of the strong influences...I told Don Hustad another time was the fact that as a boy I got to find in going through the hymn books that there were certain songs I liked then other songs and I... Did I...maybe I told you this before?

SHUSTER: No.

DUNLOP: But I...I learned those songs as a young teenage boy, played them on the piano because I was studying about music and I said, "Oh, I like those songs!" and they were songs that I found in those Alexander books. The names of the songs that were my favorite seem to have been the same. Robert Harkness. I think there was something unique about his melodies and about his harmonies. And I got so that I just looked for songs by Robert Harkness.

SHUSTER: What were some of the songs he wrote?

DUNLOP: Oh, he wrote...has written "He Will Hold Me Fast," [pauses] "Bearing His Cross." [Pauses.] Boy, I wish I had had a moment to think about this...

SHUSTER: Sure, take a moment

DUNLOP: ...because you asked me this so fast I didn't know it was coming. [Pauses.] "Are We Downhearted?" is another one of his songs. [Pauses.] I'd have to really just look them up because there's so many wonderful songs. "Somebody's Here With An Aching Heart." "Jesus Will Give You Rest." "Is He Yours?" is another one. Then he wrote the...the song, "Sometime." [Sings] "Sometime, all sorrows will be over. Sometime...." Wro...wrote another song which I suppose he...he thought was a companion song called, "Somewhere." And another one called "I Have A Friend, Oh, Such A Friend Is He." Yes, he wrote a song called, "Tis Jesus." "I Know Of A Name, A Wonderful Name." And so forth. I could go on and on, but I'd have to take a little time.

SHUSTER: And most of the pieces you have composed have been songs as opposed to instrumental....

DUNLOP: Yes, more in the vocal field than in the instrumental. I have done some instrumental things but it has been mostly...mostly the vocal field. Choir....

SHUSTER: Do you think this has been your best work? What do you think has been your best works?

DUNLOP: Did I give you any of my books at all?

SHUSTER: No, I don't think so.

DUNLOP: Well, I should do that. Will you hold it out a moment?

SHUSTER: Sure.

DUNLOP: I want to get....

[Recording turned off and on.]

SHUSTER: What are your personal favor...?

DUNLOP: Is this on now?

SHUSTER: Yes. What are your personal favorites in the...?

DUNLOP: Well, my favorites are not necessarily the song that have been the most widely used. Therefore, they might not necessarily be so widely known, but I enjoyed writing the song "Wonderful, Marvelous, Yet True." Starts "The Bible says if I believe..." I believe "The Answer's On The Way" is a chorus that has been used over the years quite a and one that's in quite many songbooks is "He Was Wounded For Our Transgressions." Numbers of choirs have used that song. "My Sins Are Blotted Out I Know" is one of the oldies I wrote way back there many, many years ago, back about 1926. And I suppose "Only One Life" is very widely known. I don't know that I have any special songs that are favorites. That's a...a strange...I'm...a personal favorite. The song I'm writing at the time is my favorite song, so, you know. And afterwards down...I pull the curtain down and it's another song until I'm on it for a while and then that's...that's over. And that's the way it goes. "He Put A Song In My Heart" is a song that has a lot of rhythm and life to it that has been widely used. I've written song in various countries. I've written songs in Mexico. I wrote one called "They Are Waiting." Which is really a Mexican rhythm, type of rhythm. It's published in one of those books I've just given you. And so forth.

SHUSTER: What do you think is the place of music in evangelism?

DUNLOP: Music in evangelism? I think it has a very great part. It's not the ministry because there is nothing that takes the place of the Word of God. But I think it's a supporting ministry in the sense that music is...has always been a part of...of the joy of the Gospel. People want to sing. People want to sing and give an expression to their praise. Song of praise are very wonderful, songs of testimony. And you know, it is hard to find good songs of praise, words of praise, good songs...sets of word for testimony. I have people giving me words for songs all over the country. In fact, maybe any given year I'll get scores of song poems sent to me, but most of them are not too desirable. I find most of them are the preachy type of songs. "You should do this, you should do that, you should do the other." Or they're songs on prayer. Now there is nothing writing with songs on prayer except that so many people write songs on prayer. You can only use a small few of them, you know. So I don't encourage too many songs on prayer. Songs on invitation the same way. But the songs...there are three types of songs, poems I look for constantly: sings of testimony, songs of praise and any song that has to do with the redemptive work of Christ. And that is the hardest to find. Very few people seem to write songs about the redemptive work...the finished work of Christ, what it means, what he's done, what his sacrifice really means. And there is...I'm today that so much is written that is so light and frothy as far as its message is concerned. They've gotten...contemporary music today, some of its good and some of its very ungood [sic], if there is such a word.

SHUSTER: Well, there's "bad."

DUNLOP: Because the message is poor, the message is...is not there. Just because the person uses the word "God" in a song doesn't mean it's a sacred song, doesn't mean it's a Gospel song. You've got to have some aspect of the Gospel in it to be a Gospel song and that means the death, burial and

resurrection of Christ. So my feeling is that music in evangelism should portray the very thing we're preaching and that is we're talking to people in...in...in another language, that is the language of music, saying the same thing, but that message should be there. Too many times, I've seen music that's just going no place and...in some religious meetings that I feel sorry about. Sometimes you have a good piece of music and poor words. Sometimes you can have good words and poor music. And it's great when you can have both that are fine.

SHUSTER: Do you think that Christians appreciate the work of an artist, that....

DUNLOP: Well, there's always...there are always some that do. You're talking about art in music now?

SHUSTER: Yes, that's what I mean. Artists, musicians, composers.

DUNLOP: Oh yes, there are always some who do. But I find that generally speaking, the large number of people in audiences do not appreciate the fine points of music. You give the "Messiah" for instance, which is a great oratorio. It is very seldom you hear the whole "Messiah" given. It was given in a certain place recently. The whole three hours of the performance. But a large number of people left because they couldn't take that high class of music all that length of time. And there may have been other reasons why some of them would leave too. I think in evangelistic services too, you take the catchy choruses with simple, singable things perhaps go over much better with the crowds than anything of a more serious musical nature. But my feeling in writing songs is that every song should have a fidelity to the Gospel and should have some aspect of the Gospel in it or else it's not a Gospel song.

SHUSTER: Well, I think that that just about runs out of my questions. Thank you for all your patience and sharing reminiscences...

DUNLOP: Well, you're most welcome Bob.

SHUSTER: ...with us.

DUNLOP: I'm afraid I've gotten very far afield sometimes in the things that I've said. One thing suggest another and your questions have been quietly and nicely given, but you see, they opened up doors, every one of them and I tried to step in those doors and give you.... You can always cull the things that are not....

SHUSTER: Oh no, we wouldn't cull anything.

DUNLOP: [Laughs.]

SHUSTER: There is one question that I recall now that slipped my mind. Of course, as we talked about before, Paul Rader had preached at Aimee Semple McPherson's church, and I was wondering in general if...what his feeling had been to Pentecostal churches, Pentecostal preachers.

DUNLOP: Well, Paul Rader was always a gracious man. I mean, he wasn't fighting anybody, nor criticizing. But Paul Rader himself you might say was a great grace preacher, preacher of grace. And he was a preacher that preached eternal security. We sometimes don't like the words Calvinism and Arminianism. In fact, I know a preacher who says, "I won't use either word because its divisive." But Paul Rader was on...straight on the Scriptures. He...he felt that the speaking in tongues was not...was not a...was not a sign of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Was one of the gift but not the...the...the gift that really meant that the person had been filled with the Holy Spirit.

SHUSTER: William Branham in one of his books mentions that he and Paul Rader were also friends.

DUNLOP: Branham?

SHUSTER: Yeah.

DUNLOP: I don't know that they were.

SHUSTER: I suppose he might have met him.

DUNLOP: I know that Mr. Branham was a friend of...of my wife's uncle who was a very well known evangelist, B. B. Bos...F. F. Bosworth. And Bosworth and Branham worked together for a while, in meetings over in Africa. But I don't...I don't know that Branham was even extant...was even...even operating as a preacher at all during Paul Rader's lifetime.

SHUSTER: Well, he might not have been. they might just have met each other or known each other.

DUNLOP: Well, Paul Rader died in thirty-eight, so it could be that they had met.

SHUSTER: Okay, well, thank you.

DUNLOP: You're welcome, Bob.

END OF TAPE