student to work toward a doctorate degree, they asked Dr. Malcolm
Renfrew at the University of Idaho for a candidate. Dr. Renfrew
explained that Mrs. Runyan would qualify, but that her plans
would probably depend on what her husband did. The Harvard
and Radcliffe officials conferred on the matter, and offered fellow-
ships to both William and Thora.

These brilliant students, whose home was in Ukiah, California,
met while both were in the Army. Married in 1934, they decided
in 1937 to go to college together. With their previous outstanding
academic records, they had a choice of colleges as broad as the
nation, and selected the University of Idaho.

"We decided it was just what we were seeking," said Runyan.
"Most important, it ranked high academically. Also, it was not
overly large. For us, the University of Idaho seemed to hold much
promise."

The promise for William and Thora Runyan was fulfilled in
1961. But what about the future of the University of Idaho? Will
there be promise and fulfillment in the years to come?

In Seattle, Washington, as this is written, lives a machine shop
operator, William C. Cheney, a man in his sixties. With drill
and file and torch, Cheney is a master. He can turn out almost
any kind of mechanical equipment that comes to his mind or to
the minds of others. A former college teacher, he is an inventor,
an historian, and an astronomer who built all the equipment for
his own observatory.

Back when radios first came into homes in quantity if not
quality, one came into Cheney's shop beside the gently lapping
waters of Puget Sound. Cheney added two recording machines.
Whenever some significant news announcement or address came
over the air, he fiddled on one of the recorders. On wax (and
even on glass during World War II) he recorded history as it was
being made — the landing of Charles Lindbergh in Paris in 1927
after the first non-stop flight from New York; the stock market
crash of 1929; the deaths of Comedian Will Rogers and Pilot
Wiley Post in an airplane crash at Point Barrow, Alaska, August
15, 1935; the "blood, sweat and tears" speech of Winston Churchill
in World War II; the bombing of Pearl Harbor by the Japanese,
December 7, 1941 . . .

Cheney collected other historical information in the form of
such assorted reminders as restaurant menus going back a half-
century, Sears-Roebuck catalogs for each decade in the same period,
and ration cards and coupons used in the United States during World War II. Then, in 1960, Cheney began sealing all the historical material he had collected in his lifetime inside 5-gallon oil drums. Eventually there were seventeen barrels. They were important to Cheney, and he hoped they would be important to scholars a half-century hence.

He wanted those barrels stored at an institution of higher learning to be opened and studied by professors and students in the year 2010. He wanted the institution to be one which would have a concern for America's heritage and a desire to build upon it. He wanted it to have not only a sound present but a promising future. He chose as the recipient of his unusual gift the University of Idaho, which he knew only by reputation, and the barrels have come to rest and wait in the sub-basement of the Library Building.

Thus a man who had never set foot on the University of Idaho campus showed that he had faith in its future. This writer, who has been privileged to study at the University, to serve on its administrative staff, and even to teach a class, also has faith. He has faith that the many young travelers destined to pass this way in the years to come will be guided to a better life by a beacon of knowledge, bright and warm.