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## Interview no. 68

Howard Quinn

Mary K. Quinn

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UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

INSTITUTE OF ORAL HISTORY

INTERVIEWEE: Howard and Mary K. Quinn  
INTERVIEWER: David Salazar and Mildred Torok  
PROJECT: History of UTEP  
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BIOGRAPHICAL SYNOPSIS OF INTERVIEWEE:

Former professors at UTEP.

SUMMARY OF INTERVIEW:

Early days of the College of Mines; former faculty members, administrators, and students; the Mexican Revolution.

1 3/4 hours (3 3/4 tape speed); 45 pages.

S: What we'll do is this: We'll start with the real basics like where you were born and when, and a little bit about your parents.

MQ: Mine?

S: Yes.

MQ: Oh, that's simple. I was born in El Paso on May 22, 1900. My father came here in about 1883. He came out here a sick man; he came for his health. I think he thought it was a God-forsaken looking country--no trees. He came from Mississippi, and, of course, it was green and pretty /there/. Then he got better and came back into El Paso. He was a pharmacist, trained in Hotel Dieu Pharmacy in New Orleans. He went to work for the Rio Grande Pharmacy. My mother came out here to teach school in 1892. They met out here and married and settled down and lived very happily. At least I guess they did.

HQ: Their only misfortune was that they had four girls and no boys! (Laughter)

MQ: And no boys. But we thought that this was such a commentary on this country because it was bare and everything: The first money my father was able to save, he put in a savings bank so that he could be taken back to Mississippi to be buried. When my older sister was born, he took the money out and never put any more in to be buried anywhere else. This was home.

There were four daughters. I'm the second one. Elizabeth is two years older than I am (you know about Elizabeth, she was at the Public Library for years), then me, then Anne (who taught at El Paso High). Then my sister Charlee, the youngest one, was the one that went into the WACS and did so exceptionally well. She died about four years ago.

S: You say she did exceptionally well?

MQ: Yes. She got to be a lieutenant colonel. That was as far as they went. That's pretty good.

S: Yes, very good.

MQ: She has a very interesting experience, I think, first and last. The one to talk to about her is Anne, because they were closer together. She was stationed in the South Pacific and was also stationed in Washington, and she rose as high as they were able to rise at the time. She was in command, I think, of the Fourth Army. I'm not sure, but I think that was the division. As I say, get that from Anne, because Anne knows it all. Charlee went in in the first class of the WACS.

HQ: That was before Women's Lib.

T: Yes. I think she did pretty well in spite of Women's Lib. (Laughter)

MQ: She was, I think, probably the cleverest in the family.

HQ: Oh, hell's bells, Mary.

MQ: Oh, I really think so. She really was a very interesting person.

Then Anne taught at El Paso High all those years, and she taught Math. She must have been an awfully good teacher, because students keep turning up that had her. But the only one that liked her were the good students; she just made them learn it! But she did this sort of thing: The days it snowed, those days everybody could go to the window and look out all that they wanted to, which, I think, shows an understanding teacher.

Let's come back to my mother. My mother taught out here when the town was about so big. She taught at the Central School. She must have been a very extraordinary teacher, because up until the time she died, these old, old men kept turning up and saying, "How are you?" And

Mrs. McAfee (do you remember Mr. McAfee, President of the First National Bank and then Chairman of the Board), Lulu McAfee went to school to my mother, and to the day Mrs. McAfee died, she always spoke of my mother as Miss Word.

T: Was that her maiden name?

MQ: That was her maiden name. She taught out here. My mother came out here and taught in the schools here, and there are still people around who went to school to her. Mrs. Rheinstein, my neighbor downstairs, is one of them. And then the four of us went to El Paso High and graduated from El Paso High. Anne and Charlee and I all came back and taught at El Paso High--taught Math. Then I went on out to the College and taught 40 years. Elizabeth never taught; she was a librarian. And, by the time you count up the people who went to school to Mother, the people that went to school with us (four of us stretched out over a period of years), and then the ones that went to school to us, it covers an awfully large section of town.

T: And your father's name was K-E-L-L-Y?

MQ: Yes. His name was Charles Edgar Kelly, but he was always called Henry Kelly.

T: Is there a story behind that?

MQ: The story, as I understand it, was that it was Dr. Justice (who was one of the pioneer doctors here) who called Papa "Henry." (Incidentally, his daughter lives here.) Why? Nobody knows. And it caught on and so everybody else called him Henry Kelly--except that Dr. Justice, the last few years of his life, very carefully called him "Charlie." Henry was a nickname that just happened to hit, and that was it. Isn't it funny?

T: It is funny.

MQ: And there's no accounting for it at all. Various people turn up and they say, "You know, I found out why your father was called Henry Kelly." Well, if they found out, it was something he didn't know.

T: When did your father pass away?

MQ: 1932 or 1933. I couldn't tell you exactly. It was after we came back from Cambridge. I think it was the summer of '32. I'll look it up for you.

S: You were saying that to your father, El Paso seemed like a very desolate place, very dry. What were your impressions?

HQ: She didn't know anything better than that! (Laughter)

MQ: I was born here; and I didn't see it as being anything except the prettiest place on earth, and I loved the mountains.

S: How do you remember early El Paso?

MQ: Naturally, it was lots of fun. The only thing is, you didn't have very much of what was privacy, because if you misbehaved, somebody phoned home and told your parents before you could get home and explain.

S: So you'd say the community was very close-knit?

MQ: Yes. It really was, very close.

T: That's interesting, about when you misbehaved. Now, you have to be a little more specific about that. Can you think of something you did?

HQ: That generation didn't do /really bad/ things.

MQ: Probably I failed to speak to Mrs. So-and-so, or I may have gone downtown without my hat on. You know, something of that kind.

HQ: That was before we had cooperative dormitories. (Laughter)

T: Did you live in this section of town?

MQ: No. We lived...well, I could have taken you down and shown you where three of us were born, except they tore it down about two weeks ago,

which I thought was very underhanded. My mother and father, when they were married, went to live on the 900 block on Stanton Street. That's the block just below Hotel Dieu. There's an apartment house, and now there's a parking lot; but there was a house there up until about two weeks ago, and that was our home. It was built by Mr. Pew, who was a shoe merchant here many, many years ago. Elizabeth and Anne and I were all born there. And then there were just too many people for the house, so Papa bought a house at the corner of Mesa and Montana, where the Circle K gasoline station [is], right across from the Hervey House. And we moved there [in] January, 1904, I'm sure of that; early in January, 1904. We lived there until 1921, when we moved out to 1617 Arizona Street, where my sisters still live. My mother lived in three houses. She rented one on Stanton Street as a bride and she died in the one on Arizona, and she never lived in but one house in between. But since we were married, [Howard and I] have always lived up in Sunset Heights, because it was so close to the College, you see.

HQ: Half a mile to the College, half a mile to downtown.

T: Did you walk over there? How did you get over to the College?

HQ: I walked over there a lot of times. When I first came out to this country, I didn't have an automobile. People didn't have automobiles like they do now--you know, they've got them coming out of their ears. And I lived in a \_\_\_\_\_ joint down on West Missouri Street, which was certainly loaded with questionable characters of one kind and another...

MO: But you were recommended by the Masonic Lodge to live there.

HQ: Yeah. I was a Mason and I went down to the Masonic Lodge. What was the name of the old guy who worked down there? Vogel.

MO: Yes.

HQ: I used to walk down to Mesa and catch the streetcar up as far as the Women's building, and that was the end of it.

MQ: The Women's Club.

HQ: Yeah. Then there was a sort of a cowpath over the hills from there to the College.

MQ: And you had to walk it.

HQ: I was here three or four years before I had an automobile.

MQ: There were some students that did drive. Now, Howard was at the College a year before I was.

T: 1924, is that right?

MQ: Yes.

T: And then you came in '25?

MQ: Yes. When we retired, they gave us a plaque for 81 years /of service to the University/. The one year was mine and the 80 years was Howard's.

(Laughter) But there were people who drove to the College all right. But there's an arroyo that there's a bridge over and a road now. But the arroyo was just wide open /then/, and if you were real daring, you went right through it. But most people in the faculty weren't that daring and nobody who owned a car was that daring. It was when you had your father's car out, don't you see, that you went through that trough. (Laughter)

HQ: No they're all hollering out there because they have to walk ten feet. We 've ruined a whole generation!

T: Who did?

HQ: Mary; me; people like us.

MQ: You may have ruined them; I liked them.

HQ: All the people that voted for Roosevelt first in 1932, that's when the country started going to the devil.



MQ: I don't think he wants a political speech. (Laughter)

T: Well, that's just added.

MQ: That's free. (Laughter)

HQ: Speedy and I were the only two that had good sense out there. We were both good Republicans.

MQ: Now, I never went to the College /as a student/. My sisters, Anne and Charlee, both went. Anne was there in '21 and '22, I guess, and then she went down to the University /of Texas/. Charlee must have been there in '22. You'd have to look those things up, or they could tell you. But they were students out there in the days when it was a rip-snorting school, a mining school. There were 10 girls. When I went to teach out there, there were 78 students, weren't there? Something like that. We had about three girls that came on Saturday that taught, and one of those was Stanley Bevin. And if she ever gets back here in town when you are still doing this program, /she'd be good to interview/, she's something. She married Justin Foster. There's a whole family of Bevins here, you know.

T: Is he the professor on campus?

MQ: No relation at all. This Bevin here works for the Gas Company, and I think they've had two girls graduate down at the College, two daughters. But I remember /Stanley/ was one that /used to come on Saturdays/, and I think Martha Percy was one. I don't remember the other one that came on Saturdays. Then we had about seven or eight girls that were regular students. Some of them were very popular, and some of them...well, you know how it would be.

HQ: Mary became involved in a controversy recently about that, because they hadn't taught anything but just mining out there up until I don't know

when. We had an old fella that was 10 times as dignified as that whole parcel of professors. If you took the good qualities of all of them and ground them up and made one person, /he'd be/ old Professor Drake, and he taught English.

MQ: Emmett Addis Drake.

T: I've heard of him.

HQ: He looked like an old-fashioned English gentleman, and he had the manners to go with it.

MQ: But he also had a heart of gold. I always think about the year that he taught Economics. He taught English and Economics. You see, the school was little and we knew everybody's business. They didn't have any problems then; they didn't have any civil rights. (Laughter) I remember this boy was due to graduate and he didn't have any money. None of our students had any money in those days. He came to me and he said, "I just don't know what to do, Mrs. Quinn." I guess I was Mrs. Quinn by then. (Maybe I was still Miss Kelly, because I taught down there before we were married.) He said, "I just don't know what to do. I think I'm going to flunk Economics. I've bought by commencement invitations, and I need the presents people will send me." And he said, "My mother will be so embarrassed if I don't graduate. What shall I do? I simply cannot send those invitations out unless I'm sure that I'm going to graduate." And I said, "Well, what's holding you up?" Well, it was Economics. I said, "Well, I don't know. I'll go see what I can do." I sent in to /see/ Mr. Drake and I said, "Mr. Drake, this boy needs to pass Economics and he doesn't think he's going to. He has everything else ready for commencement, and he has his invitations, and he needs the presents. You know he does! Besides that, he'd be so embarrassed. What are his chances of passing?" And of course,

the school was little and the classes were little, and Mr. Drake and I were friends. And Mr. Drake said, "I'll tell you Mary. You go get those invitations and take them into your office, and his list, and you address them. And send him in here to take his final." Now, that is what I consider being an educated gentleman. The amount of Economics you learn or don't learn your last month of school isn't going to make a difference, because it isn't going to change the scheme anyway. But it was that kind of a relationship between students and faculty, and also between faculty members, because I could go to him. That was the part I loved so.

T: Well, it was partly because the school was small and new, wasn't it?

HQ: It was that way all over the country. I went to the University of Minnesota and it was the same way. The profs knew you and you knew them.

MQ: You weren't just numbers or seats, don't you know. Of course, they also chaperoned you a lot, and one thing and another of that kind.

T: I don't think that's too bad an idea, to tell you the truth.

MQ: You mean chaperoning the faculty?

HQ: Don't be so old-fashioned!

MQ: No, I think there's another person /that should be mentioned in/ any history of the college, and that is Mrs. W. H. Seamon. Have you /heard of/ her?

S: No.

MQ: All right, let me tell you about her, then, if I may. W. H. Seamon was head of the Geology Department. You've found that, I'm sure. Mrs. W. H. Seamon was a Campbell from Virginia.

HQ: They traced her line down from George Washington and Martha Washington.

MQ: Yes, and I think it went back to William the Conqueror, and then came to

this country. She was, I think, the most perfect lady I have ever known, in a sweet, gentle way. Her father was killed during the War Between the States when she was about three years old. I remember she told me one time that she just remembered the sadness of the time. Anyhow, she married W. H. Seamon. He was a graduate of where, Howard?

HQ: I suppose he was a graduate of someplace in Virginia.

MQ: Probably it was VMI. Anyhow, they came out to this country when it was really wild. He had taught at Rollo and then he went to work in all those mines.

HQ: He told me that he carried more life insurance than anybody west of the Mississippi at that time. That was down in that tri-state district, you know. The people who had founded El Paso National Bank came out here mining \_\_\_\_\_ from that part of the country.

MQ: He went on the gold rush.

HQ: Yeah!

MQ: I don't think he found any gold.

T: Was this Seamon himself?

MQ: Yeah, W. H.

T: The geologist that was here?

MQ: Yes.

HQ: The metallurgy building, Seamon Hall, is named for him.

MQ: He went on the gold rush, and when he came here to teach, when he got around to the finding of gold in Alaska, he came to class in the clothes he had worn in the gold rush. Howard says they had not been cleaned in between!

HQ: He spoke to women's clubs /in them/! They were so greasy and dirty, they'd stand straight up, you know! And he always carried around these sulfur

matches. I don't know where he got them. They came in blocks, square blocks. You'd break one of them off and I don't remember how he'd light them. He had to have those. They were awful! I never heard of them before. They didn't have any matches like that in Minnesota.

T: This is a question I wanted to ask. What seems to come out is that so many of the early professors that came here, including you two, were well-educated and really had fine backgrounds. What was it about our little mining school out here that attracted you?

HQ: Jobs were scarce, sister! When I came back with a Ph.D. from Harvard, you know what they gave me? A cut of 33 1/3 per cent from my salary.

T: Here?

HQ: Here! I went through all of Jack Berry's correspondence, burned it and destroyed it, and he had a telegram from one of the geologists...

MQ: There were things that should have been destroyed, Mildred. Don't get upset. (Laughter) They were the private papers that \_\_\_\_\_ brought to Howard.

HQ: Yeah. We've got enough floozy and killer stuff that's off-color and innacurate in all the books those authors have published out there. That's another thing. I'd abolish every university press in the country if I had my way, because they're nothing but vanity presses. Nobody would publish most of the junk that's published by university presses.

T: Well, do you think they're innacurate?

HQ: They're piddling. You couldn't sell enough of the books to pay for the typing of the manuscript.

MQ: Of course, the thing that many of us feel is that the outlander comes in and is simply fascinated with the "lady of joy." Well, the lady of joy was everywhere, and they forget people like Mrs. Seamon, who I was going

to tell you about. W. H. came down here, and Mrs. Seamon, with the background of all the Virginia gentility that could possibly be, came /with him/ and she camped all over Mexico and all sorts of places. They came down in a freight car because they wanted to bring the stock with them when they went to Rollo. When she came here, he was a full professor and head of the department. We had no recreation rooms or anything of that kind up there, /so/ Mrs. Seamon opened her home every Sunday night to every student of the college and his girl or her date, and she had a buffet for us. And you felt perfectly free. As Mickey McGee Goodwin said, "If you didn't get taken to Mrs. Seamon's on Sunday night, you weren't anybody." But for years she had that Sunday night open house, and she asked all the students; and she was perfectly charming to them. She taught a lot of us the first manners that some of us had ever been exposed to, I think. She was just perfectly adorable to everybody. We had no medical facilities at the college then at all. You have no idea of the bare bones of the college. Do you remember when Dr. Dale got sick? Well, Dr. Dale was one of the students, and, I guess he had the flu or something; and she took him to her house and he stayed there, and she nursed him till he was well. I think Mrs. Seamon is so much a part of any of the old history of this school.

Well, when we went to the luncheon that the ex-students had last year, they all got up and told about Cap. Cap was colorful and marvelous, and I was very fond of him. And the fact that he always spoke of what I taught as "Mary's fancy work" I never held against him. But they told about it, and finally I couldn't stand it any longer. Everybody else had talked, so I simply got up and said, "Don't you remember Mrs. Seamon?" And there wasn't a man or a woman there who didn't almost cry. She had

meant that much to all of us because, you see, that was an old, old crowd. That's when Mickey said, "Yes, if you didn't get to Mrs. Seamon's, you weren't anybody."

T: When you mentioned Cap, is that Cap Kidd?

MQ: Oh, yes. Now, we never called him Cap.

T: I wonder where he got that name.

HQ: His initials were C. A.

MQ: But Mrs. Seamon was so much a part of the college. And Seamon Hall is named for W. H. Seamon.

S: Well, this is a tribute in itself, having the Flowsheet dedicated to her.

MQ: I think so too; don't you think it was? The Flowsheet was dedicated to her. But, as I say, I don't think any history of the college should ever be written without including Mrs. Seamon. There was no club, no nothing. Do you know which house is Dr. Knapp's?

T: Yes.

MQ: Well, the Seamons built that house so they'd be closer to the college.

HQ: It's poured and \_\_\_\_\_ adobe. And he built nutty things all over like that.

T: Was this Seamon himself?

MQ: Yes, W. H.

HQ: At one time he was Villa's chief geologist and engineer in Mexico when Villa was in charge of Northern Mexico.

PAUSE

HQ: Villa had to have a little money to keep on paying for ammunition.

MQ: And of course, they did make coins out of the copper wires in Chihuahua.

But they also had this other brought in. Howard said that there were two Seamon boys. Reeves was killed in the First World War. And Henry wrote to his mother and said, "I'm all right, but I'm worried about Reeves. His outfit has gone ahead." They weren't in the same outfit. And Reeves was killed. But Henry went back to Mexico, and to hear tales about Mexico during the Revolution just makes your hair stand on end! W. H. had worked for Villa, [so] they were marked people. They had been mining men in Mexico. That was before I came here to teach--about 1910 or 1911.

HQ: Jobs were so scarce. Tell them about old Doc Rodney.

MQ: Doc Rodney graduated from Northwestern and he went down to Charcas.

HQ: Because he couldn't find a place in this country. That was Rush Medical. That was one of the best medical schools in this country.

MQ: That was in the '90s, wasn't it?

HQ: Yeah.

MQ: He was there during the Revolution. They kept driving people out, you know, and they stayed, those that could, to take care of the property, because they felt so responsible for it. Well, Henry Seamon stayed and stayed, and finally there was no chance of keeping the mine open. The people that owned it kept urging Henry to come out. So he took a T-Model Ford and started for the border, cross-country; any roads he could get. He got as far as Chihuahua. By that time, Chihuahua was held by the other crowd. He had to get gas or he couldn't go on. And to get gas, he had to get a permit from the commandant. He went down to wherever the commandant was and asked for a permit for gasoline. The man looked at him and said, "Seamon." And he said, "Yes." And there wasn't anything else. The commandant gave him a permit to buy gas. Henry went right down to the gas station, and instead of having his car filled, he bought a drum



of gas and had it put on the back seat and lit out for the border. The phone rang while he was standing there, but he paid for his gas and left. Afterwards, some years later, he met a man in El Paso; the man was introduced to him. They said, "This is Henry Seamon." And the man looked at him and said, "Not Seamon hijo." And Henry said, "Yes." "I thought you were dead!" And Henry said, "No, I'm not." He was working back in Mexico again, then. [The man] said, "I was in the commandant's office when you came in to get the permit for gas. He gave it to you, he signed it; I saw you drive off and he turned and phoned the gas station and said, "Seamon hijo--shoot him on sight." And that was the telephone call [that Henry had heard]. Henry didn't wait to have [his car] filled. He bought a drum and lit out, and it saved his life. He was full of stories of that kind; you just loved it. And Mrs. Seamon lived through all that with her sons doing that sort of thing, and then being nice to all the rest of us.

T: I want to ask Howard a question. You were raised in Minnesota. What was your first impression of this country?

HQ: I thought it was the most God-forsaken little place on the face of the earth! I'd worked in the mines and that was just plain, damn, miserable hard work, as a laborer; just as a miner. I didn't want any more of that. And this job opened up, so I came down here for a year or so, I thought.

MQ: Well, you taught a year at the University of Illinois.

HQ: Yeah, that's right. It took about a year, though, and I realized this was really quite a pretty good place for geology because you didn't have anything to hide the bedrock structures.

T: So it was interesting in a professional way.

HQ: Yeah.

T: Was there a school of geology here at that time?

MQ: It was the School of Mines.

HQ: Then eventually we gave a major in Geology, Mining, and Metallurgy; those were the three. You could get majors in those particular fields with an Engineer of Mines degree. You see, that's the kind of degree I got from the University of Minnesota--an Engineer of Mines degree with a Geology major. I think probably they used to have those degrees all over the country. You'd get a basic training in English, Math, and things like that, and then you specialized in either Metallurgy or straight Mining, or in Geology. But you were an engineer.

MQ: Yours was economic geology.

T: When you came to the school here, did you come as head of the Geology Department?

HQ: Oh, no. W. H. Seamon was head.

T: Were there just the two of you?

HQ: Yes.

MQ: He came as an adjunct professor. There is no such animal anymore.

HQ: I guess it was for four years, and old Prof Seamon died in his sleep one night. I became head of the department until the time (pardon my English) this bastard Gray showed up. I was 69 before he got enough nerve to move me out!

MQ: Yes, Howard, but Dr. Mac was perfectly charming.

HQ: Oh, yes; I'm not saying that. It's that other tramp we got. I was always surprised when I found him wearing shoes! But he was a boyfriend of the right people at the University. He roomed with the right people.

S: Dr. Quinn, what can you tell us about your family, about your background, before you came over here?

HQ: I grew up in Minnesota; that was civilized country. In those days it wasn't like this wild western place. We didn't have all the floozies, all the gunmen, and things of that kind. Jim Hill was building the great northern railroad across the country at that time. The Crosbys were building, and the Pillsburys, and T. B. Walker. We had museums and a big university in Minneapolis.

MQ: And a horrid climate.

HQ: And almost a million people--3500 at the University.

T: Is that all there were?

HQ: Yeah! They weren't turning them out like a stamping machine, where you just stamp students out the way they mint pennies out.

T: Did you have to work your way through school?

HQ: Well, not exactly. The folks were in the hotel business. We ran a sizeable country hotel--62 rooms. That's bigger than the St. Regis downtown, by far, and better looking than the St. Regis. Dad and Mother finally retired and sold out. The whole pattern of the hotel business in small towns changed after the First World War and roads began to show up. Prior to that time, we had nobody but travelling men.

T: What city was this?

HQ: Melrose. It's seven miles from \_\_\_\_\_ Center. You ought to know about \_\_\_\_\_ Center, because that's one of the few towns that's produced a Nobel Prize winner in Literature; mainly on moonshine rotgut that was sold out north of Melrose. Sinclair'd come up there, you know, and he'd be tight all summer and collect stuff to write these books of his.

S: When did you meet Mrs. Quinn?

HQ: I guess in '25, when she came out to teach.

MQ: No, I met you the spring before.

S: Maybe she was a factor in making you stay here, too?

HQ: No. There just weren't any jobs in those days. It's just like it is now with school teachers. They're a dime a dozen. You might as well just grind them up and make hamburger out of them, like they did with babies in Mexico City when we first went down there. They used to tell us not to eat tamales because they ground up these little children and put them in there.

T: Howard has a great imagination.

MQ: I think he does, too. I always heard they were dogs. (Laughter)

HQ: We spent a whole summer down there in '28 on our honeymoon, and you'd see these little kids, whole crowds of them, huddled in a doorway. Their families had disappeared completely.

MQ: That was a complete revelation to Howard. I had lived here on the border during the Revolution, don't you see? It was the summer that Obregón was assassinated. In our naive Minnesota, in our naive Texas, we couldn't believe that you could assassinate a president-elect and not have a revolution, because we'd always had a revolution before when anything like that happened. It was quite a summer. There were 50 foreigners in Mexico City that year.

HQ: The town had half a million people. Now it's got nine million. When we came out they had a car ahead of the engine and then an armored car in the back of the engine; and then they had troops on top of the coaches. That was the time of the Escobar revolution in 1928.

MQ: I still /remember/ looking out. It was a moonlit night, and when we left Mexico City they marched these troops in. They had sarapes on and pointed

hats. They put those men on top of the coaches. All night long I'd look at the moon and /see/ the shadow of them as the train moved along. And, of course, the train didn't go any faster than 15 or 20 miles an hour, because it couldn't. And it's true, there was something you had to blow up twice before you got to them, but then they could have been machine-gunned right straight off. And when we got to Zacatecas, they got off, because from Zacatecas north it was under control. They turned back around and went on the next one. But as far as I know, they were never shot off from there. But it was all new to us.

HQ: I was the poor guy that had come from Minnesota and had never heard of revolutions.

T: This was an escort of foreigners out of the country?

MQ: No, an escort of the train. Any train, not foreigners.

T: Did that encourage all the Americans to leave?

MQ: The Americans that were encouraged to leave had all gone years before.

T: What were you folks doing down there?

MQ: I was going to summer school.

HQ: Yeah. Mary's crazy about Mexico. A peso was worth 50 cents in those days.

MQ: Yes. It was an opportunity to go to summer school, and so we went down. The thing is, I had grown up here through the Revolution, don't you see, and I'd seen all of this; and it quieted down, so it wasn't bothering me. And I visited Chihuahua after the Revolution. So to me, to have this man come through the train and want to know if you were carrying gold (because you had to carry a certain amount of gold), and then to have him say that if there was any shooting to lie down cross-wise on the train /because/ you're safer, /that wasn't news to me/. Then they'd

pull down all the uppers and look for guns (and there weren't any guns).

I had been down there under those circumstances and it didn't bother me a bit. I forgot that Howard was an outlander!

T: So it really was quite exciting.

HQ: Oh, boy, was it! And you know, we paid the hotel bill every week with silver pesos. I could go down to the bank and get a sack of those things, and a mozo would cart them back to the hotel. There weren't any traveler's cheques or American Express or anything like that in those days.

MQ: And the coins were worth 50 cents.

HQ: And they had that much silver in them, too.

T: While Mary was going to college, what did you do that summer?

HQ: Oh, I puddled around.

MQ: I didn't go to college very hard.

HQ: It rained every afternoon. Mexico's nice. We had a suite. An English couple that really looked mid-Victorian ran the hotel. And we had a sitting room, we had an entry hall, and we had two bedrooms.

MQ: And a balcony.

T: How much did it cost?

HQ: It didn't cost much. I don't remember what it cost. We were by the Alameda, but there was a place that sold cemetery flowers next door.

MQ: Oh, yes. It was the flower market that sells wreaths and things of that kind.

HQ: Wasn't that the summer that Charles Lindberg flew down?

MQ: No, that was the summer that young Carranza was killed. He was their Lindberg.

HQ: He was the outstanding flier of Mexico. I can still remember those enormous wreaths they had displayed down there.

MQ: Out in front of all the shops they had the wreaths, and on them said, "From So-and so." It was just very interesting. His funeral was just so much more moving than Obregón's, which had been the week before.

T: Were there any graduates of both of yours who were well-known, that you could name or indicate?

HQ: When Speedy and I ran that Geology Department, we were in the top 15 schools in the country, as far as enrollment was concerned. You can go back and look through them. I mean the University of California at Berkeley, Stanford, Minnesota, and Harvard; the first 15. And we got between 10 and 15 millionaires that we've turned out, and the kids didn't have a penny when they showed up to go to school here. They made it after they got out.

MQ: And they've been presidents of outstanding companies and things of that kind.

HQ: I think we had by far the best department in the college, in spite of the fact that Tony Berkman had an outstanding department, too. Of course, his was all Pre-Med.

MQ: Well, I think George McBride would be one of our famous students.

HQ: Yes. He's vice president of Freeport Sulfur. Johnny Cain is one of the vice presidents of American Metal. Fred Stuart was a vice president, but he's retired now. He's the one that moved to Tucson from New York. And what was that Smith that was in the Philippines?

MQ: Oh, Charlie Smith. He was the one that hid the gold. It's a gorgeous tale. Who was he working for? Mosier?

HQ: No. What's the guy's name? A German name. And we had brothers here; Crosby.

MQ: Oh, yes, the Crosbys.

HQ: One of them is head of the outfit now. They own one of those international gambling halls in the Bermudas as a subsidiary of this mining company.

T: And he is one of your graduates?

HQ: Why, sure he is!

T: And what's his name?

MQ: Foster Crosby. There were two of them. Foster was the younger one. Carrie Crosby was the one who married Bill Green. The oldest Crosby was before my time.

But this Charlie Smith worked for this firm, and when the Japanese came in and took it, they burned the paper money. That was the reason we had to use two-dollar bills coming back and forth across the border, because there weren't many two-dollar bills. And they knew, then, that it wasn't money that had been stolen from our crowd in the South Pacific and moving in through Mexico. But there was gold money, and Charlie Smith was given the money to go and bury it. He took it out and buried it, then went to join the guerillas in the hills.

T: This was in the Philippines?

HQ: Yes. Oh, we had 10 or 12 boys over there when the war began.

MQ: And many of them rode with the guerillas.

HQ: Most of them succeeded in getting out.

MQ: He stayed with them and finally got out. And then, he came back. And when it was over he was to go find the gold. I thought this was awfully smart: He had buried it under a sugar refinery and set the refinery on fire. And the smell of the melted sugar into the earth marked the spot.

How about Lee Cherry Smith?

HQ: He practically wound up as the chief geologist of a large oil company. He was right next to the top.



MQ: And then there's Hugh McGaw; of course he is my love. I think he is the funniest man I know. He retired as a full colonel. He has been Outstanding Ex. This was one of the nicest boys to ever have on campus: Peewee Dewitt. He was as big as that. He was a musician and Howard used to take him on field trips. And he said that on a camping trip, there was nobody like Peewee. They'd take him down to...

HQ: Those God-forsaken places, you know. And we'd have trouble with students over the food, and every other thing. The living accommodations were bad. It was sort of like the performance here now, but they really had cause to complain. But Peewee kept them happy.

MQ: And he would play his guitar and get them to singing and everything. Then we had a Hard Luck Dance every year. And Peewee was the one that went to the Hard Luck Dance looking like he'd had hard luck, but he added to it. And, as I say, this man was enormous, Mildred. And, adding to it, he had cut his shoe and colored his foot, and it looked like a railroad train had run over his foot. They went to the place where everybody who had money enough to go somewhere went, and that was The Modern. It was in the basement of the Mills Building. It had a tile floor made out of little round bathroom-like tile, and you ached to the top of your head after you'd danced on it all night. But Peewee and his crowd came in, and Peewee crossed his foot that way, and one of the debutantes in El Paso looked over and saw his foot and fainted! Oh, and everybody was so pleased! (Laughter)

Now, that is the sort of thing, David, that I remember about the school, and I simply loved it. But, you can see, it isn't what everybody would remember, except someone who just loved them.

HQ: And then, of course, we had Sal Trevino.

MQ: Yes, he went to school to us.

HQ: Not when Mildred was here.

MQ: No, he was gone before Mildred was here.

HQ: He was in charge of one of the bureaus down in Mexico. His father was one of the generals in the Revolution.

MQ: He walked from Mexico City.

HQ: Yeah. He was on the "proscribed" list at one time. Sal told me that the old man walked all the way from Mexico City to the border, but he just moved at night. And Sal was already a millionaire. If you've got the right relatives in Mexico, that helps. (Laughter)

MQ: Well, his uncle was President. But Sal was an awful nice kid.

HQ: Yeah. When Mary would go to Mexico City by herself, I'd always write Sal to keep an eye on her.

MQ: That used to drive Sal just plain, ordinary crazy, because Howard would write and say, "Now, Mary is going to Mexico. Would you kind of keep an eye on her?" Well, Sal was working for the government, his uncle was President, and he was in charge of one of the bureaus. And he came to see me, and he took me to lunch. I said, "Now, I am going down to Capactla. Have you been down there?" He said, "I don't know that part of the state."

HQ: Nobody else does, either. There are no roads into it!

MQ: Finally, he wrote to Howard and said, "I'm sure she's down here somewhere, but I can't find her."

T: So he couldn't keep track of you, then?

MQ: No.

HQ: That's where all the vanilla comes from in Mexico. It's impossible to get in. It's south of the oil field country down there. Where did that

plane finally land that you went out on? What's that oil town down there along the gulf? Can you remember the name of the town?

MQ: Not at the moment. Don't expose my senility.

HQ: It's a big oil town--it was in those days, you know. The English came in there and opened up those enormous fissures.

T: Is Trevino still living?

MQ: Oh, Heavens yes! The one that's dead is Tres Palacios.

T: Dr. Quinn, you said earlier that the College of Mines was at one time among the top 15 mining colleges in the country.

HQ: No, not mining colleges; colleges in general. There are 300 and some schools in this country that offer majors in Geology, and I'm talking now about enrollment, the graduating classes at the undergraduate level. For years this school was among the top 15 in terms of undergraduate students that were turned out.

T: What years would that encompass?

HQ: I suppose mainly the years at the close of the war and after the war, when we had a great many students. Before the Second World War we just had a handful of students. When I came down to teach, we had 78 students in the whole place and some of them were taking metallurgy, some mining, and some geology. We had eight girls in that crowd. They were just taking liberal arts, which is certainly a misnomer.

T: Can you enlarge a little on that statement about the top 15 colleges?

HQ: Not particularly. The record's contained in a publication that was gotten out in Washington each year. I can't remember who got it out, but it gives the number of students, undergraduate students that were graduating. That's where I got it. So, I think it's official, all right. But this, of course, was the time when we had that tremendous oil boom. You remember one year we graduated, Speedy and I, over 50 undergraduates in that department.

T: Because of the oil boom?

HQ: Partly that, yeah, and partly because we had so many students that came into the college and became interested in geology.

T: How do you account for the decrease in interest in geology?

HQ: Most of the oil companies, the big oil companies, have eaten up the little

ones, and in consequence there aren't the number of jobs anymore. Midland and Houston used to be the centers of the oil industry. Houston still is, and Denver is now. There's just a handful left in Midland. This is all a matter of economics. I see they expect to ration gas before the summer's over.

T: Do you believe it will come to pass?

HQ: Why, it can't help it. Suppose you have \$10,000 in the savings bank, and you're going to have to spend the rest of your life living on it. If you spend it all tomorrow, what are you going to do?

T: You mean there just isn't that much gas left?

HQ: No, of course there isn't. Just as there isn't that much water, which is more of a problem as far as El Paso is concerned. But nobody seems to care about that. What they ought to do is prohibit any vegetation in the town at all and discontinue all these swimming pools. Those are the most idiotic things on the face of the earth.

T: Because they take too much water?

HQ: Yes. Might as well let the kids smoke marijuana or heroin or anything else.

MQ: Or drown them.

HQ: Yeah.

T: Well, you certainly gave a very good answer to that one, because I don't believe any of that has appeared in any publications.

HQ: No, they're scared to death. You know, we've been trying down here at the Chamber of Commerce to bring business into town for years. Well, most of these big businesses need water, and they come down, look the place over, and that's it. There's plenty of labor here, and reasonably priced labor.

T: What kind of industry did you mean?

HQ: Practically any kind of industry: The chemical industry. Except making pants. I guess they don't need much water for that. That's about the only thing we've got in industry.

MQ: Don't you remember the year they were going to have a wool washing plant here?

T: I don't remember that.

MQ: We didn't have it, but there was all this furor about it. That takes an indefinite amount of water.

HQ: One time we had \_\_\_\_\_ here--he had some position in the county--who said El Paso needn't worry about its water supply, we could just dig a ditch from Lake Superior. And of course, it never occurred to him that that was about 300 feet above sea level, and El Paso's 3600. He was just going to have a miracle performed and the water was just going to run uphill here. Honest, the more we educated people, the more idiots we wind up with!

MQ: Somebody pointed it out to him, and he said, "Oh, no." Here was the map, and "There's Lake Superior on the top and here is El Paso down here." Honestly, he did, and it was in the newspaper.

HQ: So don't mention his name. I guess the old boy's dead anyway. But you can't antagonize the garden clubs, you know. My God, you might as well go out and shoot yourself!

T: What did you particularly like about this college in the early days?

HQ: Well, in the real early days, I suppose it was that we had a congenial group of students. And in those days, jobs were few and far between, as I've told you before. Like that piece yesterday about these poor kids, half-witted, you know; they're complaining because the minority groups

haven't any of these \$10,00 jobs. I suppose they mean scrub women and things like that. It's all been in the paper and on TV. Imagine, \$10,000 a year. I think they ought to shut down about 90 per cent of those places. If I had my way, I'd penalize anybody that had more than four children, preferably more than two.

T: Cut down on the population?

HQ: Yes. You probably didn't read that piece about Juárez, where 43 per cent of the population (there's one-half million people over there) are under 14. The non-working group runs I think between 25 per cent and 50 per cent; and we'd just die off if 5 per cent of our people aren't working!

T: Were the early facilities up here at the campus adequate for teaching geology?

HQ: Oh, yes, more so than in most schools. We've got geology right out a door, exposed at the surface of the earth.

MQ: You didn't have the equipment--microscopes and that kind of thing--but the geology was walking in the window.

T: And that's one of the reasons why this is a particularly famous geology school?

HQ: Yeah. Well, that was one of the reasons, I suppose. We didn't have many students in the early days. The Big Ten in the Middle West, the University of California at Berkeley, and the Colorado School of Mines, those were the famous mining schools. And Columbia University, first, and M.I.T. At one time, practically everybody that had a major position with the AS&R Company was a graduate of M.I.T. They didn't have much more. You know, when I was at Harvard, we had sort of an interlocking arrangement. You paid your fees over at Harvard and you could go over to M.I.T. and take anything you wanted. I took some courses over there

under old Doc \_\_\_\_\_, who was internationally famous.

T: How did you first hear about the school out here?

HQ: God only knows! (Laughter)

MQ: Well, Howard taught one year at the University of Illinois filling in for someone who was on leave.

S: Earlier we had been talking about the students that had graduated and that you knew. One in particular was Charlie Steen.\*

MQ: Charlie Steen went to the College. He came from down the road somewhere, down around Houston. He was, I think, without exception one of the most... not lawless, but bolshevik--that approach.

HQ: Ultra-liberal.

MQ: Ultra-liberal. When we had Sadie Hawkins Day, he came in a Union suit, remember?

HQ: Yeah; underwear.

MQ: Yeah. Charlie, I understand, complained about the food every day, but maybe it was only every other day. But he lived in the dormitory and he complained about the food. Then when it came to commencement, why, he decided that instead of going to the president's reception, he would work as a waiter. They paid the waiters \$2.50 or something like that for the afternoon. So instead of going as a guest, he was a waiter. Then he was 4-F, which of course was embarrassing, there's no doubt about that. He went to South America and worked down there in the jungle and brought back the most revolting pictures I've ever seen of people eating monkeys, because monkey hands look just like human hands. Charlie didn't make very much money in those days, but he, from the very first, sent money back to the college without any solicitations or

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\*Charlie Steen was the man who discovered uranium deposits in Utah and became a multi-millionaire overnight.



anything. I've always thought that was very, very much to his credit.

He's blown his top two or three times, and he's said some things I wish he hadn't. That speech he made when he was Outstanding Ex, I thought was in poor taste. I agreed with some of it, but I thought it was in very poor taste. But he has given to my certain knowledge \$20,000 anonymously to the college; he gave some of the first big gifts. And that I'm all for. But I think back to the days when the money that Charlie sent back for scholarships and so on really meant something.

HQ: That was long before he hit uranium.

MQ: Oh, yes, that's when he was still in South America. Then he came back and worked for some oil companies and he gave them the benefit of his advice. Apparently, the chief geologist doesn't much care for the advice from the even very able geologists, and they fired him. Well, by that time he had a wife, and what? Three little boys?

HQ: Yes, I guess so.

MQ: Three or four little boys. And he had this prospecting bug. He prospected in Canada and didn't find anything, and then he went up here to Utah. And he got down to absolutely starvation. I don't think there's any doubt about that. They say that the children trapped jack rabbits and they lived on them that year, and I'm pretty sure that's true. And the way I got involved /goes back a long way to when I was fired/.

HQ: They didn't have Women's Lib in those days; none of that foolishness.

T: How did you get fired?

MQ: /The Texas legislature/ passed a law...

HQ: Oh, she could have worked, but they wouldn't have paid her.

MQ: I don't know whether they'd have let me work. Before we were married, you see, we were both on the staff. We had permission in writing from the

Regents to marry and continue to teach. Then the legislature, many years later (when I was a much better teacher, had better training and what have you) passed a law that a man and his wife could not both draw pay from the state.

T: Is that the nepotism...?

MQ: Well, no; it just simply was pure spite.

HQ: It didn't make any difference whether you were... Nepotism applies only when you're working together in the same division department.

MQ: And blood kin, too.

HQ: Well, it's more particularly the same department, as far as the University is concerned.

MQ: The law was aimed at a man at A&M. We know who it was aimed at. It was slipped through when the legislature was away one weekend, and then when the bill came out, here this was, that a man and his wife couldn't both work. President Wiggins was president at the time, and I always thought he didn't play quite fair there. When he saw me, he said, "Mary, you won't be with us for a couple of years," or something of that kind. I don't know exactly how he worded it. He didn't say, "Are you or Howard going to stay?" He made it very plain he was keeping Howard and I could do anything I pleased. He kept Mr. Ball and Mrs. Ball, well-known in the town.

Well, I decided I didn't want to teach in the city schools; they wouldn't pay me enough; so I sold life insurance. And among the people that I sold life insurance to was Charlie Steen. That was just fine; and it was a very small policy, extremely small. But it was all he could afford, and I was pleased to get it, goodness knows. And after he got down to absolute starvation, he let his policy lapse. He went on loan, you know, as they do. I was

teaching, I guess, by that time again, because it was only two years that I was fired. They hired me back after that, and the next bill didn't carry this provision. So I got notice that Charlie's policy was going to lapse. And I kept thinking of LM, his wife whom I had met, and these little boys. I thought, "I simply can't let that happen." And I paid it, paid the premium. I paid one quarter, and by the time that quarter was up, that three months, Levidia came in and he was a millionaire. So, he paid the company back and he sent me some stock.

Now, he did not mean the stock for me. He was sending it to Howard, but he knew Howard wouldn't take it. So when I got the stock and showed it to Howard, Howard said, "Well, send it back to him." So I wrote Charlie a note and told him I appreciated it and sent it back to him. And he wrote me one of the nicest letters I've ever had. He said, "Now, don't be foolish. You paid my policy when that money meant a lot to me. Peace of mind at night, to me, is what it meant." And he said, "Doc has taught hundreds of knuckleheads, and one of them has finally come through. For goodness sake, let us repay it." And so I kept it. That's my story of Charlie Steen. And he always comes to see us and I'm extremely fond of him.

HQ: And he's ultra-conservative.

MQ: Oh, my goodness. He's the only person I have ever known... Now, I have known rich people; please. In fact, I went to school with a good many of them. But Charlie Steen is the only person I have ever known that, when he was in the money (and he will be again) spoke of himself as a wealthy American. He would say that on the boat going to Europe, these people were so glad to meet him; they never met a wealthy American before. And I thought how much fun to have money and love it that way, don't you think so? I wasn't the only one Charlie paid off. Everybody that had ever

helped him, everybody that had ever grubstaked him, he divided with them.

T: Was that a considerable amount of money, Mrs. Quinn?

HQ: It was to us, but it wasn't really.

MQ: It was to us. They story that it was \$150,000 is not true.

HQ: The fellow that loaned Charlie the money to develop the mine was with, I think, the Chicago Bridge and Iron Company. He had worked for them summers, and they got crossed up after Charlie got this thing developed. I think Charlie gave him \$5 million for his share.

MQ: Bought him out.

T: That's talking money, isn't it?

MQ: That's talking money. I heard on campus that I had gotten \$150,000, but that's not true. I didn't even get a small fraction of it; but it was, to us, a good deal of money. In addition to that, it was such a perfectly charming thing for anybody to do.

T: Shows real gratitude. You say that Charlie Steen is going to make it again?

MQ: Yes.

T: Have you any basis for that?

MQ: Yes. If he'll only stop fighting. You see, what's holding him up is the income tax deal. And they, as I understand it, have offered to settle and Charlie wants them to settle for less. And Charlie is a little outspoken.

HQ: Unfortunately.

MQ: Unfortunately.

HQ: If you've ever mixed with bureaucrats, and you certainly have, because the whole administration is nothing but that up at the college, you know you can't say anything that hurts their particular thing.

MQ: I don't think he will ever be the millionaire again that he was. But you

ought to be able to get along on a couple of million, if you were down to the stage they were in /at one time/. The thing that I admire about Charlie and his wife ML was that they had the nerve to starve on the faith that they'd get it. I don't know whether he would say it now, but Charlie himself has told us that he gave himself one more winter, and if it didn't come in, he'd go back to regular work. That's my story about Charlie Steen. But I keep on thinking of the money he used to send back when he didn't have very much, you know.

HQ: He went down to work in Bolivia. Of course, the altitude was much too great down there.

T: How old a man is he now?

HQ: Oh, I don't know. He graduated in what, '44?

MQ: Something like that.

HQ: I suppose he was about 22 or 23 then.

MQ: I think he was fairly old for his class, so I really don't know. I'll ask him the next time he comes by.

HQ: It's out there in the Registrar's Office.

S: Getting back to the College, Mrs. Quinn, what courses did you first teach when you were there?

MQ: Well, I tell you, you've heard about these people in the colleges that have a chair? Well, I had a sofa. (Chuckles) I taught American history, I taught ancient history, I taught psychology, I taught sociology, and I believe there was one other history course. Let's put it this way: I don't know what I taught, but those were the classes I held.

S: You graduated from Wellesley.

MQ: In '22.

S: In comparison, would you say that the College of Mines was pretty primitive?

HQ: I'm afraid so!

MQ: No, I couldn't say that; because, you see, I'm a native, and El Paso wasn't my idea of a primitive place. I was just real surprised when I saw what Boston was like. I have a young friend who went from Radcliffe to the University of New Mexico (this is within the last 10 years), and she wrote me and said, "Mrs. Quinn, the academic atmosphere is very different."

S: To put it mildly. (Chuckles)

HQ: I know one thing. After you'd lived a couple of years close to Boston, you knew what the Irish did politically. I didn't want anything to do with the Kennedy family.

MQ: Now, Howard, you didn't go to Wellesley, you went where the Kennedys went. Yes, sir.

T: Would you say that the townspeople were interested in the college?

MQ: I never have been quite sure whether they were or not. Would you say the townspeople were interested in the college in the days when I started?

HQ: There was a group of women that were. That was about all.

MQ: That was the Women's Auxiliary.

HQ: Of course, we always had that small group that was interested in athletics.

MQ: But you see, I can't tell you any of that because I really don't know. I taught two years at El Paso High, and by the time I taught out at the college, my father had been Regent and had served a complete term as Regent. So that's entirely different; I can't be objective about it all. My two younger sisters had both gone to school out there, and then had gone on to the University of Texas. So I just don't think I can judge it.

S: Well, we can say that your field was sociology.

MQ: Well, it was eventually, but originally what I had intended to teach was

English. But Mr. Drake wanted to teach the English; so he taught the English and so I taught the history. And then from there I taught history and sociology, more history than sociology, until the school got big enough, then I taught sociology.

S: Later on it branched off into its own department?

MQ: It was a separate department only one year before I retired. Originally it was History, Government, and Sociology [all] in one group. And then they began to divide it off. I think it was only one year that I was in a separate department, certainly not more than two years.

S: There was one course you taught which was Family Life and Marriage.

MQ: Yes, I taught Family Life and Marriage.

S: Could you say anything about that?

MQ: I had more fun in it than almost anything I ever taught. And, I keep assuring myself, I don't think I did any harm. There are two courses that I taught out there that I loved better than any. One of them was Comparative Cultures, United States and Mexico. Now are the days when there are people starving for Mexican courses; I think of the days when I used to have to go around and invite them in, because I thought it was a disgrace for people to grow up on the border and not know the two countries. The other thing was, I thought it was a disgrace that a number of Americans of Mexican descent had no pride in their background. And I don't mean get out and demonstrate, that's not my idea of pride. But they didn't know. And so I just adored that course. That was my love.

T: Was it appreciated, Mary?

MQ: Oh, yes. We had an awfully good time. At least I did. You know, I was always a little afraid my paycheck would come with an amusement

tax on it! (Laughter) It never did, but I always thought someday it might.

And then the other one was, of course, in marriage and family living. It was open originally to sophomores without prerequisite except sophomore standing, and it was not the juicy course that you think. It was intended to teach people to act like human beings in a marriage. I enjoyed it and the students found it very practical. At least, that was the reaction. I always think of two boys that came up at the end of the first semester of the first year I taught it, and they said, "We enjoyed your course." I always distrust people who tell me that. And I said, "You did?" One of them said, "Mrs. Quinn, I think we ought to tell you the truth. We took that course because we found a woman teaching the course, a mixed course in marriage and family living, and we thought we could give you a hard time. It wasn't that kind of a course at all, and it was a practical course."

I taught then to budget. And somebody asked, "How did you teach them to budget?" Well, it was very simple. To make up a budget, you'd say, "Well, food will cost so much." Well, they had to make up menus for two weeks, and they had to go to the grocery store and figure out how much it would cost. And really, I don't know that I broke up many romances, but I sure made some of them pause. I tried to make it just as practical as I could. But then, of course, there are always a few people that take it because they think it's going to be a course in sex.

HQ: They're just concerned about rolling around in the hay!

MQ: There are always a few like that. Now, I'm told I have a nasty tongue, and that it cuts. This is not true. I never did have much trouble with



/my students/ that way. But as far as dealing with the sex side of it, I usually did it in conferences, and you signed up. Somebody told me one time they thought I ought to have mixed conferences. Well, I had a mixed class, goodness knows. And it finally got to the point where they were really quite frank with each other, without being vulgar, because they didn't want to have their heads taken off. And I had the conferences separate because the boy--and it's true of boys, too, or was then; I don't know what it is now--or the girl that really had a question, they're not going to ask in class, they're not going to ask in a mixed group. They're only going to ask either you personally, or they are going to ask in a small group. And I think we got a great many things straight. I know they know everything now, but you have no idea how ignorant they were.

I always think of the boy (I was always fond of various ones) that came to me and said, "You know, Mrs. Quinn, I'm going to be married." And I said, "I know. I know the girl, and she's darling." And he said, "I want to ask you something before the wedding." I said, "I probably won't know the answer, but I'm more than willing to have you come and ask me anything." He said, "Well, I'd like to make an appointment with you." "All right." We made the appointment and he came in the afternoon. Just the two of us, because it was getting quite personal, so he said. And I said, "I may not know, because there are a lot of things I don't know." Like I had the phone ring one night /and a young man asked me/ if I thought he'd damaged a girl. This was about 11:00 at night. (Laughter) But this other boy, I said, "If I don't know and if I can't answer, I'll send you to somebody who can." And I always had a doctor talk to the class all together. I had Branch Craig, and he was awfully

good. He used a recorder to protect himself, because people would say he said thus and so, which he had not. Anyway the boy came to the conference and I turned white-haired wondering what under the sun he wanted to know. So we sat and visited, and finally I said, "There was something you wanted to know before you married. Now, what was it?" And he said, "I'll tell you, Mrs. Quinn. When do I polish the bottoms of my shoes? I know I kneel down before the minister, and they can see the bottom of my shoes. When do I polish them so they look black?" That was the question, and it was driving him frantic, because he didn't want to embarrass anybody. But he sure had me going in circles. And so I assured him when to do it and that was perfectly all right. He married and lived happily ever after; he really did.

HQ: When Mary was teaching that course, why, one of the local Methodist ministers phoned her and wanted to make an appointment to talk to her about something.

MQ: He phoned on a Saturday afternoon and he said, "May I come see you, Mrs. Quinn?" And I said, "Yes, indeed, I'll be in my office Monday." He said, "No, I can't wait until Monday. Can I come see you this afternoon? I want to talk to you about your marriage course." I began to wonder what under the sun I had said. I went in and told Howard, and Howard said, "What have you said this time?" Well, I didn't know either, so we waited. And the minister had said he'd like to come over right away, and he came in a short time. And Howard, bless his heart, sat in the study, out of sight, so I guess if the man hit me, he'd come and save me. So, he visited a little bit and he said, "You know, Mrs. Quinn, I was wondering if you would give a series from your marriage course at my church on Sunday nights."

S: That was quite a compliment.

MQ: It was quite a compliment and it saved a great deal of wear and tear on me.

HQ: Speedy Nelson didn't think much of that.

MQ: No; Speedy was a Methodist. Cousin Charlie didn't either. I thought cousin Charlie was going to quit.

HQ: He's a Methodist and gave quite a lot to this local Methodist Church.

MQ: And they didn't think that a women should be asked. It was a sort of Sunday School group sort of thing.

HQ: Especially not a member of that particular sect.

MQ: But it was a very satisfactory course. It really was.

T: You didn't have any opposition from the administration on that course, did you?

MQ: No, I don't think so. I remember going down the hall one day walking along after I had a conference, and having one of the members of the department say, "Did I hear what you said to that girl?" As I went into my office, I said, "I don't know. Come in." And he said, "I'm sure I heard you discussing birth control with her." And I said, "I'm sure you did; somebody's got to tell them. She asked." No, there was never any opposition. At one time, one of the presidents wanted to take the course away from me and put it in the Philosophy Department. And the man who was teaching philosophy, Dr. Crawford, was very much embarrassed because the course had been established, had been pioneered and established, and it was fairly popular. I wouldn't take more than a certain number because they've got to be able to talk, it's that kind of a course, plus me being up here and telling what I think. Dr. Elkins wanted to give it to Dr. Crawford, and I resented it very bitterly because I had pioneered the course. And Dr.

Crawford is a philosopher and an idealist, and Mary Quinn is practical and I just didn't... But President Elkins went to greener pastures to the University of Maryland and so Dr. Crawford came to me and said, "I'm not taking that course, Mrs. Quinn; because when all's said and done, marriage and family living, the way you teach it, is not philosophy, it's sociology." That's the only thing I ever had along that line.

I never had any of the parents phone me and tell me that I was a dirty old woman, and I've had many people wonder why so many of them came and wept down my neck. Because one girl said, "You go on with all this foolishness, and then in your last lecture you tell them what you really think marriage really amounts to." The only thing was, I do believe that love is immortal, and the reason you must marry somebody that is fitted for you, that can hold together, is because, especially for the woman, divorce is emotional bankruptcy. It takes so long to get over it. And I always think that when you marry, and you give a pledge to fate, somebody's going to have to redeem it; you're not going to come out even. And the one that's left is going to have to pay for the happiness you had. But I told them then, and I still think that anyone who has been happily married, and who has loved as people should who are happily married, I don't think they're ever alone. I think they'll be lonely, I don't think there's any avoiding that; but they will never be alone. And that was the philosophy in that course. It was very simple.

T: That's beautiful.

MQ: And really, it's amazing how many of them will turn up and say, "You told me to push the toothpaste from the bottom, not from the middle!" Because women grab toothpaste from the middle and that makes many men very unhappy. And it's just as easy to learn to do it this way. And that sort

of thing. So, it was my favorite course, I guess.

T: Well, I think that's a marvelous explanation of it.

S: And it's good that we're getting it straight for the record.

MQ: Because I know people took it thinking it was going to be just a snap. And I always loved those two who said, "When we took it we were going to give you a hard time." They were both pre-meds, and one of them is now my doctor. We went to see him one night--Howard had a nosebleed--and he said, "You know, Mrs. Quinn, I think of you often." I thought, "You do?" And he said, "Yes. I never hear the word 'ecology' that I don't think of you. You asked on the final to describe the ecology of crime. I didn't know what ecology meant!"

T: A lady before her time, I would say.

MQ: I don't know if I appreciate the "lady!" You can see what fun it was, David.

Pause

T: How do you account for so many of our geology graduates going on to really quite famous lives?

MQ: Well, they were just unusually fine men. The night the old boys had a party for Howard when Howard retired, they didn't ask anybody that didn't go to shcool to him, except me. And when they said all the nice things they could say, Howard got up and he said, "Well, really, we don't deserve any credit. Speedy and I had the finest men that ever went to any school, any time."

I know somebody else you should find out something about--Ruth Auger. Have you heard of her? Well, she was one of the most colorful mortals we ever had, an artist. She was the registrar. And I think she may have been the first registrar, I'm not sure. But she was quite a character. I

think you might find her rather interesting. She left the school a long, long time ago and she is now dead. She came down here for her health. I can still /remember/ there was a phone in her office. And Cap, that's Dean Kidd (there wasn't but one Cap; the other one was Dean Puckett), Cap's office was down here on the other side of the stairwell, in the main building. Ruth Auger would step out here and she would scream, "Cap, Cap, someone wants you on the phone!" Cap would take down his extension and talk on the phone. It never occurred to anybody, apparently, to invest the money to have a buzzer from place to place, or two phones.

HQ: Now you go into one of those offices and they're just surrounded with phones. It's taxpayers' blood money.

MQ: And the other thing I remember about Ruth Auger too was when I was in her office one day and this boy came in and put down ten dollars. And she said, "Now just a minute," and she got out a little index card and marked it off. He was paying his tuition, piecemeal, as the semester went along. The school was small enough, and she knew he would pay eventually. And I don't guess anybody /asked her to account for the tuition until the end of the year, and at the end of the year his tuition was paid. It's a different age. My, it was fun!

HQ: She finally took up painting and art.

MQ: Well, she was an artist.

HQ: Yeah, primarily.

MQ: I think her health got better, and the MYA came along about that time and she was paid by the government to paint a mural in Oklahoma, in a post office.

HQ: Like the one Tom Lea painted there in the Federal Building.

Pause

S: In adding to the Quinns' interview, Mrs. Quinn explained how The Prospector and The Flowsheet obtained their names. Since the University at that time was the College of Mines and Metallurgy, The Prospector and The Flowsheet went right along those lines. The Prospector would go out and obtain news as a prospector would go out and obtain minerals. As far as The Flowsheet, the flowsheet of mining is a process by which impurities are taken out of the minerals that they are to obtain. In the sense for the annual, all the events were exposed in the end product, being the total events of the year.