

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW
WITH
SAMUEL CRASS HASTINGS

18 JULY 1995

MURFREESBORO, TENNESSEE

INTERVIEWED BY REGINA FORSYTHE
FOR THE Q. M. SMITH ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
INTERVIEW #QMS.028

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Albert Gore". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

ALBERT GORE RESEARCH CENTER

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT



**ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW WITH
SAMUEL CRASS HASTINGS**

Q. M. SMITH ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW #QMS.028

FORSYTHE: This tape is designated as QMS.1995.28 and will be part of the Q. M. Smith Collection. Now we are in the Gore Research Center, Room 111 of the Ned McWerter Learning Resource Center. Tell me about the farm manager.

HASTINGS: This is Sam C. Hastings. I was talking about the farm manager back when I was a youngster here at the old teachers' college. This was back before I had driven, even a Model T Ford or any kind of a car. I was too young then. Mr. Byer was out with my dad, and we were talking. Then he turned to me and said, "Sam, I need to go up to the dairy barn. How about you driving me up there?" I said, "Well, I haven't driven." "Oh, you can do it. Come on. I can't drive myself, but you can drive me." We got in, and I cranked up the old Model T truck with one seat. Mr. Byer took hold of the xxx post there, and I started off. We really went all the way to the dairy barn, and he was holding on for his life. I don't know how fast I was going, but we made it in pretty good time and without mishap. We returned to where my dad was and left the truck there for him to use later. We'd think about that and get some good laughs about it.

FORSYTHE: You told me you bought milk from the dairy barn.

HASTINGS: Oh, yes, we bought our milk there for eleven cents a gallon. It was expensive! Those were in the good old days where a dollar went a long, long way.

FORSYTHE: How was the quality of the milk?

HASTINGS: Excellent. Outstanding. I couldn't ask for better. A lot of cream on top.

FORSYTHE: Did you have it delivered?

HASTINGS: No, we had to go get it. It was mighty fine.

FORSYTHE: What was the condition of the buildings while you were here?

HASTINGS: We tried to keep them in pretty good shape. I did a lot of painting on them as a youngster. My dad worked me hard. I had to work for my money. I'd work all week for \$15.00. That was good pay then.

FORSYTHE: That would buy a lot of gallons of milk.

HASTINGS: How about that!

FORSYTHE: What can you tell me about the farm that was connected to the school?

HASTINGS: It was a good farm and good training for young men that came here to learn a trade. As I said earlier, my dad did an outstanding job of training them to be electricians, to be plumbers, inside buildings and out. He had charge of just about everything except teaching. Actually, he did a little bit of that in teaching them how to be electricians and plumbers. They adored him, and he loved them.

FORSYTHE: Where did you live while you were going to school here?

HASTINGS: It may have been the laundry, in connection with the power plant. I recall that we found an old black tire off of a buggy, and we cut it up. I don't mean in pieces; we just pared out a head on it and tapered it down to a long, black snake tail. We tied a string to it and put it on one side of the entrance to the laundry. A young man with an arm full of books came to get his laundry. We started pulling that black snake across the way, and he started throwing books. I don't know whether he tore up all of his books or not, but I mean, he was trying to kill that black snake. We did all sorts of foolish, silly things back then. We had fun!

FORSYTHE: Do you remember any other pranks?

HASTINGS: Oh, yes. We were working on the sewer line. Some of the football players were passing by. They had been to the cafeteria to eat, and they were going back to the dorms. They passed right by us. Claude, who had played pranks on some of the football players, they came by, and Claude was sitting by the sewer. We were opening the sewer line that had stopped up. He was sitting there on the side of the manhole. The football players said, "Mr. Will," talking to my dad, "Is that what you got out of the sewer?" pointing to Claude. They went off just whooping and hollering and laughing. My dad turned to Claude and said, "Now you always have a quick answer. How come you didn't answer them?" "I couldn't think of nothing to say." There was another boy from way back out in the backwoods. He'd been pitching hay all summer. He was strong as an ox, but just as quiet as he could be. The boys wanted to initiate him. He was a freshman. They appointed one big, strapping boy to be his lawyer, to defend him. They started in, and they accused him of something, I don't know what. This old boy from out in the backwoods didn't have much to say, and his lawyer finally said, as he was taking off his belt to participate in the whipping, "I think he ought to take his whipping and get it over with." This boy from the country said, "Now you fellows can whip me if you want to, but I had better never catch one of you alone outside of this room." This big boy put his belt back on, and they dismissed him without touching that boy. There was another boy---I can't recall his name---out playing football who would deliberately run over a man that was about to tackle him, knock him down and keep going. That's when this team really won some games! There was another one that was bad about chastising freshmen and so on. They caught a young calf, carried him up and left him in this football player's

room too long. He had a time trying to clean his room! Yeah, there were a few pranks played while I was in school. They were bad about throwing water balloons out the window. One old boy was going up the stairs, and they emptied a garbage can full of water. There was a stream of water coming down the stairs, and he couldn't outrun it. He got wet. There was another case where they had a boy's room. They went in and filled a water bottle with water and put the stopper in and tied a string to it and tied it to the headboard. He felt this bottle, and he reached and pulled on it, pulled the stopper out. There was just water all over his bed. I wish they hadn't done that!