

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW
WITH
EUGENE SLOAN

26 JULY 1995

MURFREESBORO, TENNESSEE

INTERVIEWED BY REGINA FORSYTHE
FOR THE Q. M. SMITH ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW #QMS.041

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
EUGENE SLOAN**

Q. M. SMITH ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW #QMS.041

FORSYTHE: This tape is part of the Q. M. Smith Collection designated as QMS.1995.41. This is Regina Forsythe. I am interviewing Mr. Eugene Sloan at his home at 402 Richard Road in Murfreesboro, Tennessee. Today is Wednesday, July 25, 1995. Tell me that last bit where he called you in and pointed a finger at you?

SLOAN: Don't quote me on that. That is just a sidebar to help you understand Smith. He built this school by choosing the proper people to head departments.

FORSYTHE: All we have left is the other presidents. Do you have any more to say about Dr. Cope?

SLOAN: I could tell you a great deal about Cope. He is one of the best administrators that I have ever seen. He knew how to deal with the man out here behind the plow, and he knew how to deal with the president of Princeton University. I have seen him operate. I have been so close and seen him under so many circumstances. I remember one time, we were flying from France down to Greece, I believe. One after the other, the guys who were pilot, engineer and copilot of the aircraft came back from the copilot's position up there. They passed by us going back to the rear of the aircraft to get a cup of coffee or use the latrine. All three of them had passed by us on their way to the rear of the aircraft. Quill got up, went down and said, "Who's flying this plane?" The pilot spoke up and said, "Don't worry about it, it's on autopilot." I could tell you dozens of stories like that about Quill. He was a great member of the Church of Christ and his family ran a grocery store up in Sparta. They usually kept the preacher in special meetings. I don't know whether you are acquainted enough with the organization, but he knew a dozen stories about these preachers. One of the things that I won't go into because it is too involved.

FORSYTHE: Comment on your involvement in the NCAA.

SLOAN: We were members of the National Collegiate Athletic Association.

FORSYTHE: The Cumberland Valley Conference.

SLOAN: That was a high school thing. That is one of the things that Smith said he got me for. I had organized the high schools, including Carthage, Gallatin, Lebanon, Watertown, Gordonsville into more than an athletic league. We had contests

every year in track and field, in spelling, in speech, and various things like that. We had a conference champion every year.

FORSYTHE: Volunteer State Athletic Association.

SLOAN: Among the things Mr. Smith told me to organize was the business arrangement to assist in the method of ticket sales, and so on. He thought the way to do that was to follow the same thing on a college level that I had done with the Cumberland Valley Conference on the high school level. I organized the VSAA, and then I followed that up with the VSAC. The VSAC still operates a basketball tournament. That's about all that's left.

FORSYTHE: Your involvement in the TEA.

SLOAN: Volunteer State Athletic Conference is still a conference. We weren't then in the OVC. One of the jobs that Smith wanted me to do was to get in the Ohio Valley Conference, made up at that time of Murray State, Western, Marshall College in West Virginia, and Evansville. Tennessee Tech was already a member of the Ohio Valley Conference. Mr. Smith was very anxious to get in the OVC. Two of those organizations I organized as background, and he and I would go to the OVC meeting. We went year after year. We even played in the Refrigerator Bowl football game up there.