

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW
WITH
CAROLYN HOLLOWAY

30 AUGUST 1995

MURFREESBORO, TENNESSEE

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

INTERVIEW #QMS.079

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
CAROLYN HOLLOWAY
Q. M. SMITH ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
INTERVIEW #QMS.079**

FORSYTHE: This tape is part of the Q.M. Smith Collection designated as QMS.1995.79. This is Regina Forsythe, I am interviewing Mrs. Carolyn Holloway. Today is Wednesday August 30, 1995. The interview is being conducted in the home of Mrs. Holloway located at 1410 Mercury Boulevard, Murfreesboro, Tennessee. The tape of this interview along with a transcription of the interview will become part of the Quintin Miller Smith Collection and will be available to the public. Future researchers may include portions of this interview in their publications. Is that all right with you, Mrs. Holloway?

HOLLOWAY: Yes.

FORSYTHE: What is your full name?

HOLLOWAY: Carolyn Cook Holloway.

FORSYTHE: What is your birth date and birth place.

HOLLOWAY: February 6, 1913. Maury County, Tennessee.

FORSYTHE: What was your father's name and occupation?

HOLLOWAY: Fred S. Cook. He owned a furniture store, Cook Outfitting Company.

FORSYTHE: What was your mother's name and occupation?

HOLLOWAY: Lillian Ragsdale Cook. She was a housewife.

FORSYTHE: Do you have any siblings?

HOLLOWAY: I have three sisters, all older than I - Mable, Eugenia, and Francis.

FORSYTHE: Did any of them go to MTSU?

HOLLOWAY: No. Two of them attended Tennessee College for Women, where I went.

FORSYTHE: What was your husband's name and occupation?

HOLLOWAY: Eugene C. Holloway. He was an attorney.

FORSYTHE: Do you have any children?

HOLLOWAY: I have Anne, Harriet, and Eugene. Anne went to MTSU. She was chosen as an outstanding Alumni in 1986.

FORSYTHE: Did any one else in your family work at MTSU?

HOLLOWAY: Anne worked in the bookstore, while she was on campus.

FORSYTHE: Why did you come to work at MTSU?

HOLLOWAY: I lost my husband in an automobile accident, and I needed a job to support my three children. I worked at MTSU from September of 1949 until February of 1979.

FORSYTHE: What memories do you have of being a staff member?

HOLLOWAY: It was very pleasant. Back in the days that I began working, it was a small college and everyone on the staff was good friends. There were only five administrators on the campus, and they all had offices in Old Main. Each one had a secretary, and that was the staff.

FORSYTHE: What do you remember about your job interview?

HOLLOWAY: Mr. Judd, who hired me, and his wife, were friends of mine. I had known them for a long time. When they found out that I needed a job, that was it. It was offered to me.

FORSYTHE: Where was your office located?

HOLLOWAY: It was in the front of Old Main and was on the right side as you entered. President Smith's office was on the left. I worked for Mr. Judd and sometimes for Mr. Beasley. Later, I worked full time for Mr. Beasley. Mr. Clayton James, Dean of Students, also had an office there. When his secretary was not available, Evelyn and I helped out.

FORSYTHE: Who else worked in the office with you?

HOLLOWAY: Evelyn Turney. My sister Charlotte Cook Hinds worked in Mr. James' office. All three offices were in coordination with each other and we sort of shared the work.

FORSYTHE: What were you hired to do?

HOLLOWAY: Clerical work--typing and records work. There was no air conditioning in those days, and we kept the front windows open. In the summertime, at two o'clock in the afternoon, that sun really beat down. I was used to taking a nap with the children in the afternoon, that was before I started working. When two o'clock came, I was tired!

FORSYTHE: You were promoted, right?

HOLLOWAY: Yes, through the years. We just did what we were asked. When they put us on a state salary schedule, we had to have a job description. I remember that the last thing that Evelyn and I put on our job description was "anything else that is necessary for the production of the office."

FORSYTHE: What was your title?

HOLLOWAY: I began as a clerk, later a secretary, and I think a general flunky. You had to be in those days, and do whatever the job needed.

FORSYTHE: Tell me about the conversion to an office computer system.

HOLLOWAY: I took training in Nashville for IBM. I took one week of keyboarding, another week of wiring, and another course of wiring. In those days, we had to wire the boards to go in the machines. The training sessions were usually a week at a time. I went to several different ones.

FORSYTHE: How many people went through training?

HOLLOWAY: I went alone at first, and later when we had to hire another key punch operator, I went back and took another wiring course. We had our own office down in the basement of Old Main. That was where our equipment was because it was very heavy. We had a sorter, an accounting machine, a reproducer, and an interpreter. Those machines, at grade reporting time, were coordinated so that they put out the grade reports. We were able to mail grades out before daylight on the next morning.

FORSYTHE: When was the computer used.

HOLLOWAY: They were used for grade reports and most any other functions that the office had to turn out. We got computers somewhere between 1960 and 1968. I think I was set up in the computer office by the fall of 1968.

FORSYTHE: Can you tell me about the change from IBM to Honeywell?

HOLLOWAY: The office had become much larger at that time. We had two key punch operators. Since I elected not to go to programming school, they hired a programmer out of Nashville and he already knew the computer language for Honeywell. They had their own language at that time. It was not like it is now, where you study a lot of different languages and key them into the keyboards. The man that new the Honeywell language was under Dr. Paul Hutchinson. He was a math instructor.

FORSYTHE: What were your duties?

HOLLOWAY: Mainly to do what they needed - clerical work and typing. By that time we had three key punch operators and I supervised the rest of the staff. Dr. Hutchinson supervised operation of the machines, while I supervised the material that was to go into the machines. We processed the grades as the instructors came in.

FORSYTHE: What kind of education do you have?

HOLLOWAY: I have a Bachelor of Arts degree in foreign languages from Tennessee College for Women. I graduated in 1934.

FORSYTHE: Did you ever take any classes at MTSU?

HOLLOWAY: Only typing and shorthand. They offered me a job teaching on Saturday mornings. That was after I finished those business courses and was working in the admissions office. I

turned it down, because Saturday was the only time I had available to take care of the household chores and laundry, plus, I needed that time with my children.

FORSYTHE: I want to ask you about some of the people you worked with as a faculty member. What do you remember about Mr. Judd?

HOLLOWAY: He was one of the nicest fellows you would ever know. He was a pleasant person to work with. He had a serious operation before I went to work for him, and it left him in a palsy condition. You would never guess it, because he was so pleasant to be around. I really enjoyed working with him.

I also enjoyed working with Evelyn. She was a graduate at MTSU and was an assistant in that office while she was a student. She worked at MTSU longer than anyone ever worked out there. She stuck with admissions. When I went with the Honeywell operation with the computer center, they offered me a chance to go back to work in the records office. They started arguing over whether I should go back to the records office or if I should stay in the computer center. I was about to go on vacation, and told them, "You all decide what you want me to do and tell me where to put my things when I get back." The programmer, Sam Waldens, decided to keep me in the computer center because I was the only "old pro" on the staff.

FORSYTHE: Tell me about Sam Waldens.

HOLLOWAY: He was a nice, easy-going fellow, quite proficient in his job. He started to work for State Farm insurance when they first started up in town. They had an IBM operation, too. He started working for them as a high school graduate, no college training. He became head of the operation in Murfreesboro then in Nashville. He advanced in his profession because he knew his field and was easy to work with.

FORSYTHE: Paul Hutchinson?

HOLLOWAY: He was a Ph.D. in the Math department and quite an intelligent man. He had been a consultant. Dr. Cope was president at the time. He wanted to bring computer operations into the Math department and Cope knew Paul from church. Paul stepped down from the Math department and came over to work in computer operations. After I retired in 1979, Paul decided to go back to teaching in the class room. He is retired, but his health has been poor.

FORSYTHE: Evelyn Turney?

HOLLOWAY: She graduated two years before I started working at MTSU. When she had her first child, she took a leave of absence; and that was how I happened to get into the office. I filled in for her during her maternity leave. The next year, the other girl got married and left, so I just stayed on as staff.

FORSYTHE: Clayton James?

HOLLOWAY: He was one of the nicest fellows that you will ever know. He ran a very smooth office. He was a very good sociology professor. His wife was a very good friend of mine. She had gone to David Lipscomb University and was very intelligent. His wife and I were together one day, and she was talking about making fruit cake for Christmas. She said

that Clayton needed to go to Nashville to get some liquor to put in the fruit cakes. I spoke up and said, "Well, I would not know what to get for it." Some time after that, there was a brown paper bag on my front door step, and scrawled across the front of it was Clayton's handwritten message, "From your favorite bootlegger." The funny part about it was, back in those days, you could not have liquor on the campus. Students who got caught had to talk to Clayton James, the Dean of Students. When Clayton was buying liquor for our fruit cakes, one of the boys who had gotten caught for drinking on the campus entered the store and caught Dr. James.

FORSYTHE: Dean Beasley?

HOLLOWAY: He was a very quiet and proficient person. He was secretary of The T.E.A. [Tennessee Education Association]. There were people in that generation who were perfect gentlemen, very quite. The girls in the office took care of the mail, and the men took care of the administrative duties. If we needed any help we asked them advice.

FORSYTHE: Bonnie McHenry?

HOLLOWAY: She was President Smith's secretary at that time. She lived across the street from me on Bell Street. My husband and I built the house that she bought and was living in. I had moved into that house two weeks before my first child was born. I passed by there the other day and they were remodeling it. We had also owned a duplex on Bell Street. Dr. James Strobel purchased both of the houses we built.

FORSYTHE: Margaret Bain?

HOLLOWAY: She was Mr. Beasley's secretary while I worked with Mr. Judd, Evelyn, Charlotte, and Mr. James. Margaret was married to one of the football players at the time. He became a coach and they settled down in Mount Pleasant where he was originally from. Margaret had her degree by that time. She was a nice person. Their son became a doctor.

FORSYTHE: Charlotte Heinz?

HOLLOWAY: She was my sister and she came to Murfreesboro to visit me the summer after she finished Marvella in business education. When Bonnie McHenry heard that Charlotte was looking for a job, she said that there would be a vacancy in Mr. James office. My sister applied for it, got the job, and stayed for ten years. She is a half sister. My mother died when I was six years old and my father married again when I was nine. Charlotte was his only child by his second wife.

FORSYTHE: Marjorie McFolin?

HOLLOWAY: She was head of that office after she had finished college there. She was instrumental in setting the files up and I worked under her. She married a dentist and moved to Nashville. Margie was a smart girl. She could type 80 words a minute and talk at the same time.

FORSYTHE: Jane Warner?

HOLLOWAY: She was an undergraduate student when I went back to school. We took shorthand together. She married Jerry Warner, an administrator in the Rutherford county school

system. We have been friends for a long time and she still lives in Murfreesboro. She taught typing and business courses for adults. She had just received an award like teacher of the year for Murfreesboro. That announcement was on the radio.

FORSYTHE: Q.M. Smith?

HOLLOWAY: They came to MTSU while my husband was still living, and we knew him socially then. His wife and I belonged to the Woman's Club. They had two children after they moved to Murfreesboro. Nancy Jean was about the same age as my daughter, Harriet, and they were good friends. Nancy Jean was a pleasant child. She would come over to our house and play bridge with Harriet while they were in high school.

Mrs. Smith was a good college president's wife. She knew all the right things to do, and did them. In those days, the Dames Club, that is the faculty wives club, she was hospitable about having us over to her house. Their house was beautifully done, the lawn was always well kept. She performed the duties of the college president's wife quite nicely.

FORSYTHE: What was the purpose of the Dames Club?

HOLLOWAY: In its beginning, when the university was small, when there was a tragedy or death they all got together and would provide food or a dinner. Then it evolved into the organization that I knew. It was mainly a social group that met once a month. In the fall they would have a tea at the president's home and invite all of the new faculty members and introduce them.

FORSYTHE: What do you remember about Mr. Smith at work?

HOLLOWAY: I've always heard that they call him a "brick and mortar" president. He had quite a bit of foresight about what he was doing. What he did turned out to be very good and well thought out. He had connections in Nashville, particularly one of the architecture firms with a man named Charles Wheeler. Between Charles Wheeler and Q.M. Smith, they provided the background for the initial buildings on campus. When I went out there, there was only the education building, one girls dorm, one boys dorm, a post office, and a coffee shop. The post office and coffee shop eventually became the music building, and after we built a new music building, the old building became what is now the alumni center. The post office boxes were to the left as you entered. We had to go get our mail every day, they did not deliver it. There was a coffee shop at one end and the post office boxes at the other. We went to the post office window to request our mail. I do not remember when the building was a dining hall.

FORSYTHE: President Cope?

HOLLOWAY: He came to us after being Commissioner of Education in Nashville. He was well liked on the campus. Of all the MTSU presidents I've know, I've known all but two, he got out on the campus and would try to become acquainted with everyone, even the grounds keeper. He wanted to be familiar with all the aspects of the campus. I thought that was a good thing to do.

FORSYTHE: President Scarlett ?

HOLLOWAY: I was very impressed with him. In my opinion, he was one of the most brilliant men that we ever had on our staff. Each president had his own area of expertise. Cope had a good relationship with everyone and knew how to get along with the towns people. Q.M. Smith did too. Scarlett was not so much that sort of a man, as he was a planner. He would get back in his office, and like Q.M. did for the buildings, Scarlett was interested in raising academic standards. My son finished in law after he got out of the Navy. Dr. Scarlett came in one day and wanted to know where my son was going to go to school. He was thinking ahead and was already planning what could be accomplished in my son's education.

FORSYTHE: Dr. Ingram?

HOLLOWAY: He was also a Commissioner of Education. He had been the head of the Education department at the time I was head of the computer room. I think he went on to be one of the presidents of a community college, and then became commissioner of education. He was always very pleasant, but I never really knew him as well as the rest of them. I know Scarlett the best, because I go to church with him.

FORSYTHE: Who were some of the bosses you had?

HOLLOWAY: The first one was Mr. Judd, then Mr. Beasley, Dr. John Weems, and Paul Hutchinson. Weems was a bright young man that came to us while he was working on his doctorate at Peabody University. He came in and worked under Mr. Beasley. When Weems got his doctorate degree, and Beasley retired, Weems took over as the head of the admissions and records office. They called him Dean Weems. He was very interested in expanding the data processing area. I expect he might have helped choose the Honeywell equipment. He liked statistics and part of the work I did with the IBM machines was to turn out reports. After the final day of classes I had to make a final report of full time and part time students. One year Weems took the statistical reports to the American Association of Collegian Registrars and Admission Offices and he was elected president the next year. Other administrators respected what he did in his division.

FORSYTHE: This is a continuation of the interview with Mrs. Carolyn Holloway by Regina Forsythe on Wednesday, August 30, 1995. Robert Abernathy?

HOLLOWAY: He was one of the administrators in the building that I was in when I first went to work out there. I had known him before that time. When my husband and I first married, we had a downstairs apartment in a home on East Main Street. The people who owned it had retired and took the up-stairs and made two more apartments. Gene and I married about six months before Jean and Bob did, and they moved into the apartment right above us. I had known them for a long time before I came to work at MTSU. When I began working, one of the first persons I also helped was Bob. He asked me to write some letters for him, and I did it. I guess I was too long taking them back up there, for I got the message from someone else that he thought I did the letters perfect, but was slow. He and I were fast friends while I was there. His wife and I are still good friends. He was a fun person. He could tell more jokes, and we enjoyed being in a coffee shop with him.

FORSYTHE: Eugene Sloan?

HOLLOWAY: He was a reporter for one of the Nashville papers. He used to come down every morning, just about the time we got to the office and got settled, to have his material run off on the

mimeograph machine. He wanted to send the stuff to Nashville, so I'm sure he got it in the mail by eight or nine o'clock. He was a very quiet man and was proficient at what he did.

FORSYTHE: Mr. Woodmore?

HOLLOWAY: He was also in our building and was one of the other administrators. He was on the basement floor and had the whole Business department down there. He was like Mr. Lyon, he knew the operations inside and out. He trained Jimmy Jackson, who was a student worker. After Mr. Woodmore retired Jimmy worked under Dr. Green.

FORSYTHE: Mr. Holmes?

HOLLOWAY: He was there before I got there. I believe he was in Mr. Woodmore's position before Mr. Woodmore came to MTSU.

FORSYTHE: W.C. Hastings?

HOLLOWAY: He was in charge of the maintenance on campus. I never knew him very well. Before he retired, they asked him to go all over campus and point out all the pipes and electrical lines, because he was the only one who knew them. That was how small the campus was at that time.

FORSYTHE: Ed Voorhies?

HOLLOWAY: He was in the Industrial Arts department. He was quite an intelligent fellow and trained some good students out there. He took that department over from Mr. Freeman. Voorhies became head of the industrial studies program before he retired. He was quite well thought of all over the state. He did a lot of volunteer work here in Murfreesboro. A lot of our professors at MTSU have been very generous in donating their time, knowledge, and expertise to the city.

FORSYTHE: Mr. J. Eldred Wiser?

HOLLOWAY: He was head of the Chemistry department when I was there. He was very intelligent. He also had a brother in the Biology department. The older Wiser men were very brilliant. He prepared the good students for medical school. He really prepared them. His son became a doctor. His wife was librarian over at the high school.

FORSYTHE: Virginia Muncie?

HOLLOWAY: She was a good friend of mine before I came to MTSU. Her husband was a dentist, and he died while they had a small child. She was a neighbor of mine, down the street in Columbia. She went back to Peabody College, received a degree in home economics, and eventually became Dean of Women at Peabody. Then she came to Murfreesboro to become head of our Home Economics department. My oldest daughter trained under her.

FORSYTHE: Horace Jones?

HOLLOWAY: He was in the Math department. His father-in-law was P.A. Lyon, a former MTSU president. He was an instructor in the Math department. When the school was still small,

Horace would go to the president's office to read the "Tennessean" newspaper. Evelyn and I were working in a nearby office and he would stop to chat and give us a fashion evaluation. My daughter was in high school at that time, and we shared clothes. In our situation, money was kind of tight anyway. She liked new clothes, so I would buy what she liked and also wear it. I joked about wearing my daughter's hand-me-downs. Jones was a tremendously nice fellow.

FORSYTHE: Hillary Parker?

HOLLOWAY: I knew him as the head of the training school. My children were in school at the time he was there. We have had some brilliant men. He did a good job. He has two fine sons, one of which still does a lot of planning/ architecture. The other one does metal sculptures.

FORSYTHE: Dr. C.C. Sims?

HOLLOWAY: I used to have coffee with him every morning. He was head of the History department. He was a very good businessman. I knew his wife, too. He has written a history book.

FORSYTHE: Wink Midgett?

HOLLOWAY: He was head of the business office and had a reputation of mentoring some fine students. His oldest son and my son were contemporaries. As the children grew they were in the training school together and became good friends.

FORSYTHE: Mr. Keathley?

HOLLOWAY: He took Mr. James place after he retired. His office was right next to me, and my sister worked for him after she worked for Mr. James. His wife worked in the business office. We used to have coffee together quite frequently, she was a fun person. Dean Keathley had the reputation of being soft spoken, but when he spoke you needed to listen.

FORSYTHE: Dean Kirksey?

HOLLOWAY: He was Dean of the faculty. His wife was a graduate of Tennessee College for Women, my alma mater. They had a daughter the same age as my son. After he retired, he worked for almost ten years for a Baptist organization.

FORSYTHE: Roy Simpson?

HOLLOWAY: He was principle of the training school when my children went there. He came before Hillary Parker.

FORSYTHE: Richard Peck?

HOLLOWAY: He was head of the English department. He and his wife were as smart as can be. Dick and I had some differences. One time we were talking about foreign languages and I made the remark that I had never had English class. I had five years of Latin before I got to college and I learned all the English grammar I know from Latin. That did not please him. Dick had a way of getting mad and turning red in the face. He would pound his first on the table and say, "I have a Ph.D. in English from Vanderbilt University and I

know how to drop a letter." When my daughter was a freshman at MTSU, she made a "B" in Dick's English class and was upset because she had made all "A's" in English during high school. She came over to my office and complained about it. Dick came in later and I looked at him and kidded him about ruining my daughter's record. He got mad again and said, "She can say nothing the most beautifully I have ever seen in my life. Not a comma out of place, long and involved sentences, but she says absolutely nothing when she gets through with it." I told my daughter what he had said, and she brought me a paper of her college roommate who had received an "A." The idea of the theme was cute, but the sentence structure seemed like that of an eighth grade student. When I read it I said, "You know what he is teaching don't you—creative writing. Next time give him a good story and don't worry about punctuation." She received "A's" after that. They were friendly.

FORSYTHE: Did you know his wife, Virginia Peck?

HOLLOWAY: She was not an outgoing person, but she was very brilliant. On the side, she hybridized day lilies and became quite famous for it. They had a place in the country and she sold her bulbs to a wholesale house in Missouri. When my daughter moved to Connecticut, I sent her a check and a catalog of Mrs. Peck's day lilies and told her to pick out what she wanted for her grounds.

FORSYTHE: Did you know the Wrights, Margaret and Neil?

HOLLOWAY: Yes, they did the music for my daughter Harriet's wedding. They were quite good friends of mine. I still see Margaret once in a while. I thought the world of both of them. They were very generous with their talents in Murfreesboro.

FORSYTHE: Charles Murphy?

HOLLOWAY: He has just had hip or knee surgery. Bubber and I started working at MTSU at about the same time. He was the coach and all of the boys just loved him. He was a lovable character. I remember one time we had an investment club and Bubber helped us choose the stock.

FORSYTHE: Baxter Hobgood?

HOLLOWAY: He was superintendent of the schools for years. His wife was also a product of Tennessee College for Women. She went to college with one of my older sisters. He has been one of the best school administrators. I suppose he is known all over the state. They were about eight years older than I.

FORSYTHE: You have a connection with Albert Gore?

HOLLOWAY: He was on the MTSU campus when I was at Tennessee College for Women. He was a single man and I think also the county superintendent in the area where he was. He was dating one of the girls that was in the May court. He came over to see Liz and that was how I met him. I did not realize who he was until years later after Gene and I married and Gore campaigned for a seat in the House of Representatives. That was back in the late 1930s. Gene and Alva's husband became interested in his politics. Minnie, Alva's wife, kept a bedroom for Gore while he was campaigning and when he came through this area he made their house his head quarters. Those two managed his campaign here. I did

not keep up my relationship with the Gores after Gene died. Then a friend of my son, the Huddleston boy, became a page in the Senate while Gore was there. Through that connection, Pauline Gore thought my son would like to be a page and called me. I had not seen her for at least ten years. My son was only fifteen at that time and pages had to be sixteen years of age. I said I do not think you will have him because he is not quite old enough. She said, "Carolyn, we have three members in the Senate this year that are all in their 80s, if we were to be unfortunate enough to lose all of them in the same year, we would lose our majority and would not have the opportunity to appoint your son as a page. If you feel like you could let him go, I'll be glad to make arrangements for a place for him to stay." I let him go, and he stayed there for the month of February. He was a freshman or sophomore in high school at the time, and it was a wonderful experience for him. When he graduated from high school he went to the Naval academy and he finished up there in 1964. We were very grateful to the Gores for the things they did for us. I have seen them several times since they moved to Carthage.

My daughter that was with the University of Connecticut, was one of ten individuals honored by the National 4-H Council at their place in Chevy Chase, Maryland. My family and I flew up there to see her get the award. We all had a table together at the dinner that night. When we were in the hallway of the National 4-H building, we were standing around talking and the Gores came in the door. Pauline looked like she had seen a ghost and said, "Carolyn, what are you doing up here?" I took her over to meet my children. It so happened they were there to accept an award, the same award my daughter was receiving, for Al, Jr. He was campaigning for vice-president at the time. We had a nice visit with them. It was Anne who got the award. She left Murfreesboro and went to Connecticut as an Extension 4-H home economist. From there she got the opportunity to go to graduate school at Amherst University, which is right across the state line in Massachusetts. She got her doctorate also.

FORSYTHE: What have you been doing since you retired from MTSU?

HOLLOWAY: A little of everything. I work at the North Boulevard Church of Christ delivering meals on wheels one day a week. I work for the American Red Cross as a volunteer in their canteen division. I have a group of social friends that I get together with for dinner.