

HELEN JULIA MCKINNEY FOSSUM

Dr. McKinney, who married one of our professors, Dr. Paul Fossum was a very outstanding scholar. She was dedicated to the very finest kind of teaching and had had an unusual experience as a teacher of French in various colleges and also as a Dean of Women. She came to the College of Puget Sound in 1938 and spent the rest of her career teaching at the University. She was a very outstanding person and was constantly making very fine recommendations in the faculty meetings concerning the quality of education, the quality of teaching, and the kind of student that we should produce at the College.

Dr. McKinney had a sister who was teaching in the midwest and was on the executive committee of Phi Beta Kappa. She monitored our applications on two different occasions when we applied for a Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa. On one she said that the man who was then the Executive Secretary for Phi Beta Kappa on the west coast was teaching at Scripps and he said, "I simply do not recommend any of the Universities for Phi Beta Kappa in my province." That included The University of Redlands, the University of the Pacific, Willamette University, and ourselves. It was reputed that he did not have great respect for the Methodist Institutions because he did not feel that they stressed quality. In talking with Dr. McKinney Fossum, she said that her sister said that too many of the Methodist Universities were career oriented and not enough in the pure academics to qualify for Phi Beta Kappa. This is one of the things that distressed Dr. Todd very much because each triennium we would apply only

to be told there was some unusual thing, that if it were bettered, we would get our chapter. First it was our million dollar endowment, second we must have 100,000 volumes in the library, then we must have fewer graduating with the career oriented majors and we are still in 1980 hoping that some day we may get a chapter of Phi Beta Kappa.

Dr. McKinney married Dr. Paul Fossum, who had a Ph.D. in political science and who taught for us a course or two in political science without any remuneration. He was very much interested in the College of Puget Sound and often came to my office to tell me he could open up doors for the possibility of financial solicitation. He was sincere and genuine and I appreciated him very, very much.

Dr. Paul Fossum had a complete disability from his service in World War I, having contracted sleeping sickness in Dieppe, France. He was on a government pension the whole time he was involved with the University of Puget Sound. He had very strong likes and dislikes. He was always working on his theory of economics which he thought would revolutionize economic history and business in the United States. One time he and his wife went on a trip to Europe and when he came back he was very much exercised - he had been using the little room in the tower of Jones Hall as his special study and had left his papers out on the desk during the time he was in Europe. When he came back, the papers all had been put in one pile and the room had been used by the man of whom he had high suspicions - Dr. Battin. There was never a very close relationship between the two - as a matter of fact, they were

somewhat antagonistic. Dr. Battin used to bait and tease him and Dr. Fossum usually rose to the situation. One Monday morning Dr. Fossum came in very much exercised and said that he was sure that while he was gone Battin had stolen his latest idea of Economic Theory and would rush to publish it to get credit for it. I tried to referee between the two but finally Dr. Fossum said he was going to publish it right away because he was sure of the fact that Dr. Battin would try to publish and take credit for it. The idea came out in a slim pamphlet and evidently it did not create as wide spread acceptance as he had anticipated. It received slight review in one or two bulletins.

Mrs. Fossum was much beloved by her students. She was very much beloved by her colleagues who held her in high regard and esteem. For a number of years now, since her retirement, she has been in Panarama City in the infirmary because she has had difficulty in her locomotion.

I have nothing but the highest regard and affection for Dr. Helen McKinney Fossum and she contributed much in her time to the University of Puget Sound and to the lives of her students and for the outstanding leadership and good of the faculty.