

Ed Nesman Email Exchange
September 14, 2016

1. *Did you and other Methodist Missionaries in Eastern Cuba serve as a bridge between the American business community and rural Cuban communities.* I don't think that it was one of our goals or the reason we felt we were there at the time. Indirectly I think that we did serve as a bridge but it wasn't something that we worked on. They looked to the Agricultural School and to the Pastor in Mayari to lead the Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter services and that may have been an intentional attempt to influence them. We did not try to intervene in any labor issues or work related situations.

2. *Did the North Americans at UFCO know more about Cubans because of your school's presence and the Methodist relationship with both communities?* The fact that there were always two representatives from the company on the EAI Board had some impact. There was also a strong representation of missionaries and other individuals from the church that served as an exchange setting for ideas about rural life. The fact that no graduate from the school was to be employed by the company prevented the school from becoming a training center for future employees. I do know that there were times that Dick Milk returned from the meetings very frustrated over some of the restrictions that were imposed. During the two years that I was acting director I can't remember any conflicting events at the EAI Board meetings although I may have been naive at the time. I know that Milk had a strong feeling for the need of agrarian reform if there was to be good land available for family farms and that may have been a source of frustration.

3. I'm trying to figure out *how missionaries influenced other North Americans.* I need to add that the Americans from Felton [Bethlehem Steel] also gave scholarships and had some influence on the the school One of our Cuban teachers came from that background. As a side note, her father was a mid level supervisor and made some unfortunate statement about Rebel activities. He was taken as a prisoner and the family asked if I would go to try to get him released. It was quite an adventure, he was not released but not shot either. There was also a relationship with Nicaro and the Nickle mines. As far as the general impressions of Missionaries on most of the other North Americans, I think they saw us as a bit strange but rather harmless and were impressed with some of the things at the school. I know they were really impressed when former VP Henry Wallace came to deliver the Commencement talk.

OBITUARY

THE RESUME OF EDGAR NESMAN'S LIFE:

Edgar Glenn Nesman, 89, was born in Lansing, Michigan and died in Tampa, Florida on November 10, 2016. He is survived by his wife of 63 years, Marjorie, and sons Tomas (Bonnie), Daniel, and Richard (Sharon) and preceded in death

by daughter, Teresa. He had 6 grandchildren: Taylor, Melissa, Samuel, Colleen, Abigail, and Jordan. His life was centered around education which began with graduating from Springport High School (Mich.) in 1944, BS in 1950 and MS in 1960 from Michigan State College/University, and a PhD in 1969 from the University of Florida. During WW II, he served in the Merchant Marines in the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans. He taught agriculture and mechanics at the Methodist Agricultural and Industrial School in Cuba from 1950-60. He taught extension and community development at the Methodist Rural Center in Costa Rica from 1960-1966. Upon coming back to the United States, he began his tenure as a professor of sociology and Latin American studies at the University of South Florida from 1968-1992. He traveled and worked as a consultant on rural development throughout Latin America, Egypt, and China. He was an honorary member of Alpha Zeta, Alpha Kappa Delta, and Phi Kappa Phi fraternities. In his retirement, he volunteered with United Way, Meals on Wheels, USF Collaborative, USF Latin American Studies, ECHO, Hispanic Services Council, and ALFALIT. He was a long-standing member of Temple Terrace United Methodist Church and served on the resident board of University Village, where he lived with Marjorie.

Quite a full life, eh? Miguel, will you let "the doctor" Sanfiel know about this, please? I seem to no longer have an address that works for him.

Haven't our lives been enriched by our association with Ed Nesman--and with each other!? And our time at the agricultural school? God be praised for our wonderful lives and associations!
Love, Carroll English