

W. V. Quine Ohio Historical Marker – June 25, 2008

**A Fitting Recognition for a  
Scholar and World Traveler**

It is a great honor and privilege to be here today celebrating the centennial of Dad's birth in a manner that neither he nor I ever imagined possible.

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I want to thank Chad Miller and Professor Waller, the Ohio Historical Society, the speakers, the singers, and the generous donors for their efforts in making this possible. Oberlin College was a very special place for Dad and Rhoda Walk has photographs of many of these sites on her poster in the front hall.

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It was here that the future direction of his career was determined when Dad undertook independent study in the works of Whitehead and Russell and here that he saw how to combine his interest in mathematics, philosophy, and linguistics. Having spent the past year editing two forthcoming books from Harvard University Press for the centennial, I can also say that I'm following in his footsteps by having my remarks written out verbatim on 3x5 cards.

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It was finding such cards in the archives that have enabled us to completely reconstruct his Harvard course on Hume from 1946 as well as introductory, retirement, and memorial remarks for such distinguished friends as Piaget, Skinner, and Van Heijenoort. Some of these words will soon see the light of day for the first time in print. .4

As you've gathered here today, Dad also liked music. He played piano (mostly on the black keys) and mandolin. He loved Gilbert and Sullivan, calypso, Dixieland, and Mexican folk songs. His interest in language caused him to take particular pleasure in the unexpected like this Dixieland rendition of Sweet Georgia Brown ... (*play first 1:30*) ... in Czech... which we bought on the Charles Bridge in Prague .5

Finally, the dedication of such an historical marker is special because it contributes to our historical landscape. Dad was a great traveler. When Margaret and I traveled with him as children, he often pulled off the road to satisfy our curiosity about our surroundings by reading the historical markers scattered along the highways and byways.

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Before interstate highways and widespread air travel, they were one of the highlights of travel. It is wonderful to be adding to that proud legacy.

Douglas B. Quine

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[Finally, I have some gifts for the participants: Oberlin envelopes with personalized postage stamps postmarked by Oberlin's postmaster on Quine's birth centennial]



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