

THE HALLS OF IVY

The Halls of Ivy was an NBC radio sitcom that ran from 1949-1952. It was created by Fibber McGee & Molly co-creator/writer Don Quinn before being adapted into a CBS television comedy (1954-55) produced by ITC Entertainment and Television Programs of America. British husband-and-wife actors Ronald Colman and Benita Hume starred in both versions of the show.

Quinn developed the show after he had decided to leave Fibber McGee & Molly in the hands of his protege Phil Leslie. The Halls of Ivy's audition program featured radio veteran Gale Gordon (then co-starring in *Our Miss Brooks*) and Edna Best in the roles that ultimately went to the Colmans, who'd shown a flair for radio comedy in recurring roles on *The Jack Benny Program* in the late 1940s.

The Halls of Ivy featured Colman as William Todhunter Hall, the president of small, Midwestern Ivy College, and his wife, Victoria, a former British musical comedy star who sometimes felt the tug of her former profession, and followed their interactions with students, friends and college trustees. Others in the cast included Herbert Butterfield as testy board chairman Clarence Wellman; Willard Waterman (then starring as Harold Peary's successor as *The Great Gildersleeve*) as board member John Merriweather; and, Elizabeth Patterson and Gloria Gordon as the Halls' maid.

The series ran 110 half-hour radio episodes from January 6, 1950 to June 25, 1952, with Quinn, Jerome Lawrence, and Robert Lee writing most of the scripts and giving free if even more sophisticated play to Quinn's knack for language play, inverted cliches and swift puns (including the show's title and lead characters), a knack he'd shown for years writing *Fibber McGee & Molly*. Jerome Lawrence and Robert Lee continued as a writing team; their best-known play is *Inherit the Wind*.

Cameron Blake, Walter Brown Newman, Robert Sinclair, and Milton and Barbara Merlin became writers for the program as well. But listeners were surprised to discover that the episode of 27 September 1950, "The Leslie Hoff Painting," a story tackling racial prejudice, was written by Colman himself.

The sponsors were Schlitz Brewing Company and then Nabisco. Nat Wolff produced and directed, Henry Russell handled the music and radio veteran Ken Carpenter was the announcer.

Information from Wikipedia