COLLECTING RARE BOOKS AND MANUSCRIPTS FOR UCLA

Wilbur J. Smith

Interviewed by Alan H. Jutzi

Completed under the auspices
of the
Oral History Program
University of California
Los Angeles

* * * * * *

THIS INTERVIEW WAS MADE POSSIBLE THROUGH A GRADUATE STUDENT INTERNSHIP IN ORAL HISTORY AWARDED BY GOLD SHIELD, UCLA ALUMNAE SERVICE HONORARY.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

[Frontis photograph of Wilbur J. Smith (left) with Carl Sandburg was taken in 1961 on the occasion of the Sandburg exhibit in the Department of Special Collections.]

INTRODUCTION

Wilbur Jordan Smith was born in Chattanooga, Tennessee, October 14, 1906, to Paul Jordan-Smith and Ethel (Park) Richardson. His father was a California teacher and author who for many years served as literary editor for the Los Angeles Times. His mother was also involved in literature and the arts. She worked in the theater and radio and compiled one of the earliest editions of American folk songs. Considering the background of his parents, it is not surprising that Wilbur Smith spent the greater part of his life collecting and preserving books and in developing the special collections of the UCLA Library.

Mr. Smith's education took him to both the east and west coasts and led to a multiplicity of work experiences. He attended Pomona College (1923), the University of Virginia (1926), the Los Angeles Public Library School (1932), and Columbia University (1935). Before and during the Depression, he worked in New York, briefly in the book department at the John Wanamaker Stores, in radio with his mother, and as a reporter for the New York Journal of Commerce. In Los Angeles his bookstore experiences included positions with Lou Samuel's Penguin Book Shop and with Jake Zeitlin. In 1942 with his wife Ninon (MacKnight) Smith, and son Paul, he returned permanently to the Los

Angeles area. He worked for Douglas Aircraft and as a researcher at MGM before joining the UCLA Library.

In 1947, when the UCLA Library was rapidly expanding, Lawrence Clark Powell hired Mr. Smith to fill the post of Gifts and Exchange Librarian. After serving three years in the Department of Gifts and Exchange, he moved into the Department of Special Collections as Curator of Printed Books, a position which emphasized both his talents and interests. In 1951 he was named head of the department when Andrew Horn became Associate Librarian.

Through twenty years of the department's stunning growth, until his retirement in 1971, Mr. Smith has been instrumental in collecting and organizing the Library's holdings of rare books and manuscripts. In particular, he has developed one of the largest collections of English children's books, assited in the development of a prestigious folklore collection, and augmented UCLA's holdings in Victorian literature and Western Americana. His bookish interests are wide and are reflected in the variety of his experiences in the book world. He has pushed throughout his career for a rational approach to book collecting, and for better storage accommodations for the preservation of rare materials. Through his efforts, the Department of Special Collections has become a major tool for research in the Humanities at UCLA.

In the following pages, which consist of tape-recorded interviews made with the UCLA Oral History Program, Wilbur Smith recalls his early work experiences and the twenty-five years he spent with the UCLA Library and the Department of Special Collections. Records relating to this interview are located in the office of the UCLA Oral History Program.

Alan H. Jutzi

Los Angeles
August 1974

INTERVIEW HISTORY

INTERVIEWER: Alan H. Jutzi, BA, Concordia Senior College; MA, Liberal Studies, Valparaiso University; MLS, School of Library Service, UCLA; Gold Shield Oral History Intern.

TIME AND SETTING OF INTERVIEWS:

Places: Wilbur J. Smith Room, Department of Special Collections, University Research Library, UCLA.

Dates: January 21, 28; February 4, 11, 20, 1974.

Time of day, length of sessions, and total number of recording hours: Recording sessions were conducted in the morning. Forty-five minutes were recorded at the first three sessions; the last two were one and one-half hours. This manuscript represents a total of approximately five hours.

Persons present during interview: Smith and Jutzi.

CONDUCT OF THE INTERVIEWS:

In the first two sessions, the interviewee provided an account of his earlier life, including events leading up to his career in the UCLA Library. The remainder of the interview was topically structured and dealt with the history and development of the UCLA Library and Department of Special Collections, library acquisition, administration, storage, and financial policies, collection development, and the part Wilbur Smith and others played in the growth of the department.

EDITING:

The transcript of the interviews was checked by the interviewer against the original tape recordings and edited for punctuation, paragraphing, spelling, and verification of proper and place names. The completed manuscript retains the original sequence of sessions. Any addition of words or phrases made by the editor but not actually spoken by the respondent have been bracketed. Mr. Smith reviewed the transcript and made slight corrections and additions.

The index and front matter were prepared by the interviewer.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS:

The original tape recordings and the edited transcript of the interview have been placed in the University Archives and are available under the rules governing the use of noncurrent University records.

TAPE NUMBER: I, SIDE ONE

JANUARY 21, 1974

JUTZI: Okay, I think we're ready. Would you like to begin?

SMITH: Well, yes. My acquaintanceship with the library here is what led me to apply to the job in the first place. I had been using the library fairly frequently as a researcher at MGM [Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer]. I was working at MGM. That was right after the war [World War II]. Incidentally, I got into the MGM job through an old friend who was a bookman, a mad Hungarian, Leo Linder. I later hired [him] when he got out of a job. I had known him since 1931 or thereabouts. We'd met in the bookshops here while I was a student at library school at L.A. Public Library. Leo, at that time, was first violin at MGM orchestra and was prowling around bookshops, and I met him over counters. We laughed at each other as we sometimes reached for the same book, you see; so we got a nodding acquaintance which led to a friendship. I had been working at Hughes Aircraft during the war. Then, in 1945, the war ended, and the contracts were being wound up. In '45, I was out of work. MGM, meanwhile, had a job open, and Leo recommended that I go around and see Richelavie, who was head of the department then. I became a fellow researcher, which meant that we were given scripts and

we were to do the literary research and all the research relating to details of background in a movie, like street signs and uniforms and religious customs, though MGM had its own specialists in religious matters. But we tried to foresee all the difficulties that might arise and judge from reading the scripts. It was a rather odd, interesting kind of job, but unrewarding in that when the final say came they paid no damn bit of attention to any interesting or good research that they put into it.

JUTZI: They didn't follow the story?

SMITH: No, they did what they liked. If the art director didn't like this or that, or the star didn't like this or that costume, they'd go ten or twenty years out of the way. When you think about it, this is just about what you would foresee them doing. I remember one of the pictures I worked on had a little business about tornadoes, and I took pains to look up what the actions of tornadoes were because what they had happening sounded wrong in the script. When I finally told them, the director didn't care. He didn't care a bit. This was my first disillusionment along that line. But I had plenty of others; so it finally came to be a sloppy kind of job--one that you didn't have very much self-respect for. Of course, MGM never turned out much in good pictures, anyway. But that was one of the reasons, I think.

Well, that job came abruptly to an end when the cost-plus factor began to go by the boards. MGM, along with some of the other big studios, had built up a huge backlog during the war. They took full advantage, just as the factories did, just as Mr. [Howard] Hughes did. They took complete advantage of all the profits that could be gotten from war contracts and made this enormous backlog of films, which included adding to the cost by padding up the departments--among others, the research department. It was built up far beyond what it had been before. I gathered that it had been before, among other things, a convenient place to put your nephew if he had no talents, and your wife's ne'er-do-well son-in-law or whatever, because those are the people that you found there. You didn't find, for example, professional librarians as a rule, although it later came to be a kind of status thing to have one, at least, on the staff.

JUTZI: You had already gone to library school by this time?

SMITH: I'd gone to library school, but I'd never had a library job. I had sort of sawed the limb off when I was offered a job or two by Perry, who was the local bigwig as head of the L.A. Public Library. That's Edward Perry, whose son [Caswell Perry] was a different kind of person. His son was a more amiable fellow, but old man Perry was a kind of a tough customer. However,

he did offer me a job. Through him, I got this contact for a job, and I turned it down. It was the only offer I had that was anything like what I wanted. Of course, needless to say, the Huntington [Library] wasn't aware of the existence of anybody in the L.A. Public Library. That was just a silly dream. I got a job, as a matter of fact, in a bookshop. In fact, I worked for Jake Zeitlin for a while. My job ended there quite suddenly with my getting an appendicitis. After I got out of the hospital, I got a job with the Penguin Book Shop, which was Lou Samuel's (who's still alive, by the way, though I think he's pretty rickety now). Samuel was a business manager for movie stars.

JUTZI: Was this before MGM or after?

SMITH: This was before MGM. MGM came much later. This was back in the thirties, early thirties. I worked a couple of years, a year and a half or so, for Samuel's shop. His shop was at 9675 Wilshire Boulevard, right across, I believe, from the Cadillac agency. And I only remember that because of the earthquake that took place at the time, while I was working there. I remember the enormous plate-glass windows, how they were waving, as I darted out into the street--as people did--when this eerie event took place. In fact, I think I was reading The Memoirs of Casanova when the earthquake took place. [laughter] I think I read that full set while I was at the Penguin Book Shop. There

really wasn't much to do. I did most of the buying and kept the shop while Samuel did the selling. I was no good at selling and still no good at selling. I could only sell solid gold, you know, if it was less than the going price. [laughter] Well, when that earthquake hit, we had a lot of Oriental artifacts--little knick-knacks, quite valuable items--here and there in the shop. Partly, it was material related to, I think, the Lafcadio Hearn Collection that we had, which had been partly P. D. [Percival Densmore] Perkins's collection. In some way, he was connected with it. I'm a little vague about it now. There's a catalog that the library has of that collection. I did about three or four catalogs for him, and that's all. They were miserable affairs, I mean, miserable from the reaction point of view. It's true that people were reading a lot in the Depression, but they weren't buying much. Samuel lost money in the market. He'd been playing the market. When the market fell, he had a nice house up in the hills, in the Hollywood hills, and I think it was a Frank Lloyd Wright structure, with a swimming pool and all that went with a successful Hollywood career. And he had taken to collecting books, which was also fashionable. He also had a kind of taste for books. But when the crash came, it finally turned out, as he told me, nothing that he had was worth anything except the books.

JUTZI: So that is how he got into bookselling?

SMITH: His house wasn't worth much, and it wasn't easy to sell it, even at those bargain prices. This is why he went into bookselling, yes. I think that probably there were other instances of that. I don't know of one, but there must have been, because it's true that books had been just a fashionable thing to do--you know, collecting high spots. Merle Johnson [American First Editions] was the great one--the bible of that time. It was a silly way to collect books. We used to have some extreme examples of the silliness of that kind of collecting. One of the dumber Marx brothers--I've forgotten which one it was now, but one of the less talented ones, the least talented one, the one that never did much of anything, who just stood around--was quite a gambler and crapshooter; and whenever he made a little profit, he would often come in and buy books. He'd breeze up in a new car. I don't know whether they were all paid for or not, but they seemed to have numbers of them. He'd breeze up and come in--he was a good-natured fellow--and he'd say, "What have you got in a dust jacket?" [laughter] He didn't care if the books were ever read. Of course, there still are people who collect that way.

I knew one of them here (who's dead now) who was a very nice chap. The only books he ever read were books not worth reading. He had never read, for

example, Hemingway. I doubt very much if he had ever read Hemingway, and he had all of his first editions. In fact, he sent all of them to Mr. Hemingway. Was it in the Bahamas that he was living at the time of his death? He sent his entire collection of Hemingway down there to be autographed. He paid for autographs. He wanted things mint and in a dust jacket with autograph. So he sent his entire collection and never saw the books again. [laughter] That was the end of his collection of Hemingway. He was quite good-natured about it and laughed over it. I don't think he quite expected it. Anyway, there were a number of collectors like that.

Samuel was a pretty good little hustler. He was good at persuading people to collect. The majority of his collectors were people in the movie industry. The fact that he had books and that he knew people who still were making pretty good money, relatively speaking, is what saved the day for him--also, the fact that he could hustle, talk, and was quite good with the books. Otherwise, he sat rather despondently in that shop, biting his nails right down to the bone and reading the financial page. He was never doing anything about it, but he was reading and rereading those pages. I often wondered what in the world would go through his head about the stock market. I don't suppose I'll ever know. He later became an appraiser, not just of books but of everything in the house. I think he was pretty

good at it. He was a pretty clever fellow. Now I think he lives alone. It's really sad, but it's a commonplace kind of ending for everybody: now you're alone, no friends to speak of, nobody ever even heard of you.

JUTZI: Did you work for Jake [Zeitlin] for a while?

SMITH: I worked for Jake for a short while. I never cared much to work for Jake because he had, at that time, pep meetings, which I detest. Of all people to have a pep meeting, it doesn't seem likely, does it?

JUTZI: No.

SMITH: It doesn't seem like Jake to me. I suppose he felt that he was obliged to do it. Somewhere along the line, some businessman must have said, "Jake, you should have pep meetings;" so he would have them. I found them terribly embarrassing. At the time that happened, Carl Zamboni was working for him, too. I've forgotten who else. It wasn't a long experience. It wasn't my first bookstore job either, because I had worked before in a bookstore. My first bookstore job was at Wanamaker's in New York. They had a rare-book section. Old man [John] Wanamaker had been a collector himself. As a prestige item, Wanamaker's had a rare-book room. I think this is the only reason department stores ever have such sections, because they never make money on it; it's always a loser. Old man Wanamaker, as I recall, was a collector of

Napoleona, and some of the more interesting things he had in his shop were Napoleonic relics. For the most part, it was just junk that he had--the kind of things that interior decorators buy: so many yards, such size books, and so on. While I was there, in fact, they got a shipment. I think there were 10,000 to 15,000 volumes. It would be typically late seventeenth-century, early eighteenth-century theological works and sets of standard authors in three-quarters leather. They were largely French. They must have leather binding. At that time, they were making a wholesale conversion of books into cigarette boxes and that kind of thing. They'd just hollow the books out.

That job didn't last very long. I don't know whether it was because I was a poor salesman or just what the reason was. This was about 1927. I'm not too sure now of dates. I've had such a ragbag of a career, I can't really remember dates anymore. At that time, I went from one thing to another. I worked for a time for Ask Mr. Foster Travel Agency.

JUTZI: In those days, everybody got what they could.

SMITH: This was before the Depression hit, but times were tough then. My brother and I had been to New York to seek our fortunes, feeling very much like little country boys coming to town, and had really a tough reception in New York. We wound up together in a very cheap, cheesy, little hotel in the Times Square

area, and we were way up in the top. We had signed up for one person. Actually, we'd take turns walking up the stairs. We'd take the elevator to try to camouflage our little chicanery. We'd take the elevator up to a floor or two from the right room, then walk up the rest of the way. But finally we were caught onto; when we were, my brother Ralph happened to be in the room. We knew the man was coming up, was following us, to see what we were up to. Instead of stopping there, I proceeded and walked on up the flight to the roof. I couldn't tell when the man had left. I tried to peer down over the cornices of the roof to see if I could see him, but it was snowing. [laughter] It suddenly took to snowing. Well, we were found out. It didn't fool him. He had come up to the room and told us to leave. That was the breakup of our little New York adventure.

I then hopped on a train. I rode the blinds--blind baggage. We did quite a bit of that in those days. You could do it. You can't do it anymore. It's physically impossible because of the way trains are made. You can ride the freights, and I suppose some people do that.

I went down to Tennessee, to a warmer climate, by train or hitchhiking. There were good days for hitchhiking, too, although they had their troubles. I recall once I took a trip in which I walked practically

the whole state of Virginia the long way, because there had been some murders. There had been murders committed by the hitchhikers. The only ride I got in Virginia was from a colored man. A black man picked me up, and he was collecting rents. As it turned out, when we got to whatever the town was, he said, "Well, here we are." I said, "Nice to talk with you." He said, "You know, I felt a little bit uneasy back there because, you see, I got a lot of money with me." He pulled out all the rents. He had just stopped in front of a bank where he was going to deposit these rents. Now, we laughed at that, because I said, "I hid what money I had in my hatband," and I showed it to him. It wasn't very much, to tell you the truth. I wore out my shoes completely on that trip. They were down to paper thin, and I would just wince when I walked along. I could feel every pebble!

I stayed down in Tennessee for a little while. My mother [Ethel Park Richardson] was down there. That's going back to Mother, as it were. We didn't have a home there. Her sister Katherine lived there. My stepfather [James Perkins Richardson] ran a prep school in Houston, Texas, when we lived there. My mother had taken over the headship of that school when he died, but she got sick of it and wanted to get into the theater. She'd always had a hankering for the theater and had always played around with little

theater in Houston, which was a typical little setup with ridiculous plays, with people running around in gauze. [laughter] It was typical 1920s stuff.

My mother did reasonably well in New York in radio--sort of a pioneer in radio. At that time, she'd been persuaded (I relate this because it does tie in with something you happened to hear) to collect folk songs, because she'd grown up in Tennessee. Her hometown was Decherd, a little town. I think on one side of her family there were mountain people. At any rate, in that area she knew and had remembered a lot of songs. In Houston, she met Sigmund [G.] Spaeth, who was a kind of popular music man. I don't know if you have ever heard of him or not. He wrote some books that were very popular at the time, like Weep Some More, My Lady. They were about sentimental songs and also about folk songs. He was on vaudeville, even. He would call himself a tune detective. It was all rather entertaining at the time, a novelty, since become quite a commonplace thing. But at the time, it was a novelty, and he had a very good knack for it. He met Mother through Mother's interest in theater and was amazed, as he said, at her memory for all these folk tunes, American folk songs. And so she began collecting them. Although she was not a musician at all, she was able to make simple notation. She went around by herself. She got along very well with mountain folk, and that

was not easy, because they are very suspicious people. They clam up on most people and just hoodwink you. But she got along very well with them and particularly got along with a hero of the day, who was Alvin York, Sergeant York. She got to be very good friends with him. He helped her in the area where he was. I believe that was in Kentucky, if I'm not mistaken. Mother roamed around by herself; she had a world of nerve. She was the tiniest person, but nothing daunted her. She would even take mules, if it was necessary, to get back into the hills and talk with these people. This ultimately resulted in a book being published called American Mountain Songs. It was published, I think, in 1927. It was one of the earlier compilations of American folk tunes. Well, this is what she was doing down in Tennessee at the time that I hitchhiked my way down there. I went with her on a few occasions back in the hills.

The one I remember best, because of the idyllic setting, was in the Smoky Mountains out of Knoxville, with those steep hillsides with corn growing on them. The whole thing was almost unbelievably idyllic for what it represented. A beautiful mountain girl was plowing the corn on this hillside. Now, there was this barefooted maiden. Somebody else was in the backyard of this log cabin beating out clothes in a primitive way. It just didn't seem possible. All the rest of it

was there--the smoke curling up out of the typical mountain cabin. It was just too good to be true. But Mother got to talking with these people she'd never met. She had met some of the others living in the general area, so there was some common talk about people. She got them to sing songs. I never hung around closely, because I didn't want to inhibit the process. This is a little bit like the Oral History Program. Too bad she didn't have a recorder with her at the time, in fact. But she had a wonderful memory, anyway, and she took down these...

JUTZI: ...the music and the lyrics?

SMITH: Yes. We were invited for lunch, and of course we stayed for lunch. The young man of the house had been out shooting squirrels, and we had fried squirrels and grits and gravy and coffee. At any rate, I dug into my bit of squirrel, which I wasn't averse to eating, but it was a very peculiar-looking piece on my plate which I learned later was considered to be one of the choicest delicacies of all. It was the head. I was supposed to crack it open and eat the inside. [laughter]

Since I had that experience, I saw a movie, a really quite remarkable movie. It had some kind of sentimental title like Of Human Hearts. Walter Huston was in it. James Stewart--I think it must have been his earliest movie--was in it, too. He was the son.

It was all very reminiscent of this spot and also of my father's father [John Wesley Smith], who had been a Methodist minister and a circuit rider in that part of the state--that is, in eastern Tennessee-western Virginia. It took him over to Virginia, where he met my grandmother [Lucy Jordan Smith], and he married her. But the strict minister takes his son around, and James Stewart, the son, eats in this cabin situation. The salad has a little frog on it, which he distastefully recognizes, and he makes a small scene over it. He doesn't make a calamitous scene over it, but to his father that was too much. His father later beat him up over it and told him he should have eaten it. I thought later, well, really, I should have eaten it. It was just good manners, but I didn't have such good manners.

We talked with some of those old-timers up there. One old graybeard, who looked like somebody that had come out of a New Yorker caricature, was talking about the TVA [Tennessee Valley Authority]. It was way before the TVA, but they were talking about TVA at the time, which was going to take over large acreage of this gorgeous country; and it ultimately did, of course. I just wondered what happened to that old man, because some of those old people spoke mildly enough but rejected the notion of having their places taken from them. I wouldn't attempt to imitate his speech, but

it was very impressive in the quiet way in which he said that he didn't think they would take his place easily. He had his gun in hand at the time--the old long rifle. [laughter] Those men were wonderful shots, you know. That wasn't folklore. They all were. Well, it was part of their life; hunting was part of their life. They really were offhand shots. My father knew that, too, and somewhere he had written of people that he knew who could shoot like this--with a rifle like it was a pistol. It was just like pointing. And they'd hit, too.

I had a few other bookstore jobs. I just drifted into bookstores, I suppose, simply because I felt at home with books. I think that's the real reason why librarians become what they do. They're at home and most people are not. I had poor jobs; I mean, they were just jobs as clerks in Bloomingdale's, places like that. Still, it was books, and I was amongst things that I felt at home with. I finally went from one job to another. As I said, I had one job at Ask Mr. Foster. I was fired there. I was fired because I didn't appear to be busy enough. Actually, I didn't make enough out of a job. I wasn't smart enough to know at that time that you're supposed to appear busy even if you haven't anything to do. The idea is that your boss sees you; he says, "I'm not making money off this man. Look at him: he's reading a novel there when he should be

licking stamps," or doing some ridiculous little job. It used to be that my colleagues laughed at me, and I wondered, "Why are you laughing at me?" "The airy, breezy way you come in, and you know damned well you're not doing anything, and you don't seem to even care." I must say that I got the same reaction when I was working for the newspaper, and I did get away with it there.

After working with Mr. Foster's place--I don't know what may have happened to me in the interval--I got a job with the Chase Brass and Copper Company in New York City. That was down on Lafayette Street. It was what they call the retail division, but actually they had enormous quantities of brass and copper and bronze in all forms and shapes--bit rolls, big pipes, big solid bars--wonderful-looking stuff. They sold things that were made out of brass and copper. It was a manual job. I think the idea was that I was to work up to be something in the organization. In fact, they talked solemnly with me about this whole idea of learning from the ground up.

It was tough work, because brass and copper was covered with a coating of grease and because the sheets which make a thunderous noise when they're handled, were put into shelves similar to map drawers. It took two to put them in. You often got cut up. The stuff was sharp and had burrs along the edges, besides having

grease, a thick coating of grease, on it. It was a dirty, filthy job. I could actually stand up my pants, because they'd be so stiff with that waxy sort of grease. It was a terrible and depressing job. However, it had its interesting sides. There were quite a few blacks that worked there at the time, and one man used to entertain me mightily. He would come in early; so I would come in early, too, just to hear him. He was a preacher on the side, with a wonderful voice. He'd practice his sermons. It was really quite an entertainment. I met a young Swede, a little man who could carry a 300-pound bar. He taught me how to carry weights all out of proportion to my real strength simply by proper balance. There was a way to carry things. So I learned from my little Swedish friend.

I finally did hurt myself, swinging up rolls of copper and brass to shelves that were way up above my head--six-feet-six or so. One day I swung a seventy-five-pound thing up there, and I wound up on one foot, which is a very bad thing to do. That did my back. The people in the place rushed quickly, as they had evidently been through all this kind of thing many times. They strapped me up in the twinkling of an eye, and they tried to get me to sign a waiver. It almost took me by amazement, the quickness with which they tried to absolve themselves of any blame for having caused the accident. They even took the trouble to

try to get me back to work as soon as possible, even though I was just walking around with little things, which I did do.

While I was working there, I was living on Perry Street in Greenwich Village. My sister was living in the same apartment house. As I would go in at night, I often met a man who lived in the same building. He was, I think, the Sunday editor of a paper called the New York Journal of Commerce. He would see me coming in. He had met my sister; so we got to talk and chat, en passant. He told me that he didn't think I should be working at that job at the brass company and asked me if I was willing to apply for a job on the paper, which I did do. I fabricated my history a bit. When asked if I could type, I said, "Yes, I can." I'd been at school at the University of Virginia for a year. I'd been told by my friend to mention this to the managing editor, who was a University of Virginia man himself. This made a hit with the managing editor. I exaggerated that case, too, somewhat. They decided to hire me.

I took over a job of filling one page--oftentimes running over to a page and a half, but one page as a fixture. I covered such items as a column on canned foods and another one on dried fruits and nuts. The cotton exchange--and the cocoa and tea and seeds and spices--was another little gem. I covered the prices on some other foods. In other words, it was the

wholesale food business, which meant that I would spend half of my day in the Wall Street area where the cotton exchange and the cocoa exchange and seeds and spices and tea people were. The other part of the day, I would spend on the west side, from Barclay Street, which is where the Journal of Commerce was located, and in the Hudson Street area, which is where the butter and egg men were. I didn't see them, but I did see the cheese people. It was rather pleasant, because I got to sample the cheeses. Sometimes I'd go out to lunch with them in mysterious places. They'd have eating places--I'm sure they still have them in New York--in the middle of a block, and I mean in the middle of the block, through subterranean alleys; somehow you get into these secret dens of wonderful eating places.

There were at that time speakeasies located in similar wonderful, unbelievable places. I say "wonderful" because you never could believe that there would be such places, judging from the outside. Of course, at that time New York was full of speakeasies. It was in the midst of the Prohibition era. For example, right across the street from the Journal of Commerce, there was a completely innocent-looking street, and there were plenty of speakeasies. In fact, there was one in particular where Journal of Commerce men would hang out. I didn't hang out in those places--not that I didn't like speakeasies, but my routines just

didn't take me that way. I frequented some in the Village, in that area, more. I remember the [New York Evening] Telegram was running a series right around that time on the quality of liquor you found in speakeasies and how many watered drinks you'd get. I think that they said at that time there were 30,000 speakeasies in Manhattan--some ridiculous figure like that. [laughter]

JUTZI: Of course, you could never see any of them.

SMITH: No, some of them seemed to be fairly obvious. Of course, the police knew where every single one of them was, and they even knew what was going on at all times in every one of them. If you don't believe that, I have plenty of proof that that's what happened. You can't live in that kind of a milieu without knowing what goes on. It wasn't as though speakeasies were just in one section. They were all over.

I remember once when we were on Perry Street, I was quite impressed by a little incident. A young girl--from a Southern state, I believe--disappeared. She came up to the big city and just had a wonderful sinful time going to all the speakeasies and places like that. Well, she disappeared, and her mother and people were frantic: "Where has my girl gone?" and so on. So they finally called in the neighborhood cop, and I happened to be around. I've forgotten exactly how it happened. The policeman said, "Well, what did

she look like?" And he got all the particulars. "Oh," he says, "I think I know where she is." He went and found her. I went along with the pair--the mother, wringing her hands, and the cop, who was quite bland about the whole thing. He knew what was going on. You see, he knew where everything was. He was as familiar with his beat as anybody who was living there. It was all quite a commonplace event. The girl was in a speakeasy, just singing away with some friends that she had been with in New York. It was in one of those places where you go in. "How could this be?" In the middle of this block, mysteriously, is a little den.

I got finally to the point where I was so haphazard about what I did at that newspaper that I was burning the candle at both ends, just sort of living it up a bit. I would be going to bed maybe one or two or three o'clock in the morning. Since I didn't have to report to anybody and nobody looked at my copy except the compositor down in the basement, there was no reason why I had to appear on the scene except to meet the deadline for the paper. I must say I got into some very bad habits. I got so that on some occasions I would not even show up in the Wall Street area at all. I'd get somebody else to get the figures from the cotton exchange, and I would fake some of the rest of

it. I don't feel ashamed of that any longer, now that I look back at some of those reports and at the reports that are being turned in today by people who write for big papers like the Wall Street Journal.

Most of those reports are absolutely not based on any intelligent and rational thinking at all. They're just so many trite remarks, except when you get down to details, certain details, which are not usually what the reader is really looking for anyway. He wants to know what the state of the market is and why. It was easy to fool me on the commodities, because there was no official board that I could look at and get figures on. I had to rely on judgment and the reporting of people I interviewed for telling me the truth--which would probably be true perhaps 15 or 20 percent of the time. I'm sure I was used on a number of occasions to report things that didn't happen.

It became demoralizing. In fact, I once wrote a column, an entire column, that could have got into the paper if the man who was setting it up hadn't read it instead of simply automatically setting it up. It didn't make any sense at all. He called for me, "Smith, come down here." I came down there and looked at the copy. I had fallen asleep at the typewriter, and I had written several sentences that were absolutely in a dream, that had no relation at all to what I was writing

about. I remember one sentence said, "As I looked down two shiny shotgun barrels." I was writing about canned peaches or something. [laughter]

I had met in New York the girl that I ultimately married. She used to prefer to ask me, "How are potted jams, Wilbur?" [laughter] She loved the whole thing. It was ridiculous, and it was ridiculous because I wasn't really interested in it. Oh, I tried to report what I thought would be the case, what I thought would be true, but it was pretty boring.

I must admit, I spent a great deal of time in the office of a man named Cronin, who had some famous brand of salmon. He had only that one account. It sold itself; it didn't need any energy; otherwise, he couldn't have maintained his office, because he never did anything but loaf. His office, as offices often are, was just a place to get away from his wife and family. That was the only reason for its existence. I was one of the loafers. There were two or three others. One man was a customs man for the Luckenback Steamship Line. The other man was what we'd call a Hudson Street chiseler; that is, he was a kind of a con man who made a living out of splitting commissions on this and that and little petty schemes. On the side, he was a con man in golfing.

TAPE NUMBER: I, SIDE TWO

January 28, 1974

JUTZI: I wanted to start by asking first why you decided to go to library school.

SMITH: One of the reasons I brought up the subject of working on the newspaper back East was to point out that it wasn't a carefully thought-out decision; it was simply that I was dissatisfied with what I was doing because I knew that I was just wasting everybody's time. It was a great fraud, because I've always felt since then that those people who write financial papers are the biggest liars in the world. They don't know what they're talking about, really, and I didn't. Not that I was writing exercises on the economics of America, but even in what I was doing, which was reporting on commodities and foods, I didn't really understand what was in back of it all, what it was that made the prices the way they were, why the supplies were what they were, and so on. Anybody could easily have faked that job, as I was doing.

Of course, I did, to some extent, act as a reporter. I interviewed and reported on what sold. But I also had to fill up columns, and I was my own boss and didn't have to report to anybody. My copy was not read prior to its being set up in type. Sometimes after

having stayed up too late to arrive there in time, I would come in as though I had been out on my beat. I would arrive on the scene and put together enough copy with scissors and paste by using the same crummy phrases they still use today to cover up a lack of any intellectual content. You used these cliches, thousands of cliches, over and over again, and nobody was any wiser. It looked the same as it does, more or less, now. [laughter] The market was nice and comfortable. It was unchanged, usually. I couldn't do anything very startling in those days of fraud. But I would come in sometimes and fake. It's true that I had a lot of paste-up stuff that would go in anyway. I filled up about a page and a half of copy every day except Sundays. There was no Sunday paper. Perhaps half of that, or more than half of it, would be a strictly paste-up affair with some editorial work. It was scissors and paste from reports that I got from one agency or another--the federal government or trade agencies.

JUTZI: You didn't want to make the newspaper business your career?

SMITH: No, no. I realized that I had nothing really to offer in the newspaper line. I didn't have the instincts of a reporter at all. All that was attractive about it was this free and easy thing that I'd made of it. It bothered my conscience that I was really not

doing anything--just doing nothing, really. I had the same feeling, finally, when working for MGM, that what I was doing wasn't worth ten cents, even though I was doing what I was asked to do. The date was 1930, I believe. Yes, because I had to go to library school in '31, so it would be late in 1930 that I left the newspaper--just resigned my position there. I tried very foolishly to get my brother appointed in the position in my stead, on the grounds that he knew as much, or as little, as I did about the wholesale foods market. Actually, he would have been much better at it than I was. He had a more practical way of looking at things, He could have made something out of it. I not only didn't make anything out of it, I didn't even want to. I didn't care about those people; the business itself was depressing.

JUTZI: So you came back from New York to school then?

SMITH: From New York, I came out here, and I stayed with my father [Paul Jordan-Smith]. He and my stepmother [Sarah Bixby Smith] were then living at 4800 Los Feliz Boulevard. He put me through the [L.A. Public Library] school, you see. But really, it was the attraction of dealing with books. I never had got over that disease that I got from my association with Father. For a child to be brought up in something that's obviously a great satisfaction on the part of the parents or whoever it is you are with and for a child

not to be affected is very hard. It's extremely catching. It's the most catching thing there is, and I think it's one of the reasons it is so important to minority groups to have books in their houses and to own books. If they don't own them, they'll never feel at home with them. That's why they wanted to start these dormitory libraries here, as they've done finally. The books are expendable. That isn't enough, of course; you've got to go back farther than that. You've got to go back to their houses, to their homes. Having gone to library school, I had a very unrealistic idea about what librarianship would be and what my part in it would be.

JUTZI: Did you find the school particularly valuable?

SMITH: I enjoyed parts of it. Predictably, I would enjoy reference work and bibliography. Cataloging was deadly. I loathed the cataloging and some of the other aspects of it, some of the other courses in the library school, which I'd be glad to say I've forgotten now--classification and the Dewey decimal system and all that rot. I found it pretty tiresome. Still, it wasn't all that bad. The courses in the history of the book were neither better nor worse than they are today--namely, very bad. It was because the people in the library school knew so little. It's pretty much the same nowadays, as far as I can see. My son Paul, who went to Columbia, told me they had one or two people

there who were quite good and seemed to know a lot in respect to books. It was not so here, although I must say I did like some of the people, like Miss [Helen] Haines, who became later the head librarian. She taught the reference course. There were nice people, too, of course, as there are nice people in libraries. Faith Smith was the name of one of them, a nice little old mild person. I can't remember now what it was that she taught.

JUTZI: You weren't able to get a job right out of school?

SMITH: Well, I think I told you, I more or less sawed the limb off. While going to library school, we undertook a certain amount of work at the [L.A.] Public Library--all the students did--and I worked there in the art library. I don't know why I should have been so emphatic about it, but I made it clear to everybody within hearing range that I didn't think much of public library work. The reason I didn't like it was because the library clientele that you met weren't really curious in the ways about books the way I wanted them to be. [laughter] Half of them really were poor people, trying to get in out of the rain. That's about all that were there.

While I was there, I understand that Joseph Pijoan, who was historian of art and head of the art department at Claremont, had been using our collection; and he, at that time, was in the business of compiling this

history of art which was a four- or five-volume set and became sort of the standard plug. It was a poor book, I think, but it was considered important. In fact, he was a Spanish citizen, I believe, and was a member of the League of Nations for Spain and thought himself very important; so he was also regarded that way by others. He was really a charlatan. And though he did know a lot, he mixed it up with crookedness to such a degree that you never knew where you stood with him. He took to plundering books that were in the locked glass cases. I learned about this because I used to eat lunch occasionally with the public library detective, who told me the seamy side of things that he saw day-to-day. They were fantastic stories. Among them was the story of Joseph Pijoan. He was busy with a razor blade cutting up. These were cut-ups for his paste-up job, which really was a paste-up job, too. I'm told that this was the kind of a history of art that it was. It didn't have much original work in it. But he cut up the books, and I understand that just dozens and dozens of them were utterly ruined by his razor blade. He looked innocently at them when they caught him and just explained why it was that he was doing it--as though this was a complete justificiation.

Well, as I said, I made it fairly clear to everybody that I didn't think much of public library

work, so when the time came to offer jobs, I'm sure that nobody even thought of me. That may not have been the reason, but I still felt that it was. In fact, for a little while I wouldn't have taken a job in a public library because it was too much of a departure from what I had in mind.

JUTZI: Did you think about coming to UCLA at that time, or was it too small?

SMITH: I didn't, because, you see, at that time I wasn't acquainted with UCLA. It was out in the sticks. After all, it had just really gotten under way out here. It didn't amount to much. It didn't have much of a library; it was the Normal School collection that they had. But at the time, it may have been something I should have looked into. I just didn't. Of course, between here and Los Angeles proper, there was a gap of fields at that time. It was a wonderful setting. I don't remember what it was like, but there were actually empty fields between here and Hollywood. There was Beverly Hills, and then there were gaps in between. So I'm sorry I didn't pursue it farther, but I didn't. And of course, nothing ever came out of the Huntington [Library].

JUTZI: So you went into the book trade for a while?

SMITH: I was in the book trade. I became a complete bum, finally, in New York City. I'd take a little job

now and then, not because I would quit but because that's all I could get--a little seasonal employment or anything. Also, my mother was living there, so I lived with her for a time. I became a complete failure as a salesman of vacuum cleaners and later sewing machines. My wife Ninon--I didn't marry her until some years later--remembers me at that time because I brought her the sample of the sewing I did on the sewing machine. It was the most pathetic thing. It gobbled up a piece of cloth. We were taught the different uses of the sewing machine so that we could explain it to the prospective buyers.

But while I was supposed to be selling the sewing machines--after I had visited a number of people and become disheartened about it--in order to escape, I would go to a small-time bookie joint where other loafers and ne'er-do-wells hung out, played slot machines, and read the racing form. We used to say, "Let's put up fifty and fifty on that horse," meaning fifty cents to win, fifty cents to place. I'd put up with somebody else--a dollar being the minimum bet allowed. There was a lot of fun in that. I look back on it with a certain amount of pleasure, because there was always hope every day that you'd hit some marvelous long shot. Sometimes they'd get arrested. I was not one of their favorite customers, because I had a way

of being oblivious to the detectives when they came around. At one time, Police Chief [Lewis J.] Valentine was cleaning up the police department. Periodically, New York City decides that it's going to be honest. It never works, of course, very long at all. But when they bring a reformer in, terror reigns in the entire force and all down through the little tiny crooks that absolutely saturate New York City; and it worked its way down into this little bookie joint where I used to hang out. This was during the reform era.

There was one detective that would come in and see the boss, Frankie, who was a tough young man with a camel's-hair overcoat. He looked like a typical movie gangster, small-time gangster. He was a tough little guy. He was given a terrible tongue-lashing by the detective, who tried to provoke him into violence because he was known to be a wonderful fistfighter as a gangster. But he took it all. There were numbers of incidents where Henny Schoeneman, who was the proprietor of this place, would have a run-in with the law, the plainclothesmen. I heard Frankie telling them about me. He knew all the detectives, and he'd say, "So-and-so came in today. Everybody quickly put away his racing form and his scratch sheets--everybody but Smitty." That was me. I simply was oblivious to his presence. "That's Smitty. He goes right on reading the racing form; he talks about bets, right in the midst of everything."

Well, I suppose I did improve after that.

JUTZI: How did you eventually leave New York and then finally come out here with MGM?

SMITH: I was in the class of '32, which was the last class of the library school. I got a job, as I said, with Jake [Zeitlin]. I had an appendicitis. For some reason or another, that seemed to coincide with the end of my career. I don't know why, whether it was by mutual consent or what, that I left Jake. I wasn't sad to go, frankly. I didn't care too much for working for him. It was not because he wasn't decent to me; it was just because he embarrassed me with his pep talks and so on.

Working for Samuel was a much better job, and he was a much easier person to work for, although he has not been as important a person locally as Jake. I told you about the Penguin Book Shop. But that job came to an end because we came upon disagreements, principally owing to my having a wreck with his car. In order to keep his overhead down, he offered to let me room at his house as part of my pay. That was all right; I got along fine there. I'd have Sunday breakfast with him and so on. There was nothing wrong with that. The other part was having the use of his car. He had two cars. It was a kind of a beat-up old car. Still, it was in good running order. I've forgotten

what kind of a car it was now. But that was part of the job and part of the payment.

I once called on Delmer Daves, who was at that time, I believe, a [film] director. I think later he became a scriptwriter. But I called on him once with a briefcase full of books, books that we knew he was interested in. He lived up above Los Feliz--in fact, right up above where I had formerly lived and where my father and stepmother were living then, 4800 Los Feliz.

I parked my car in front of his house, went up, and rang the bell with these books in my bag. I heard a funny sound, this little squeaking sound, and I turned around and saw the car running away. It was one of those deceptive grades; it looked like there was no grade at all. I had even pulled the wheels into the curbstone and put on the brakes, which weren't working very well. But the car had straightened itself out because the grade was steeper than it appeared, and the car ran away. I dropped my books and ran after the car, but fortunately I didn't catch it. I might have gotten hurt if I had. The car picked up momentum and ran away too fast. As it came to a curb, it simply went straight on and ran into a palm tree, and clunk, there was a great shower of rust. The car was in pretty poor shape after that.

Well, this resulted in a little fuss with little

Samuel. I don't blame him, and I don't blame anybody at the time it happened; but we lost our tempers, and that was the end of that job. He was a bit of a spitfire, anyway, when he lost his temper. So that was the end of that job.

On that day, I went to the phone for something. I think I had a hot prospect for a job. So I just left the shop, having taken all my things and put them together, and I left my wallet in a phone booth. All the money that I had, I left in that phone booth, while I went through several phone calls. I knew where I'd left it, so I went back after five minutes. The man looked at me with great innocent eyes and said, no, he didn't see anything. I said, "Nobody been in the shop?" He said, "You didn't leave it here; you're mistaken." So things happened.

After that, I got a job with the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, FERA. There was the FERA and there was the SERA [State Emergency Relief Administration], at that time; they were the depressing jobs that you got, that the government had made. They weren't bad jobs, except that the bureaucracy became an impossible thing. The kind of people put in as administrators were often very poor people. I mean, they were very bad men. It was an interesting job otherwise, because what I was put to doing was editing up questionnaires with transients or migrants. At that time, it was

absolutely unbelievable the number of people who came to Los Angeles thinking that they could find something. Anyway, it's natural.

California had cultivated this image of being the land of plenty, with the warm sunshine and lots to eat and jobs for everybody. They cultivated that angle, which was a complete fraud, of course. What was particularly fraudulent about it, as I later learned, is that if you're on the bum, have no prospects at all, and are going someplace, you'd at least like to know that you could sleep; but in California it's so goddamned cold at night, any time of the year, that you cannot sleep. In the southern states or even in the Middle West, you can sleep at night in the summertime. In California, you can't sleep outside at night at any time without catching cold, unless you're a big, hefty man with plenty of avoirdupois. Well, I wasn't, and neither were most of the people that were on the road. I say, "I wasn't," because I later got myself into that same kind of position of having to sleep somewhere at night without a bed. Not that I had a long career of it, but I had a taste of it, which was enough.

JUTZI: What did you do at the FERA job?

SMITH: I was the editor-in-chief of the project, which finally came to an end. Now, what happened to all that material, I never did learn. It was a heartbreaking thing, because you got the life histories of a lot of

people who came from everywhere. I remember one world's champion flyweight boxer. Another would be a professor of history from someplace. There were some very sad cases of people who had come here who were refugees from Germany or someplace like that and had thought that they had found the promised land. They just had the bad luck to arrive at the time they did and never seemed to be able to get oriented, never seemed to get a position. Some very bright people, wonderfully well endowed, couldn't even get manual work. The stories were absolutely depressing, and so was the job itself in many ways, especially if your administrator was something less than what he should have been intellectually. This was, I'm afraid, typical of a lot of the programs. They tended to be a political thing. The whole Rooseveltian setup was a wonderful morale-saver. The programs saved the lives and spirits of a lot of people in all walks of life. It was a wonderful thing that he did for the theater people with the Federal Theater Project. And believe me, there are plenty of gray-haired people now who remember that with much, much gratitude. There was nowhere they could go.

JUTZI: Did that job end when the war began?

SMITH: No, it didn't end. I got sick of it. Well, the job itself went out, and then I could have re-applied and probably could have gotten another job on

another program. They made little programs, and they all sounded good, even though some of them never seemed to come to anything.

I don't know that it was ever published or anybody ever did a real resume of the FERA transient project. The papers presumably still exist. It may well be that some very good things have come out of it; I don't know about them. But the research material is still there with the thousands and thousands of life histories. As I recall it, the questionnaire might be as many as six pages of questions. That's really quite wonderful stuff buried away. Everybody in the world was on the road, it seemed, and Los Angeles was one of the principal focal points for this traffic. You can't believe how busy the [L.A.] Union Station used to be in those days. There were throngs of people, just as though it was a New Year's crowd. Of course, when the war came along, that continued.

My stepmother at that time [Dorothy Wysor Smith]--I had two stepmothers--was in charge of Travelers Aid. She was a very good person and the executive secretary of Travelers Aid. I used to hear the stories of the Travelers Aid, which was terrifically busy. Well, they were very busy in all of those years--an extremely busy outfit. She was an excellent person. It was hard for the local businessmen to refuse her, even though they didn't like what she was doing. She was a tough

customer. She looked them in the eye, and they'd quail. That was Dorothy. She died just a few years ago. But she was for twenty-five years, I believe, executive secretary of Travelers Aid. She had been in charge of the Red Cross in the European branch right after World War I. She did social work for a long time. Where does this bring us chronologically?

JUTZI: After you ended your job with FERA.

SMITH: Oh, yes, it brings us up into my days of bumming, which were actually years of bumming, in New York City. Little by little, I would sell off my books. I remember well some of them because it seemed such a pitiful sum of money I got for some good books.

JUTZI: You already had a collection by that time?

SMITH: I had picked them up. I picked up books, mostly bought for little money at all. Yes, I had some books. For instance, I had all of Steinbeck's pre-Grapes of Wrath books, including Saint Katy, the Virgin, which I sold on one rainy day in New York City while walking around the bookshops. It's funny, a book like that would be practically ignored, because it's not a common book. But finally, I sold it to Brentano's [Book Store], of all places--a very unbookish kind of shop. I think they paid me $15 for it. It's probably about a $150 book now, or more. I didn't have many books, but it was a wrench to have to sell them, especially at such poor prices.

I went back to live in New York City. A lot of the jobs that I got in those days were on radio. My mother was a radio scriptwriter. Besides being a collector of folk songs, she had a radio program that dealt with American folk songs. I would participate on some of these programs. I even got to be a singer. [laughter]

JUTZI: What happened to that career?

SMITH: Oh, this was a weekend stunt. I couldn't stand that crowd, myself. I couldn't stand it. I didn't want really to go on with it. I never did. For a couple of years--in fact, while I was even working on the newspaper--I occasionally would take part in Mother's plays. It was one way of keeping the money in the family, I suppose. But there wasn't any great demand for me.

I lost all my spirit. Once you have gotten to such a low ebb, when your spirits are at such a low ebb, it never even occurs to you to somehow put up a struggle. It happened to so many people. It seems unbelievable now to think of it. You get to the point where you're afraid to ask for a job because you know you'll be refused. At least you think you will be. It's a kind of desperate, low ebb in your spirits that would make many people go into things like bootlegging. There were a lot of respectable people who thought nothing of it. They thought there was nothing immoral

with it at all, and I don't blame them. I must say, when I look back on it, I can't see that I can blame them at all. It's like blaming the poor mountaineer people for bootlegging. I wouldn't even begin to blame those people. They were trapped, and they were ignorant people. What else could they do? What have they got to offer? I certainly don't think that sending them to the city to work in the factories was any kind of answer whatever; and yet that's about all that they have now.

So when the war came, I was married. I had one child. I was then about thirty-five. I got a job with Wright Aeronautical, which made aircraft engines in Paterson, New Jersey. There was a period before that in which I was working for a cabinetmaker refinishing furniture. This was in Pennsylvania. For a little while, I lived in Pennsylvania on some money that I'd accumulated from one thing or another, and I'd gotten married. So we'd gotten married just about the year the war started, the early part of that year, '38 or '39. We found a little place in Pennsylvania--a cottage in the Delaware water gap region, a very beautiful region--where we lived for a while. I had a job there with a couple of brothers who were cabinetmakers. I learned a little bit about that business while I was there. It was quite fascinating. When my son Paul was born, I needed a little bit more money; so I went

into Wright Aeronautical, where I was an expediter or in production control. If you didn't know anything else, you could get into that aspect of things, in which you followed the manufacture of aircraft parts from the forged bars of metal on to the finished part where it's put into storage.

I was then living in Westwood, New Jersey. We were staying in an old Victorian house, which was so big that we used only one room of it. It was kind of a derelict house. We lived in the front room of that house with our small boy. He had a little crib that I had bought at the auction house. There was an auction house in Portland [Pennsylvania] near the Delaware water gap where we lived. It was a fascinating place. It was an enormous barn. Val was the man who ran it, and his life's blood was auctioning, country-style. I used to buy books from him. His prices were five cents for small books, ten cents for big ones. [laughter] I still have two or three books of his, and interestingly enough, one of the books that I have is a book that I'm just working with, an American edition of Evenings at Home by a man named John Aikin. It is a book published about 1805, an early American edition and quite a rare little item. I bought one or two good things from him. I had moved then from Portland to Westwood, New Jersey, while working at Wright. I don't know how long I worked with Wright, to tell you the truth. It may have

been six months or so.

We had got tired of that part of the world. The final deciding factor in our disaffection with the East (this happened when I was still living in Portland) was that when I opened a closet which I had not opened for several weeks, I found the books and other things that I had stored in the closet had got mold on them. Well, we'd been a little sick of week after week of rain or damp weather. And of course, where we were living, too, was just above the [Delaware] river, a beautiful river that ran through there. It runs down to Philadelphia. That helped for the dampness, although it was a beautiful place. We had, in front of our cottage, a half an acre or acre of wild strawberries that sloped down towards the river. Those wild strawberries made the most marvelous jam you ever ate. They were tiny little things. You hear about wild things being so good in jams, which is a slight exaggeration in most things; but the strawberries were wonderful. It was so moist that we would get toadstools and mushrooms; but as I said, the last straw was getting your book covered with mildew. My wife and I began to pull out the atlas and the gazetteer and look at places longingly: "Where is the most sunshine? Let's go there. I don't care where it is. Wherever they have the most sunshine, that's where we're going." I remember we decided finally that the statistics were in favor of

Phoenix. We finally had to decide against Phoenix, because where are you going to get a job in Phoenix?

So we finally decided, with no preparations whatsoever, that we'd go to Los Angeles. At least I had relatives here. I wasn't going to be able to live with them, but at least they were there; so it wasn't as though I was going to be in a strange city. I had a beat-up old Pontiac or a Dodge--one of the two--that I had bought for about thirty-five dollars. It was a real clunk. Of course, at that time, you could not only get gasoline; it was rationed. You could save up your tickets a bit--enough to get across--which was what I did do. But the real worry was tires. You could not buy tires. It couldn't be done. You had to settle for old patched-up affairs, and this is what we had. The tires that I had on the car were quite bald, and I had one spare tire, which was well patched. We didn't seem to even worry about it at the time. I guess young people are always that way. They don't worry about anything at all.

So we packed our little dog and our baby into that car, and with no more preliminaries, we set out on the Pennsylvania Turnpike. I had a mattress on top of the car. It was real Okie travel. I had a wonderful mattress on top of the car. That was another thing that you hoarded jealously in those days, because you

couldn't buy mattresses either. But that mattress became such a damned nuisance; it would slip and slide over the windshield in the wind as you drove along. We had something over the mattress, of course, strapped over it with ropes. Why, the wind would finally whip that away, and whip the covering, and your mattress would slip and slide. You'd have to stop and readjust it. We finally sold the damned thing. I was so glad to get rid of it. I sold it to a farmer. He was delighted. You know, it was a very good mattress.

We didn't have too many troubles. We did have a dead battery in an awful place in Pittsburgh, which is at the end of Pennsylvania. We ran out of juice right in a depression, which is what always happens, of course. The car went down into a very deep depression, and then it was to go up to cross the railroad tracks; and right at the very bottom of that depression at approximately 1:00 A.M. on a pitch-black night, suddenly my car--and I don't know how to explain it--went dead. I can't even tell you now what was wrong with it. But, oh, the dog started barking, and the baby started crying, and it was just a hell of a low note at that time. Besides, it was kind of cold. Well, I'll tell you, I finally ran across a policeman, and he was awfully damned nice to me. He must have been in that position once himself, because he went to an awful lot of trouble. He found us an awful hotel in a very seedy

section of Pittsburgh, and in this hotel we slept sideways on the bed because there wasn't room to sleep the other way. [laughter]

After that, we didn't ever have any real trouble until we got into the desert, where we had a flat tire. The tires began to give out on me. I'll tell you, I hadn't had any previous qualms about it at all. I never thought anything of it until I got out of the car and began to look at the tire and looked at the country around me. It was so deadly quiet where I was. You could see nothing in any direction. I began to get a bit of a chill. It was rather scary. It turned out all right. I was able to put on my patched-up old spare tire.

When we got here, we had no place to live and had to scramble for a little house. In fact, we got to scrambling pretty desperately for a house because housing was also another problem at the time. We stayed in motels for a time. Of course, the motels not only didn't want babies, but they certainly didn't want dogs. We were actually thrown out of two places. So while I am a mild person as a rule, I finally got to the point where I would do rude things. For example, when I saw a place advertised, and I was told that the man would be out tomorrow, I wasn't satisfied with that. I went back the day before, and while he was moving out, we crossed each other at the front door as I

moved in. That place still exists. That was in 1942 on 1410 Midvale, which is within walking distance of the university [UCLA]. Though I had got a job at Douglas Aircraft, I was in very poor shape. I didn't pass the physical exam. I had to come back for a second trip. The second time I passed, just barely.

TAPE NUMBER: II, SIDE ONE

FEBRUARY 4, 1974

JUTZI: How did you eventually get into the UCLA Library?

SMITH: I told you I worked at MGM. Well, MGM depended a great deal on UCLA. It was really the principal source for research on scripts. They used the L.A. Public Library--mostly the picture collection there, since they had one. There was no such thing up here. Of course, MGM had its own enormous picture collection, clippings mostly, which they made themselves. I suppose there were way over a million clippings, mostly from pictorial magazines but also from books that had been disassembled. And they used the [L.A.] County Medical Library. They never had much use for USC because their library wasn't that good. Principally, they relied on UCLA. A good many of them were awful pests here. It wasn't that they weren't welcome. There was one English woman in particular who was a researcher who tried and succeeded in foisting off her research problems on members of the staff. The policy's always been pretty liberal up here in the Reference Department--I think probably too liberal. A lazy person can make you work at the expense of all the others.

At any rate, we used to use UCLA a great deal,

and I got to use it. It had never really occurred to me--such was the defeatist effect of the Depression on me--to apply for a job here until I began to see the difference between this library and many others I visited. That difference really was, as I later learned, caused by [Lawrence Clark] Powell. It was one of an independent spirit on the part of everybody. You could just see it in people; you could see it in their faces, in the way they behaved. The impression it had on me was "Hey, I'd like to work in this library." It was different. It wasn't the same meek, humble, little crowd of people quietly going around like little cogs. This seemed to be, relatively speaking, a lively group of people.

I lost my job at MGM. They started cutting down their staff heartlessly and abruptly. Incidentally, a girl who was in charge of theater arts here, Anne Schlosser, who was to have been part of Special Collections at UCLA but left her job here and took over the [American] Film Institute library, just lost her job exactly the same way. In other words, it is sort of hardhearted. It really isn't businesslike; it's just hard. Without warning, you suddenly wake up one morning, and you have no job. This is what recently happened to her. This is what happened to people at MGM. It was simply on orders, I guess, from New York: cut down your budget to such and such a degree; slash in the research

department--which was overbuilt. It was padded up to fit in with that cost-plus factor that the government had given them. And all that fat then--it was fat, really--was cut out quickly.

So then it did occur to me to see Larry Powell. I didn't know him, but I did go see him. At the time I went to see him, they had been waiting for some innocent luckless fellow to come along who might take a job that nobody wanted, which was Gifts and Exchange librarian. It was a very tough job at the time, because there was no assistance. It was a one-man operation. The scope of things was essentially what it is now. One man couldn't do all that's required now, but the idea in that job was to take care of the university exchanges, which then was a fairly viable thing because the university publications, the scientific series, were more active than they are now. I keep hearing that they've dropped one title after another. I guess it's become economically impossible to maintain it as well as it was once.

But that exchange business is an enormous part of every university library. At the time, I remember looking at the cards and reckoning up what was received, either by gift or by exchange; and there were many gift subscriptions to this and that in the serials files, which were located then very close to the G and E [Gifts and Exchange] quarters. I think at least half of the

current subscriptions or current series being received were either gifts or exchanges. Maybe it was more than half, but it was at least half. These would theoretically be started in the Gifts and Exchange section. Of course, requests would be channeled into the department; or, if you were alert to what was going on, you'd notice the announcement of new periodicals.

Usually, you initiated your exchange through Berkeley. That was the way it was set up. (I don't know if it still is or not. I daresay it is, because the University Press is where they send them out; so it would be natural and logical to have a central setup there.) So you would write to Berkeley, and they'd do it for you, offering whatever publications were suitable in the exchange. If you had beaten Berkeley to the punch and there was only one possibility, UCLA would be entitled to that exchange. Sometimes there was more than one possibility. Sometimes you could get two subscriptions for our series instead of just one, because of the ad valorem factor. Otherwise, they'd have to try to negotiate another deal, or they might have to resort to subscribing. But we got an awful lot of them in the setup. And after all, the university publications were quite valuable. Everybody wanted certain series, and there were dozens of series then that were extremely valuable.

In addition to that, you had the Cooper Ornithological

Club, a rather doubtful thing that was set up here. I rather enjoyed it myself and became known as a birdman as a result of the negotiations. Since it was known that I handled these ornithological journals, I was the sage in the field of ornithology. When a bird got caught in one of the sections of the library, they said, "Go call Wilbur." [laughter] I was called to catch this bird. It was a humorous situation. I took it seriously, and I ran down and caught the bird, too. It was a hummingbird that had got down into the bindery and preparations section.

The Cooper Club had--I guess you'd call them--managers who took charge of the selling of subscriptions and the business end of things. They picked out very good, vigorous, hard-boiled people. W. Lee Chambers was the man at the time I started here, and he drove a hard bargain. He had done so with the library. They had given him space in the building in return for use of their publications. The Cooper Club published a thing called The Condor, a very good ornithological journal. They also published occasional things under the heading of Pacific Coast Avifauna. There were sometimes separate monographs as well, all of which were available in any number of copies for exchange purposes. And of course, every one was wanted by every other publisher or every other learned society that went in for scientific journals. It was a very

good publication and still is published by the Cooper Ornithological Club up at Berkeley. I think the old man--a very well known old man; I knew him myself from my childhood--Dr. Loye Miller was the editor of it. No, on second thought, it was his son, Alden Holmes Miller. At any rate, they stored the cuts here.

Mr. Chambers would come in with his stentorian voice; his presence was always known. Gradually, he got more and more favors granted by the library, just by being very aggressive and persuasive in his talk. However, he met his match finally in [Robert G.] Vosper. I couldn't handle him at all. He completely blew me down like a hurricane. I remember he had a signature on things that practically tore the paper apart. It was so savage; "W. Lee Chambers" dug into the paper, raced across it. He wanted a setup in the receiving room. He wanted the mailing done from here for free, including postage. I think he did for a while, as a matter of fact. He began to be more and more restless. They were very proud of the fact that they were always in the black--one of the few ornithological journals that's published that was always and consistently in the black. They were very shrewd in their selection of people. And so in order to keep that way, they had to go on being aggressive and finding ways of saving money by making you pay the bill.

We began to resist, and I finally got so that I

would refer him to Mr. Vosper. I recall one time he went in; in his usual impetuous way, he stormed in there, not mad but simply calmly aggressive. He came out smiling mildly. He'd talked with Vosper, and I learned later that he'd got nothing whatever, but he thought he had. This was one of the things about Vosper: he could quietly talk you into thinking he had granted you great favors; and you went out pleased as could be; and you had nothing whatever. You had nothing in writing. This happened several times.

I worked a year, a year and a half, or two years as Gifts and Exchange librarian. By the time I had left, I had gotten more room than I previously had. I had at least one full-time student assistant, or the equivalent thereof.

JUTZI: Were you able to learn where gifts were coming from?

SMITH: Yes, I found it a quite fascinating job. It was too much. I worked my heart out, and it was really very hard. One of the things that Powell asked me first was, "Do you have a car? Can you drive?" I used my own car; so I charged the mileage against the university. I also used the university cars. They had a fleet of cars to go out at a moment's notice, practically. Sometimes you'd get a truck. But this was part of the job; it was understood.

Neal Harlow had really been the head of Special

Collections in the beginning but had many other irons in the fire and was doing a lot of things. He was in charge of building a new wing (there was only one wing to the building when I first came), and he was the liaison man between the library and the architects. He was in charge of that new wing and also of the new stack core which was added and which you may notice as a blank wall at the back of the Powell building. He had been in charge of the Music Library, which had become a part of the Department [of Special Collections] at the time, and he transferred all that stock to it. He added on a new room next to the Photographic Department downstairs. I think that Neal was involved in getting photographic services as part of the library operation.

At the time he came, it had been in the university administration, and the man in charge was included in the transfer, a man named [Harry] Williams, a very bad man. He'd been in the Army during the war, and I think he was with [Douglas] MacArthur's men over in Japan where he was a major and had a job as a photographer. Probably they knew that he was not a very good man for the job, but it was a way of getting photographic services in the library. It was certainly needed.

So that became part of Special Collections; and, in fact, Special Collections became, as it sometimes is in other places, a kind of catchall for any kind

of operation that didn't quite fit into another. For example, the map collection was a big operation then. The library was a depository for the U.S. Geological Survey and for the Army Map Service, which at that time, of course, was enormous and involved an enormous number of huge sheet maps, some of which had restricted use. The Army was interested in having them in certain locations.

JUTZI: Did any rare books headed for Special Collections come through Gifts and Exchange, like the [Michael] Sadleir Collection?

SMITH: Not through Gifts and Exchange, because the Sadleir Collection was an outright purchase; but many collections do. Once they set up Special Collections, more often than not, gifts became a direct concern of that department--as it should have been--except for the actual physical transport. You wouldn't have time to do all that work or have the muscle for it. But maintaining direct contact with the donors was important. You could almost have a department based on gifts. It wouldn't be too good a department, because you'd have no way of directing what it consisted of; it would be simply a lot of disparate collections. This was the trouble from the beginning. I felt myself discontented over the complete lack of any plan to have an acquisitions program. There wasn't even a plan for it.

The Department [of Special Collections], I believe,

consisted of Andy [Andrew H.] Horn and Neal Harlow and Mary DeWolfe in the beginning--just the three of them. Mary DeWolfe was an art major who had joined the staff of the Circulation Department years ago. I'd known her from the MGM days just over the loan desk. She became, in effect, a departmental secretary. She resisted doing secretarial work. But she actually was in the library with the hope of becoming art librarian. It didn't work out that way, as it happens. She didn't have a librarian's degree. I think that she wanted either to be the art librarian or curator of prints, and she was qualified for that to some extent. She had been to schools back East, I think--to Cranbrook Academy or something like that. She was a very nice gal. It was demeaning to her just to type other people's work. It wasn't what she had in mind. I may say that she put up a fuss with Neal Harlow and Andy, and elf Powell backed her up. He had a tendency to back people up if they were cheeky enough to protest; and he'd say, "Okay." It was his way to let people have their head, and that was the thing that attracted me to this library. And I think it attracted a lot of people--the air that people had. It was really quite different, quite contrasted, for example, with Berkeley at the same time, where the librarians were meek, quiet little people who'd tread around obeying orders from on high all the time, and that's all.

JUTZI: People were independent?

SMITH: Here, yes. I went into Special Collections when Andy Horn asked me to join the staff. I used to wonder, "Why did he bother to ask me?" And then I remembered once that Vosper--who was a very uncommunicative person and still is--and I just happened by chance to come together looking for something in the visible periodicals files. He asked me what I wanted to do with myself, and I said that I wasn't quite sure but I rather fancied the idea of being a rare-books librarian. At the time, I wasn't even thinking of Special Collections. I didn't even know that it included rare books. I didn't know what was going on then. I was too heavily involved in what I was doing myself. But of course, I had been around rare books, and it was no secret that I was interested in them. I'm quite sure that Vosper paid attention to that. Maybe in talks with Andy Horn, my name had come up. So Andy asked me, and I accepted right away. They asked me to become in charge of rare books. I don't know whether you call it "curator of rare books." Call it what you like.

JUTZI: Neal Harlow had left then?

SMITH: Neal Harlow already had moved up into being the assistant librarian. I believe he was the first assistant librarian. Prior to that, Powell had been all by himself in the front office. So Neal became

assistant librarian and went on being liaison man for the building and doing many other things. He was a busy man, a very ambitious person, obviously. Powell had brought in Neal, and he also brought in Vosper. They were both his men, and I believe Everett [T. Moore] also was. Of course, Everett, at the time, was in charge of the Reference Department. He really created that department.

Vosper and Neal, and Andy in a lesser degree, were obviously very ambitious people. So the tendency seemed to be to move on up fast. If you were an ambitious person and let it be known, Powell would push you up and push you out, which he did to some people. I feel he did that to Vosper, Andy Horn, and Neal Harlow. They all wound up with good jobs outside of this campus. Neal went on up to [the University of] British Columbia and became head librarian up there and later went on to become dean of Rutgers library school. Andy, after he was pushed out, became head at [the University of] North Carolina [at Chapel Hill], which was a big job. Of course, Vosper went to [the University of] Kansas.

The job of being in charge of rare books really was not tailored. You made it yourself. They were just happy that I would try to make it. I don't think anybody knew what a rare-books library was anyway.

JUTZI: Did they have any set acquisition plans?

SMITH: Not really. The only thing they had were some

collections. Powell had built up a collection. He had made friends with Henry Miller, who was his neighbor. I don't know how long, but he was his neighbor in the Beverly Glen Canyon at the time. They got to know each other that way. And of course, Miller used the library a lot, and Powell helped him out. If he wanted books, he'd get them for him. He'd go out of his way to be useful to him. This resulted in finally getting the Henry Miller Collection, which is the best collection, by far, of Henry Miller.

It is an interesting collection especially because of his correspondence--all after a certain date. I think his early correspondence was never saved by anybody, because he roamed around as a tramp. After a certain time, his papers were kept very tidily. Once he started keeping things, he seemed to be a very tidy, workmanlike person, believe it or not. It sounds impossible when you read some of the books he wrote, but he was a very tidy, orderly man. That collection was the best collection on the literary side that the library had. The D. H. Lawrence Collection, which did come with Powell, came much later. Powell's collection and other collections, such as the Majl Ewing, were given to us.

JUTZI: When you first came in, you were independent and just bought what you felt like?

SMITH: Yes, Neal just said, "Go ahead and make something out of it." To make something out of it did

depend on the Gifts and Exchange, and it depended on the hope that when you suggested an acquisition it might be made to add to a collection. Many of the gifts that came to the library came through Powell's connections.

Others were simply gifts by the community, that were incidental connections with the university, and gifts by faculty--for instance, the [Frederic T.] Blanchard Collection and money that went with it. I believe I was involved only in receiving the Blanchard Collection in Gifts and Exchange. Blanchard was a professor in the English department, a Fielding man. He wasn't wealthy, but he didn't have any heirs.

I never saw his will, but apparently he left everything to the university. And everything was delivered, including all the dust, threads, broken spectacles, and shoelaces. This is what moving people do. When they're asked to remove the entire contents, they remove dirt, anything. There might be a dead mouse. They actually delivered, I think, thirty-five to forty great tins, each about the size of a garbage can, along with the book collection and in addition to the furniture. I don't know who had gone over to the house, wherever it was, and said what to move and what not to move.

But his desk came over, because I remember going through that desk and finding some rather pathetic little things. Hidden way back in a secret drawer,

I found a little book I think was called The Flea. It was a naughty little Parisian book of about 1900 in which this girl is looking for this flea, and she disrobes herself and finally finds it. It's in a series of photographs--a charming little turn-of-the-century sexy item. He had coyly hidden it away in back of things in his desk. [laughter]

But everything was there including his diaries, notebooks, and so on--all just more or less as he'd left them when he died, I expect. He had about 5,000 volumes of books, mostly a scholarly library, not a library of rare books at all. He also left money. I think the money was $50,000, which, naturally, I had my eye on. I was not entitled to spend it, but before it was through, I was spending it and am still spending it. You know, there just weren't any free funds around.

JUTZI: You didn't have that much money at the time?

SMITH: No money. There was no money. No budget. From the way Powell spoke, there wasn't intended to be any money at any time, which I complained about. I kept complaining about it until it got finally tiresome to Powell, and he gave me some money out of his money, because the librarian had a little fund which was to cover contingencies. There always should be some free money around for the librarian to spend or for anybody who might be part of acquisitions and who might know

about things and get around to bookshops and have an opportunity to buy quickly like that [snaps his thumb] without consulting other people. He finally let me have some of that money, and a little bit of the time I dug in on that. I would complain in an annual report, in some letter, or orally, that there wasn't enough. By continually complaining, I got a little bit more money and finally a fairly respectable sum.

Many librarians are very meek, the way that people on the faculty are generally very gentle, meek people. I'm not an aggressive person myself, but when it comes to books it's an exception. Of course, I did learn from Powell, who was quite vocal when it came to asking for money for books, not to be faint-hearted about it. This relatively small sum of money was given finally to Special Collections, and I can't remember now how long a period passed before money was granted. Maybe it was only a couple of years. It seemed longer than it was. I simply made my own way in this.

The university had only one policy as far as acquisitions were concerned. Now, I'm not speaking about branches of the library. The [William Andrews] Clark [Memorial] Library did have a policy of sorts, though it was not very well spelled out. But that one policy had to do with California history. It was vague. It shouldn't have been vague, because the problem was with the contest of duplication with Berkeley,

the Bancroft Library. It was senseless to be competing with them. I also manufactured what that policy might be. I decided, for instance, that we concentrate on Southern California, except insofar as the general history of the state and certain aspects of the early history of California were concerned, and also if we had good collections--such as the Chinese in California, which were mostly in the [San Francisco] Bay Area.

The [Robert Ernest] Cowan Collection was very good and had much material in it that was not in the Cowan bibliography. It was by such logical reasoning, and on those grounds, that I would try to raise money to buy a rarity that came up for sale. Powell started a collection called "local imprints," which was a very good idea. At the time, you could buy them for nothing, practically--that is, the run-of-the-mill ones. The very early ones always were very expensive. He started the collection as California imprints. Well, I narrowed that down because of the scarcity of money. I decided it would be better to say "Southern California imprints" and just make our own arbitrary geographical line from Santa Barbara and Bakersfield and the Tehachapis, on south to the Mexican border. Some of the beginning imprints, we never did withdraw. I later thought that if I'd had more money, I would have kept it as California, because I don't think that Berkeley did a very good job. They've had very good people up there, but somehow it

just didn't seem to be aggressive enough.

JUTZI: It seemed like Powell was interested right from the start in developing Special Collections.

SMITH: Apparently he had this in mind all along. He started to develop the idea, and in one of the library journals around 1946 or so, he had an article on the subject. I don't know what it was called. He also thought of the idea--a logical enough idea--that there should be a national rare-book group of librarians. He thought of it as more exclusive than it turned out finally to be. Of course, I guess he didn't see what was happening. He couldn't have predicted what was happening. Nobody did. In fact, it was some time before people even realized that Special Collections had grown and mushroomed up so fast--all since, I think, 1945.

Even though we felt very late in coming on the scene, we were actually among the pioneers in university libraries. There were rare-book rooms, but that isn't the same thing at all. Those Ivy League setups, like Yale, had fifty or sixty different special collections on campus, but none was really a special-collections operation. It would be maybe on Goethe or some one single subject. Many of those collections still exist in the Eastern libraries, but the tendency has been to drag them into the special collections. I visited some of them when we were planning this building. [The

University of] Pennsylvania, for instance, had various collections which they finally pooled, after probably a great deal of trouble and resistance and lack of money, to break up this very uneconomical and very unsatisfactory way of having things run. It was typical to have the so-and-so Shakespeare collection, which would be run by somebody who was just on the way out of the English department--some sleepy old man. This was typical. This is the way things were running at Pennsylvania. All of them were very tired-looking collections. They looked as though nothing had been added for a hundred years. They might have had cobwebs on them. But nothing was added to those collections because they really weren't part of anything that was going. They were just dead, sealed-off collections. At the time I visited them, the only thing they had that seemed to have any life to it was the Dreiser Collection. They had a little room, a little Dreiser room--about the size of this one; it was actually about the size of this--where they had seminars. How much can you do with that? I'm sure they had other collections that could have been pulled out. They had lots of rare books at Pennsylvania, obviously, but nothing that was really a going concern. Apparently, so far as I could see, there couldn't have been any acquisitions policy connected with it; otherwise, they wouldn't have had that look of having never been added to at all.

JUTZI: Was there any policy about what would come into Special Collections and what wouldn't?

SMITH: No. Larry Powell had invented a code, and I thought the reaction to the publicizing of that code was a giveaway to the complete ignorance on the part of the libraries as to what they were going to do with these rare-book setups. It just became a fashion to have one: "UCLA's got one. We're better than they are. Why shouldn't we have one, too?" So Larry Powell published his code, which was just rules of thumb on what a rare book is. It's better to have one than not to have one; that's about all you can say for it. It is just to say that you have one and that it is a consideration. You can't make a code that's any good; it isn't possible. I actually thought since then that probably it would be a good idea to have an elaborate one, even though there wouldn't be perhaps more than one person outside of Special Collections itself that would ever even read it. But to know that it's there for curious people who do come in--because there always are some, particularly in the Acquisitions Department. There's always somebody in there who is curious about the library at large--not simply doing his little job--and who is interested in seeing what the library wants in all departments. Bob [Robert L.] Eckert, now, in Technical Services, is one such person. There are others.

One of the things that I always felt was lacking in Acquisitions, as it was called when I first started, was the sense of being able to participate in the building of the collections--not special collections necessarily, but the whole library. Once in a while, Powell would make a statement to this effect: "I want everybody to have a chance to contribute." He knew that there was some of that feeling in the library, but he never seemed to be able to do anything about it that would work. I thought this was a fine thing to say, and I many times recommended things but found that these went in the suggestion box, which was a wastebasket. Nothing happened. Every time a policy of collecting came along, I sort of glommed onto it, and I think there were probably others that would be encouraged to do that, too.

One was the collecting of Australiana. I used to make recommendations for that. Even though we didn't have a collection in Special Collections on Australiana, we had certain isolated items, yes, but no collection as such. A catalog came one day from one of the well-known dealers in England, which was just loaded with good stuff, a great deal of which we didn't have. I checked it. There was a lot of interesting Australiana.

Australasia is one of the areas that we covered in the Farmington plan; it was one of our specialties. It even included local history. We got all the new

things that were published in Australia and New Zealand that dealt with local history, like the history of the Stoneywell Methodist Church from 1840 to 1900. Little publications like that came up. They were quite fascinating little items of local history. We got them all. We got them even with cards, as I recall; Library of Congress cards, they were. You saw that going on, and if you saw an antiquarian bookseller's catalog loaded with it, why not jump on them and check them? I did.

I checked this one particular catalog; I checked the whole catalog because it was such a good one. I sent it to Powell. I said, "I see that the library vigorously collects Australiana. Why not consider the purchase of these?" It came back with a note attached to it: "Why should we?" It's a shattering thing for him to have said. He must have known we were collecting Australiana.

At this time, I believe, Vosper had left. Vosper had been more involved in that. He had made contacts with the faculty. In fact, I think he used to keep a copy of [John A.] Ferguson's bibliography and [Thomas M.] Hocken's bibliography of New Zealand. He used to keep them in his own office and occasionally check the catalog himself. He got quite involved in individual acquisitions. I never saw him get involved in any other subject, but he did seem to tackle that one and, in fact, did build

up a very good collection. He put in the stacks a lot of stuff that shouldn't have been there, such as early colorplate books, which are extremely expensive now--$1,000 or more for one of them and oftentimes $5,000. These were sent into the stacks. We had an excellent collection that included both state and Federal government documents, guide books, rare books--everything except, perhaps, early imprints. We've even got some of those at this time. Of course, this was later developed. After Vosper left there was a hiatus of several years. The lack of an acquisitions program is the kind of thing that dissatisfied me. The Clark [Library] seemed to have fairly good acquisitions ideas. At least, they had narrowed the range so that their budget could cover some fairly intensive building in limited areas.

There was a kind of policy in regard to the collecting of documents based on the division made by government-documents librarians at Berkeley and at UCLA. At least there was a policy on those documents that were collected in the exchange program, because among the exchanges was a state document exchange which permitted us to use state documents in exchange for other state documents. So I think that Berkeley and UCLA divided up Canada, for example, and they divided up Latin America in a certain way, and so on. So there were some policies. All those policies eventually paid off, because it meant that you weren't scattering

your energies. And you see the depth now. You couldn't have possibly acquired that depth if you started from scratch today--except by means of photography, which is a very unsatisfactory way of building a collection.

JUTZI: Was the department still fairly small when you first entered it?

SMITH: The department was quite small, except that it had a music library and a map collection; and later on, an Oriental library was added. The University Archives was also a part of it, and that included what you might call "depository copies," which later was cancelled out by the University Press along with its exchange program. That went down the drainpipes. It used to be that the library automatically got two or more copies of everything published by University Press.

TAPE NUMBER: II, SIDE TWO

FEBRUARY 11, 1974

SMITH: Last week we started talking about what was in Special Collections.

JUTZI: What were the major collections?

SMITH: Various supplementary collections were added to the [Robert Ernest] Cowan Collection. I'm not too sure of the chronology of it. I believe the [Thomas C.] Lancey Papers came after. It may be that Neal and Dr. Powell and Andy Horn, one or all three of them, were in on that. I'm just trying to make some corrections to what I said last week about acquisitions. There were collections in that new building. It's just that there was no policy and no money. It was just a haphazard kind of thing with the general notion apparently of adding to what collections there were. The California collection and the Miller Collection certainly were going concerns. The library of a prominent Bay Area collector came up for sale, and Berkeley initiated one of those en bloc acquisitions which involved other campuses. Neal Harlow and Andy Horn, I remember, were rustling around quickly--because there was a time factor involved there--seeing what claims they could make on this for the Californiana, claiming as many goodies as possible and trying to get our share out of it.

Usually when these joint acquisitions were made in the beginning, Berkeley somehow always seemed to start these things and felt that they were entitled to a lion's share. There was this country cousin sort of conflict going on all the time, which apparently Berkeley still holds to, much to their disadvantage these days. Their attitude towards joint acquisitions has been rather peculiar. They were disgruntled over the [Charles Kay] Ogden Collection, for instance. The main cause of it was in retrospect, because they didn't pay any attention to it. Other campuses got very good things.

Of course, the Cowan Collection at that time consisted of books mostly in the stacks. Only the most obvious rarities had been pulled out. But at the time they started the department, some other gleanings had been made from the stacks, I think by Neal and Andy together. I don't know on what basis, because there were as many rare books left in the stacks as there were taken out. They were pushed into a cage in the department to await further processing, and I don't think they were even charged out. It was too massive a job.

When I was hired to be a so-called curator of rare books, one of the first jobs I undertook was to winnow the goodies out of that big backlog and then go into the stacks and pull further Cowan material out, which I did. I didn't really know how to approach it but

finally decided the best approach was to go into classifications that were heavily on the subject and just take the whole shelf. I did, too, finally.

For example, I went into the Fs, that part of the classification that covers the [United States] Pacific Coast history, and I took all the Californiana out. I just simply took everything on the shelves. Of course, there were a very heavy percentage of pamphlets; so I knew that it wasn't a waste of time. The problem was that you took what was there. What was not there, like copy two or three of some rare things and, of course, the books that were charged out, you didn't catch this way, and you had to go back at a later time. There were multiple copies of some quite rare items. I won't say "rare"; they were expensive minor items. I never did finish the job; it isn't finished yet, because 95 percent of the Cowan Collection was scattered in the stacks from A to Z, in every classification you can think of.

For instance, I remember Jim Mink one time tackled the Ts, which were mining. He was interested in the mining stuff. This was his contribution to the winnowing out of things from the stacks. A lot of good mining pamphlets that you never find anymore were among the TNs and whatever other T classifications there are. I think everything was in the stacks from A to Z; so it became an impossible job. It did

come in time--when I had time to do it--that I could recognize them by the spines, an awful lot. Old man Cowan's son [Robert H. Cowan] would bind books. He was a very poor binder, but his bindings were very recognizable, a very amateurish-looking job. You can be sure that was on account of his books.

They put the pamphlets in pam-binders, which many times were harmful but on the whole were very preservative of pamphlets. They were recognizable, too, because they changed the color combinations at different periods in the library's history. I got so I could just go along the shelves and spot them without even touching them. I could spot a Cowan item, and that way, I could walk fast down the shelves and eliminate them. If I didn't see anything that looked like a Cowan item, the chances were it wasn't. Of course, the other thing was that the bulk of them were nineteenth-century American books. There were nineteenth-century and earlier period English books in the travel section. The percentages were in favor of recognizing a Cowan book because the library was pretty small in those days compared to now. At the time, I think it was under half-million volumes when I first started, because I remember the half-millionth book.

Incidentally, I had picked out (because nobody else wanted to put much time into it, apparently) all of the memorial volumes that were the landmark

volumes, except for one, I believe, that Mel Edelstein picked out. It just got to be traditional: "Wilbur, would you pick out the millionth volume?" Or the half-millionth volume or the 2-millionth volume. There were some absurd things that happened with those memorial volumes. At first, we were so proud to have the half-millionth, millionth and so on. I don't know if we had a three-quarter-millionth or not.

I think it was the millionth volume which turned out to be a piece of Californiana that I spotted in David Magee's shop. It's a fairly rare book. It's a miserable-looking book, a very drab-looking affair. Gordon Williams was in the library at that time. He wasn't very much of a bookman, and his ideas tended to be on the corny side; and yet he was in the administration. I wouldn't criticize him on this, because he put us on the spotlight, suggesting it.

But he suggested that at this Friends of the Library affair, they would show Nicholas Dawson's book called California in '41. Anyway, it was his idea: "Listen, I'll tell you what let's do: let's have it in a slipcase or a folding cloth case made by the University Press bindery."

(Which is just a factory, not a real bindery. They always used to have some old-timers there who were fairly good craftsmen--considering where they were--and who liked to keep their hand doing something a little bit better than the ordinary binding job.)

So Gordon Williams said, "We'll have blue and gold, the UCLA colors." They had a box made which was rather gaudy and very much oversized. In this stylish affair with a lot of local folk involved, I was to bring it up as the millionth book; and I was asked then to take it out. (The Friends of the Library was established right around that time; so it may have been one of the early meetings of the Friends of the Library.) At any rate, the affair was held in the library building, and there was a podium and a sort of haphazard convention of 100 or 200 people. I had to bring it up, and Gordon said, "Wilbur, will you please open the book up and show it to the Friends of the Library?" So I put down this great, gaudy, blue and gold package--a crummy-looking, pathetic affair. We still have it. It seemed that I'd opened up a whole series of things to come down to this very unprepossessing volume--sort of a drab-looking affair, after all this great, puffed-up glittering package. I felt like an awful fool.

On another occasion, we added a millionth or half-millionth or two-millionth volume, and it turned out later when we wanted to show it that it wasn't really accessioned with the number. In this mechanical business of giving numbers to books, it was convenient to give it another number. It wasn't even close. It was something like 1,000,644 or whatever. So when

we were showing it off as a chronological event, the person looked at the number and said, "This isn't the millionth; it must be some other book." This kind of comedy takes place.

Behind the library scenes, many, many silly things happen--things like padding up your statistics. You see, every year, these statistics coming out. For some reason or another, Everett Moore is headed on the statistical thing, and he is one that always is commenting on it. He even publishes the statistics. I see the latest ones show UCLA steadily dropping behind. It used to be that we were considered phenomenal. There was, at the time, a standard rule of thumb about the rate of growth of university libraries--the Rider formula.* I think he said every sixteen years a university library tends to double its stock of books. Well, we seemed to double about every three years, something like that. We were really growing extra fast and putting on all kinds of programs for quick cataloging and so on and so forth. I think Duke and UCLA were the top libraries then, as far as adding volumes were concerned. Now UCLA, I see, is down to twentieth as far as added volumes is concerned. They've dropped down from, I believe, thirteenth, and they keep being replaced. I think the last time it was Indiana who passed us.

JUTZI: When you first came, what other collections

---

*Fremont Rider in The Scholar and the Future of the Research Library, New York, Hadham Press, 1944.

did the library have besides the Western Americana? Was the [Michael] Sadleir Collection already there?

SMITH: No, the Sadleir Collection was to come later. I don't remember the exact beginning of negotiations, because I wasn't involved in them. This was between Brad[ford] Booth and Vosper, if I'm not mistaken. They started the whole thing. Brad Booth, being a friend of Sadleir's, had his eye on the collection, I guess, from the beginning. I think that was the reason that he offered it to us first. But before that happened, we had also bought (I don't know who was responsible for the acquisition; it may have been Powell or Vosper or somebody else) the library on comparative education that belonged to Sadleir's father, who was Sir Michael [E.] Sadler and spelled his name differently. You know about the change of name? Incidentally, they keep misspelling that everywhere. They never would stop. I don't suppose it matters too much, because that name has been spelled in different ways over the generations. In three different ways, I believe.

I think I said the Miller Collection did exist, and it was a good one. Certain literary collections have been given to the library. I was just reminded of that by reading the article in the Wall Street Journal that has just come out about appraisals. I don't know whether you saw that or not. They're criticizing Ralph Newman for appraising the [Richard M.] Nixon

Papers and the various dodges that people have used since they put that 30 percent business into effect. Lawyers have tried to make the best use of it at a glance if they knew enough, if they knew the law existed. Many lawyers didn't know, apparently.

The first such dodge that I became acquainted with was a gift by Mrs. J. Morris Slemons. I guess it was her husband's collection (that's usually the way it works) of John Galsworthy, who, at the time he collected it, was a very fashionable author to collect. He later became one of the most unfashionable, because his prices went down and stayed down. They had an appraisal, which probably was an earlier appraisal and a fairly generous one; and they had a piece-by-piece appraisal, which the lawyer used. They had asked us to take possession of fractions of this collection each year as designated by the attorney so he could figure out the exact sum of money they needed for taxes for that year. He would write us a letter and say, "Dear Sir, will you please take possession of such and such." We had the collection stashed away in a closet to be all very tidy and legal about the matter. We had this collection stashed away in cartons in a closet. I thought it rather an amusing dodge. Why bother to be so exact about it?

You can accession books without even owning them. The library has done it, too--not for gifts, but inadvertently they've accepted whole collections of

people. I remember the undergraduate book contest one time. Somebody pushed a truck full of books in the wrong place following the exhibition, and this young man who had won the contest got all his books stamped and accessioned. [laughter]

It happened once when I was in the Acquisitions Department, too. A faculty man came in and put down his armload of books onto a book truck--you know, there were lots of book trucks all over the place--while he went around looking for things in the department. Apparently, he forgot about the books; otherwise, he would have raised a fuss at the time, and they probably would have been located. But he walked out leaving those books on the truck, and the next thing you knew, those books were in the stacks, cataloged. [laughter] I think there were about a dozen books that were involved.

To get back to the subject of what was in Special Collections--there were little nests of collections. They weren't very imposing, but there were good little collections and some bad. I remember two bad collections at the time that I was there that had recently been acquired, both by purchase, I believe. One of them was on William Penn. It may have been a gift, but it was really not worth keeping at all. Somebody had fancied that Penn was his ancestor, and maybe he was. He had built up this very amateurish, ignorant collection of William Penn, with a lot of news clippings and junk.

Some books--maybe two out of twenty--were worth keeping just as standard texts. The collection as a whole could easily have been thrown into the garbage, and nothing would ever have been missed. Well, we were obliged to keep it.

Another one, on William Gibbs McAdoo, was sold to us by Jake Zeitlin. We learned later that it was part of, I believe, a collection that Jake himself had handled, and that it was the leftovers, either duplicates or oddments that turned up later. (Pieces of collections sometimes get separated from the main body; and they drift onto the market, or people forgot them or mislaid them or had them in their own room or something; and they eventually will come up.)

That piece over there on the wall is a piece in that category. [pointing to a cameo] That is John Bowring. I guess that's the pronunciation of his name. This was only one of several pieces that somehow turned up in that same way. Bill Wreden sold us a lot of the papers of Sir John Bowring, who was, I think, British plenipotentiary at Hong Kong and also in Hawaii. He was a very remarkable man--a translator and a great linguist. But somehow Wreden got ahold of this nest of goodies, and he sold them to us and, later on, found some more somewhere in the corner. I don't believe this was a racket; it was just an accident the way things happened. Then, at another time, he found this thing

that had been stashed away. It was broken.

Incidentally, it was fixed very expertly by Jim Mink. He goes in for fixing things, including gilding and all the rest of it. I can't imagine Jim doing it, but that is one of his hobbies. I think he did a very good job, because it was a bit grubby and had some breaks in the frame.

In current literature, Powell apparently had the idea of building an Ezra Pound collection, because he bought here and there. But there was no real system to it. He never said, "I'm going to build a Pound collection," but these books came to us. The routine was that books would come in to acquisitions or some other way. If some milling person called my attention to them--if it happened at the time when I was in the department--I'd be the one who would look and judge whether or not it should be in Special Collections. The theory was--although this was never written down--that anything that Special Collections <u>says</u> belongs in Special Collections <u>does</u>. Of course, it's open to controversy. But this is the usual way, I believe.

This was one of the few things that [Donald] Coney offered to Ken Carpenter when he took over the rare-book room at Berkeley. Practically the only power that he gave him was the power of deciding whether or not a book should be in Special Collections or shelved elsewhere. If you don't do that, then you might as

well not have a rare-book room. If there isn't somebody--one person, one office in the library--that makes that decision, then you haven't got any.

Sometimes you get into little duels, but that's natural. We used to have troubles over books in the biological sciences, for instance. Even though they belonged in collections, Louise [Darling], who's very greedy and a very excellent librarian (all good librarians are greedy), apparently had told her sub-librarian, "Get all the books in the Qs and all the books that pertain to biology." It is a kind of foolish blanket thing to say. They tried it, but they finally gave up on it because I resisted too many times. I didn't by any means resist all the time, because I realized that the setup was that biological sciences were to go to the medical setup. When the time came, I didn't resist the idea of all the ornithological works, for example, going over there.

But there were other things that went over there under this blanket thing that really didn't belong because they belonged in the main library--such as the Challenger Reports, which are great classics that are of interest to anybody in the history of science and in other areas, too. The history of science was not necessarily something that could be taken care of by the Medical Library and only the biological sciences. Anyway, the little squabbles over what belongs where

didn't really concern us much at that time. There were quite a few pocket songsters, that should have been on shelves, which were in the Music Library. They even had manuscripts.

I saw Neal Harlow, the first head of the Department [of Special Collections], the other day. He lurks around the library very quietly; he doesn't seem to want to be noticed. Nobody knows who he is, really, except me. It seems he is doing a little research on his own as a retired person. We were just talking about old times the other day, and I said, "You know, most people don't realize that the first publication of the University Library was the publication of Murman botanical water-color drawings of California flora." He said, "No, that isn't the first." He said, "To tell you the truth, I hadn't realized that, but there was one that preceded that"--one that I didn't know about--"and it had to do with music." I don't even know what it is now. He told me what it was.

From the old WPA [Works Projects Administration], we had some kind of a means of reproducing things [ozalid] like the masters of a dissertation or Xerox masters. These were opera and operetta scores and so on, many of which were in great demand at the time. They were turned over to us. It was a slightly doubtful thing, because we got involved in a lot of work that we wondered whether the University Library should be

involved in. If the symphony orchestra of Honolulu wanted to play No, No, Nanette or something--whatever we happened to have--we would sell it to them more or less at cost. I don't know whether there was a figure in there that amortized part of the operation, but it was mostly at cost. We'd reproduce the entire score. We got into some copyright squabbles, too, which we turned over to the university attorney. I don't think we ever really lost a case, but there were several cases involved.

So apparently, somewhere along the line, we published something. Whether it was a bibliography of those scores or what it was, I should have taken notice at the time, but didn't. I think to this day there is not a librarian in the University Library who would know either one of those things, because they really aren't books--although for the Murman drawings, we had a very talented graphic artist in the department at the time who drew up a title page: a regular title page--"University of California, Los Angeles; Flora of California."

It was drawn by Eugene O. [Otto] Murman, who was an ancient old chap, an octogenarian, who nevertheless without glasses drew these really exquisitely, delicately detailed botanical drawings of California flora. There were over 600 of them altogether on bristol board about sixteen-by-twelve inches. It's too bad that he

didn't use the best quality board, because they'll probably fall apart eventually. You couldn't persuade him not to be extra thrifty about it. We bought them from him periodically. Now they would make a wonderful publication. The publication that I mentioned was a selection; so this was something that had already started when I came into the department. It had just been started, really, by Powell.

Powell started a great many things that people have forgotten about in the collections here, including the children's book collection. He started that with a small fragment and not a very important collection; but locally it had a lot of sentiment to it, and it was a nice little collection to begin with. That was the Olive Percival Collection. I just picked that up, and my part in it was rescuing it from oblivion, because it was stashed away in a little coat closet and not cataloged, really.

There were collections that were around that were just stepchildren, as it were. I think this probably is also part of the pattern of other university libraries; that is to say, their collections are pushed here and there--preferably into some dark corner where they might be forgotten for a while--because the current administration didn't know quite how to handle them. I mean, how are we going to process these? We can't catalog them all.

For instance, the [Arthur Maxime] Chuquet Collection, which is pamphlets, for some years must have been shunted here and there. Finally, it was in the receiving room of the library--thousands of pamphlets, more or less from the French Revolution period, French and German and English. It was a fairly important research collection at the time for UCLA. This was in the receiving room. In fact, we never fully assembled it until we could tidy up the receiving room, because it was a shambles at all times. There were boxes all over the place. People would say, "Hey, here's some more Chuquet pamphlets." It was that kind of thing.

This was what happened also with the hymn-book collection of George Pullen Jackson. It was stashed away under the desk of Debbie King. She'd had it in there for a long time, and she pointed it out to me one time: "I wonder what we're ever going to do with that collection. Are you interested in that?" At the time, I'd just got into Special Collections, and so we didn't. I pulled it out, and it was all in one wooden crate. I don't know how long it might have stayed there, but it wasn't her responsibility, really. I guess Wayland Hand had been in back of the acquisition. He did his part in getting the collection, but the library didn't know what to do with it. The trouble was that the books were fragile, and at the same time they were very rare, irreplaceable books. Well, we took it over.

We got into trouble later on--I say "trouble"--we got into a little exchange with people in the music department who years later got interested in the George Pullen Jackson Collection as a collection. I had simply taken it as so many rare hymn books, and then put the nonrare stuff, the stuff that you can buy today, in the stacks, and just kept the hymn books themselves or anything else that seemed to require special attention. So what they tried to do was to reassemble it, although there was a typed list with the collection. It was in that same crate I mentioned. That list was inaccurate; it wasn't complete. It also mentioned a few things that never were there, which caused a little trouble. Every once in a while, somebody sees the usefulness of reassembling a collection that has been dispersed.

How can you foresee it all? You can't foresee it always--like the Edgeworth books that we have combined here. There are over 800 volumes in that collection. Well, probably if you'd kept on and put together about 3,000, that would be substantially the Edgeworth library. But you can imagine: it would take a long time. It might well be worth doing, but I don't know that it would. [Thomas] Jefferson's library had some generations trying to put that together. That would be much more important, of course.

JUTZI: Did you have any kind of system of storage and system for filing and keeping reports when you first came?

Were all the administrative procedures settled and organized by that time?

SMITH: No. I don't know whether Neal Harlow did this, but Andy Horn was a very efficient fellow and a very well organized person. I tried to keep pace with the kind of report, the kind of detailed reporting that he did; believe me, it was too much. I couldn't do it. It wasn't my style, either. It was very good, but for a historian it was perfect. These reports were so detailed. I could have done it, but I guess I didn't want to. It was more of an effort for me. For Andy, it was easy. Andy is one of those people that turns out more work than any three put together in the library. He seems never to need sleep, for instance. I don't know now who was really responsible for setting up our collection spot. It wasn't I. I approved of it and really have somehow elaborated on it. I don't really remember, but it was an excellent idea.

The organization of the collections themselves was another thing. There was no pattern to follow. For instance, there was the map collection. Do you catalog maps? If so, how? How do you catalog them? There was no real guide to that. The Library of Congress finally came up with its own system, which they don't use themselves. As their collections are so vast, I guess, they decided they couldn't. I don't know how things stand now, but their collection would cost

millions of dollars to catalog in any kind of detail; it's such a gigantic collection. But Neal Harlow and Andy, I believe, were joint authors of this little manual on how to catalog maps--which has been reproduced for other people to use, apparently, at one time or another, but which I never hear of anymore. I guess since then other ways of doing things have come out. We used that system, more or less. We usually file maps by place.

At different times, it was less convenient than others to let users actually use the collection instead of paging for it. Since we weren't up to date in our cataloging, the easiest thing would be to simply let you use it. If you wanted to see the maps of San Bernardino County, we would show you where they are and let you thumb among them to decide what you want and what you don't want. Actually, in the long run as far as working was concerned, that seemed to be the most economical for everybody, including the user.

The University Archives had also been set up by Neal or Andy or both. I don't know whether Neal ever had archive training; Andy Horn did. I think Neal was responsible for sending him back to the archives school [National Archives]--the same one that Jim Mink attended later. So Andy became at least acting archivist. There was no official archivist of the university at the time. There wasn't for a long time. I don't know why the university resisted it, because Berkeley did have

an archivist. Jim Mink was actually doing archives work for years. For some reason, both Powell and Andy would refuse to give him the title.

I know Andy one time told me, just about the time that he was leaving, that he had created a little nest for himself in case he should want to come back to it. because he was, I guess, a little doubtful about what he would do with himself. He'd been a teacher originally, a professor of history at Johns Hopkins [University] at one time. I don't know whether he got to be associate professor or not, but assistant at least. For some reason, things didn't pan out. The teaching didn't pan out for him, and he decided to leave it. He took the job here in the library, I believe, as a nonprofessional and later went to library school. I just gather this from my own observation, not from anything Andy told me, but I gathered that Powell pushed him, as he's done other people, and was pushing him out of the nest, as it were, and that maybe Andy was somewhat reluctant to be pushed out at the time. He told me once that his little nest he had prepared was the job of University Archivist, which would be rather an isolated little job that he could do well without trying.

That whole business of the University Archives became a problem for me. I didn't like it. It watered down what I considered the main purposes of the

department, which was, I felt, the center of our study in humanities--graduate study, principally. That was my own feeling about the department. Anything that cut seriously into the time that would go into the building and servicing of those collections and making them available, I resented. It also took money. For example, we had the responsibility for saving the university's papers that related to university history. Of course, we had certainly got all the library back files. Jim had gotten departmental papers insofar as the departments were willing to release them, because at that time we didn't really have the law on our side which said you must submit your papers to the University Archivist.

We had the files of the faculty publications. These were primarily the files of their own publications that were used principally for their own promotions. It was an interesting thing to have, although I didn't really want them in the library. It was used also by students who wanted to butter up their professors by having pretended, at least, familiarity with their writings. It was really rather an amusing little exercise, if you're interested in the vanity of the faculty. You certainly observe it in them. Some of them were terribly eager to have everything that they'd ever published, including offprints and rehashes of other articles, pinpointed in their listings. Others

didn't care. Either they were not vain people or particularly ambitious to begin with, or they got to the point where they didn't care much at all. There were a great many of those who would never have more than a fraction of their publications on file at one time. But we had to keep those files; and of course, being responsible for them, we had to put some of the time of the staff into it.

At various times, the departmental secretary would take over certain kinds of collections. We had some very bright kids that were working as department secretary. They were as good as any others as far as brains were concerned. I remember Jackie Woodward, who was departmental secretary at one time. I turned over to her this faculty file, among other things. She wanted to get cracking on it and didn't want to just slide along and tidy it up. She wanted to get the thing moving, in apple-pie order, and complete the way it should be. She dug out form letters addressed to different members of the faculty at that particular time asking them to please submit their publications and telling them how important it was. Actually, I could see that this was a mistake. The whole thing tended to snowball. As for the rest of the archives--that is to say, the gathering together of the papers of different departments of the administration as well as the teaching departments--there was a law that if you

had an official archives set up, with that goes the power to edit, to say what does and does not go into the University Archives, and to actually periodically receive this material. Well, once we got started with that, I could see it would lead to an absolutely immense amount of material. For one thing, years had gone by without any gathering together of this stuff. Fortunately, some of it was thrown away. I say "fortunately" because I wasn't really much in sympathy with it being a Special Collections operation.

JUTZI: It should have administratively been under another department?

SMITH: My feeling was (and I must say that Vosper finally agreed with me when he became librarian) that it would be better off a separate operation. I tried to persuade Jim [Mink] that it would be a good job for him. He was good at it, and he was trained for an archives position. It offered the possibilities of getting into a pretty high classification. Official University Archivist is a good job. It's certainly at least the equivalent of L[ibrarian]-V, if not higher--probably higher. He didn't seem to mind the idea at the time. But of course, that was some time ago.

Also, we were involved in keeping the publications of the university. In theory, we had a complete archive of the university publications, at least the scientific series and the books put out by the University Press.

We didn't actually have a complete one, but it was a very good one and a very big one. It included things like the series on zoology. I think we were publishing at the time a rag-paper copy of those periodicals. Maybe they still do; I don't know. There was the choice between the rag paper and the ordinary paper. The University Archives got the so-called "copy one" of the multiple copies received by the university. So that occupied a lot of space, and it took up a lot of room in the library, as well as a little time in processing. There were also the dissertations and theses. Why the University Library should have had to take over that responsibility was beyond me. I still don't understand why. I can understand the interest; I see a small part of the reasoning in back of it.

TAPE NUMBER: III, SIDE ONE

FEBRUARY 11, 1974

JUTZI: How did you eventually become head of Special Collections?

SMITH: I simply slid into the job, that's all. [laughter] I'd never dreamed of having it. In fact, at that time, I thought that I was just where I wanted to be. As a matter of fact, that is just where I belong; I didn't belong higher or lower. I've always felt that it was a mistake to be rushed into it, but I was rushed into it. I respected Ed Carpenter and his point of view. On paper, it looked like Ed should be head librarian--because, after all, he's got a doctorate, he's got all this experience. But Ed knew better. He didn't belong there. He didn't want to, either. And he resisted and he resisted it.

I should have done what Ed did--stay put, stay where you belong, where you want to be. The trouble is you get tied up with others who are ambitious. Now Andy was ambitious just like Neal had been. So it was convenient for Andy that I was at hand. I think Andy must have known that I didn't really have a flair for administrative work at all. I was handy for him; so he recommended that I be made head of the department. And there was never, apparently, any problem about it

when Andy moved up. Once Andy moved up, I reported to him; but he was involved in other things, and there wasn't too much contact except for reports. There wasn't very much contact, really, between Special Collections and the administration, except when an occasional little problem came up or when we needed something--monetary support or whatever it might be.

The business about Special Collections being a catchall, in a number of instances, was a problem. It wasn't just the University Archives. In my opinion, the map collection was not a special collections operation. It was true that it was an awkward format; maps are not books. But the map collection was a pretty good-sized collection, and my feeling was that it, along with the Music Library, and later on the Oriental Library, weren't part of the main operation at all. It was again that the Oriental Library wanted to belong to somebody. Mrs. Man-hing Chen didn't want to be a separate operation, so she became a part of Special Collections. The Music Library, I don't know why. It was probably because of the WPA recordings that I've mentioned--that big collection of masters. There was a lot of nonbook stuff, and there was considerable activity in this collection; so perhaps that was the reason it became part of Special Collections.

I tried little by little to rid myself of these things, and we succeeded. I felt very proud of the

fact that I had done away with the map collection and that we had made a division. We didn't want to unload it all, because naturally there are rare maps and they need special attention. So we made kind of a big breakdown on that. I think the breakdown was that we were just to keep all nineteenth-century and earlier maps of California. I don't know what the cutoff date was, if there was one, on other early maps. We had the reference map collection of a man named [Stuart] de Rothesay, who was the English ambassador to France during the Napoleonic campaigns. It was a wonderful reference collection of European maps and rare atlases. I think sensible divisions were arrived at, finally, between the main library and what finally became the Map Library.

At the time, there were three map libraries on the campus. That was another argument--that you had a split. You had the geology map collection, which was a fairly good sized collection, too. You had Special Collections, which was the biggest of the three. It had lots of geological maps. In fact, we were a depository for U.S. geological maps. And then there was the geography department's map collection, in which there was considerable duplication, and [which was] one that would be continued. So it didn't get too many arguments once you got the idea roughly accepted. There weren't too many arguments about the decision to split the

collection. A big part of it, really, would be the geography department collection, where they could have, presumably, trained map geographers in charge--which they did ultimately get. Unfortunately, they haven't stuck to the rules. This is the problem of administration. I suppose, since I've seen it happen in other departments, it must be a problem everywhere. It's one in which a strong enough administration can enforce it if it wants to. It may be more labor than it's worth. With music, as well as with the map collection, we had the trouble of their finally drifting back into acquiring everything they wanted, including books and atlases. It is a very uneconomical thing, too; because, finally, if it becomes accepted that you're collecting everything, then you have your justification for acquiring an extra budget and then finally additional facilities as well as specialists to take care of things in the proper way. In the case of music, maps, the Oriental Library, and the archives, all of those I wanted to get rid of. We made some success, but we never got rid of them.

More recently, since I left, I believe Jim [Mink] finally succeeded in getting Vosper, or whoever else might have been involved, to agree to dispense with the University Archives collection of University Press publications--which is a big, enormously bulky thing which is not used very much at all. There is a University Archives at Berkeley. In a statewide

university, perhaps you don't need two complete collections of all publications. There are a lot of wonderful books amongst them. I trust that Jim pulled out those that relate to California. We practically never used these books, and people know that we have them. They don't see any sense in it. If a copy's not in and you have to use a certain important book that is the only book on the subject, then you feel pretty silly when you start saying, "Well, this is our copy. It isn't supposed to be used." That's another thing that I've always had to struggle against. If you have an archives, it should be treated as an archives. It shouldn't be treated as an extra copy; and yet you're in that ridiculous position of having a book that people need.

JUTZI: So it's really a matter of space?

SMITH: Well, it's a matter of money and servicing. For one thing, the University Archives being what it is, you put it in a remote place. You don't put it in an easily accessible place, because you don't use it that often. That would be using prime space for a secondary thing. So you put it way off in some subterranean vault that takes a long time to get to; it usually does. The library's always had a big fight for space, and this has been ever since I was here. I became, at one time, known as the "Space Pirate" or

something like that.

Special Collections grows in completely unpredictable ways. You have x square feet of space. Tomorrow, somebody offers you an immense collection which, at least for the time being, should be kept until it's winnowed out and you've finally decided on what the limits of that collection are. It has to be housed in some locked-up area. Maybe you won't keep it all; maybe you'll keep all of it. In fact, this has happened countless times, and you never know that it might not happen tomorrow. Somebody might give you a big collection. Powell succeeded in getting the Ogden Collection. It can be an absolute giant, and that one was 80,000 books or more. That takes a lot of space.

For a time, when we were in the Powell building, I used all kinds of crooked dodges to get space, many of which were fairly transparent things, like using those hideous gray document boxes in lieu of anything else. It's convenient; it fits on the shelves. Also, they supposedly are reasonably fireproof--more so than metal containers are, which is what people used to use. They were ever so much more vulnerable to fire. Well, we used to have a certain problem with those boxes, because we use a lot of them in a given year, hundreds and hundreds of them every year. You have to budget for them; and so you budget for them, and you don't know when they will arrive. When they

arrive, they will take up as much space as they ever will. So where do you store them in the meantime? The storage place on the campus here refused to store them, because we were the only one to use them. They had their space problems, too. This happened practically every year. We'd never know, within a matter of six months, when they were going to arrive.

One time the entire supply arrived--hundreds of them. They're very bulky. It would fill half this room, just one order. They arrived, and there was no place to put them. They just suddenly arrived. "Hey, Smith." "Yes?" "I've got your document boxes." "What document boxes are those?" "Well, the record here says it goes to Special Collections." Then I realized it was our budgeted thing that we'd budgeted for a year or so ago. Suddenly, without any warning, it arrives at your doorstep, and you have to find someplace to put it. Also, who's going to receive it? You know, it's like shipping a COD elephant to somebody. It's a real problem of bulk.

He unloaded these in the driveway in back of the College Library, the Powell building. I even had to go out there to help him unload it on the driveway. I don't know whether Jim Cox or Debbie King was in charge of the stacks at that time. I think it was Debbie King. I had to ask her, "Do you have some boys that I could borrow for a while?" So we had a

crew of about eight youths, and they were throwing around these great cartons. The document boxes came in great big cartons, and each one was about four feet cubed. They were throwing them down from one person to another. We were using the basement of the east wing of the library, where the steam pipes were. There was some odd, curious space.

This was the kind of thing that I knew at the time because of our unpredictable needs. We had collections under there, too, stored down under the pipes. In fact, one time the pipes broke, and steam got all over everything. Fortunately, they were low-grade collections, and also the steam dried off pretty much before it got into the contents of the boxes. But it was hysteria while it lasted. We had to store things down in these funny, queer places. You had to be very observant to know that any such space existed down there, because it wasn't just a nice big room. It was places you had to crawl into. We put our supplies down there. Each time, it became that kind of ridiculous problem. I would take these boxes and store them--after we cleared up a tremendous historical mess. The library history in itself is the so-called first level of the Powell building. You might even say that it was the predecessor of Special Collections as a place to put things if you didn't want to be responsible for them and did not want to throw them away. [tape recorder turned off]

I used to try to imagine myself being the head librarian and these space problems arriving. Somebody's got to face them. This is the one thing that Powell and Vosper and others in the administration don't want to face, because they don't know the answer. They simply don't know the answer. They have to scramble around for it. It isn't as though you could say, as we have said before more than once, "Since we have this problem all the time, why don't we simply have a budget for off-campus storage--Bekins or another warehouse?" Finally the library did do something like that as a temporary measure. I don't think they have--I could be mistaken about it--a place that they rent year after year, so the burden would fall on us.

Of course, the Acquisitions Department got in trouble, too. The problem arrived when the Ogden Collection came. That was a problem. There was no place to put those books right away, and they had to be stored in the basement of the music building, Schoenberg Hall. What happened right away was a flood. They had to jack up all those carton crates about six inches out of the water. There was practically no damage, fortunately, because they were alert enough to have caught it in time.

As I said, I would spot space. I was much more alert than anybody else, because of the constant pressure for space. There may be a little closet, a janitor's

closet here, one there. We lost a collection once. "Where was that collection?" somebody asked. "What level was it?" "It was in the other wing. I think it was one of the janitor's closets, and I think you can still find brooms in there." Ridiculous.

JUTZI: Not everything was together?

SMITH: By no means. It was all over the place. There was no basement in the west wing of the library; but in the east wing, there was this basement for the furnace, and it held a considerable number of boxes. There was a room underneath the stairs where the Blanchard Collection formerly had been kept, which never had been an office but later did become one. We glommed onto that space. There was a little anteroom to the stacks which is numbered room 33 in the Powell building and which has a ramp in it. It's a completely awkward little place, but it's space. We occupied all of that. We took over gradually here and there, where nobody had made any real claim--what the library used but never claimed. We would move in, barge in, get squatter's rights, and finally take over the whole thing. Paul Miles was amused at it, but still he was resisting it. He said, "Debbie King tells me that you put empty document boxes down in certain parts of level one. Range after range says 'Special Collections' on it, and I go look at the boxes and they're empty." It's true that I did do that. So he exposed me. We finally

had, I think, 1,500 or so square feet of space over in the education building.

JUTZI: Did your staff grow in the sixties after you took over?

SMITH: I'm afraid that the chronology of things as far as staff goes isn't too clear. When I came into the department, Neal Harlow, I believe, was assistant librarian. Then Andy Horn was the head of the department. He was running the show at the time. I was there, and Bill Bellin, a nonprofessional person, was there. He was the man I told you about, the graphic artist. He's now a set designer. He has a big job in New York City. But he was with us for a number of years as a nonprofessional.

Ed Carpenter was there. I never could quite understand exactly why he was hired--not that he wasn't a good bookman, because he was, certainly. He made his own job and existed, and I didn't interfere. But it was unsatisfactory. Why should somebody in the department be just working away? I had certain other objections, and yet I never managed to overcome the problem of the use by administration of people on the staff. Ed was one. I mean, if Powell asked him to do something, he would never consult me. He'd go ahead and do it.

The same thing was true of Bill Bellin in the case of Everett Moore. Everett Moore glommed onto Bill Bellin,

because he was brilliant at doing anything that required graphic arts expertise or arranging exhibits. His tendency was to be the boss of that man, and he established himself before I even got there; so it was a going concern. It was one of those things that I suppose I resisted all along. I never resisted Ed Carpenter, because he was doing a good job, whatever he was doing. It was established; I just didn't feel like it. I was in sympathy with Ed, anyway.

Mary DeWolfe wasn't with me more than a year, I believe. At the same time she was there, Ed and Bill Bellin were there. Jim Mink came in as an L-II, which was something that some of the librarians resented at the time. Quite a few of them resented the fact. This was one of the things that Andy Horn did, and Andy was awfully good at getting people classified upwards. He knew how to go about it. I never was much good at that myself, but he was very good at it. He also brought in Ralph Lyon as a staff member. Ralph is still on the library staff. He had met him in connection, I think, with the forming of the Law Library at UCLA, which was formed from scraps and odds and ends in anticipation of the law school.

The university never knows when these schools are going to be established. Once the movement is under way, they're never quite sure what the steps are. I think in the case of the law school that somebody said, "Hey,

I see you got a new law school." "How did you know that? We didn't know it." "Well, we read it in the paper in Sacramento." It is such a ridiculous thing. Of course, the library did know this was in the mill. Librarian Powell took on the responsibility of forming the basic collection. I believe they didn't even have money; they must have had some money, but not enough to really do much. He put, I believe, Molly Hollreigh down in one of the lower rooms of the library and made a little room for her; and she began putting together the basic law reports and digests that were the most required books in a law library. They did a very good job. I saw the library do the same thing in anticipation of the medical school, more or less in the same areas, too, that were used in the library. I don't know how good the collections were; they looked good to me. I think they got the most commonly used things, and they got them from all kinds of places. I believe that there was a law school or some kind of an institution that had law books in the Bay Area which dissolved. It may have been connected with Stanford; I don't know.

Ralph Lyon was a Stanford man. He had a job in the Hoover Institution, as it was called then--the Hoover Library of War, Revolution and Peace. It's changed its name; I think they shortened it in recent years. I think it was in connection with the gift of a lot of law books that Andy got to know Ralph Lyon.

Maybe it was while he was at library school. I think they were both library school students at Berkeley at the time. Anyhow, it was a manual job, and Ralph was a furiously energetic person when he got moving on something; and Andy was impressed with this and hired him in Special Collections. So he had Ralph Lyon, Jim Mink, Ed Carpenter and myself. He had Mary DeWolfe, who was also a nonprofessional. In addition to these people, he had student assistants. I sometimes confuse them with full-time people.

They usually had somebody from geography to take charge of the map collection and continue with the cataloging, reorganizing, and shelving problems relating to it. It was something you couldn't just defer. That was one of the things I didn't like about the map collection. I wouldn't have minded it so much, except that it was dynamic. You could see it growing and growing and growing like a monster. Like a newspaper collection, it gets to be an absolute giant.

JUTZI: Were students and faculty using Special Collections during this period? Had it still not grown to be of interest to people?

SMITH: Well, they used it. They've used it a great deal more in recent years. It was kind of a cul-de-sac in its location, for one thing. It was out of the way. You walked down a long and forbidding narrow hallway. A library is forbidding enough without this kind of

setup. It is reminiscent of the description of Mussolini's establishment, where you'd go stumbling down a big thick carpet for a half a mile before you'd get to the awful presence. You're browbeaten before you get to the loan desk. It was makeshift. I won't criticize the library; it had no other place that we could've used. But it was a makeshift location and a very bad one. I don't see how they could have done any better, because they couldn't have immediate access to the stacks, the main stack core. We did have an access to it, up a steep ramp. But to have a special collections setup in which the shelving space is absolutely limited is deadly, because in a year or so, or two or three years, you're absolutely out of space. Then you begin having collections all over the place, as we did and actually still do.

Special Collections grew faster in proportion to its size of operation than the rest of the library--which was pretty fast. As I said last time, we had almost exactly 5,000 volumes in the book collection. The size of the manuscript collections--or rather I should say "nonbook," because it wasn't altogether manuscripts by any means, but unconventional materials--was accordingly small. It's hard to say in terms of true treatment (you could find that out easily enough if you want to look at the records), but it was a pretty small operation, because the collections at

that time were in the main stacks.

I should say at least two of the biggest categories were Western American history and the Victorian novel. Those large groups had books on the shelves that belonged, really, in Special Collections. Since we got the Sadleir Collection, we had to go over the shelves more carefully, because there was duplication. There's still a few books to be found in that classification in the stacks which we didn't catch. I caught some just the other day, because they were in the German literature section--some three-decker novels. They were translations into English, but they still didn't belong there. They were absolutely unused copies, beautiful copies, and probably were uncommon books, too.

JUTZI: Did you try to add to the Sadleir Collection by getting manuscripts and buying things that Sadleir didn't collect?

SMITH: Yes, we did. What we really tried to do in every collection was to build to it in our own ways where it was feasible--let us say, where there was material to add. You can't add things if there's not much on the market. That's part of an acquisitions policy; it has to be based on what you can buy. We still found it possible to buy three-deckers and books in boards and labels in fine condition. We tried, as nearly as it seems to make sense, to maintain the standards that Sadleir had set. It is impossible to

do that all the way, because he was there at a far, far more favorable time for that kind of thing. But all the same, I'd like to show you downstairs that we have been able, in many cases, to get books in the same kind of condition, simply because, at the time we started, they weren't all that expensive. In the fifties, they hadn't gone up, and we could still buy some of those copies very cheaply, indeed. It's only in the last ten or twelve years or so, they've gone up just in leaps and bounds.

JUTZI: Did you purchase mostly from England or from sources in Los Angeles?

SMITH: Mostly from England. The dealers of America were not on the alert. The American dealers, on the whole, were not very imaginative about nineteenth-century literature. Jake [Zeitlin] had gotten into it. He jumped the gun on many of the dealers in the history of science field. Somebody should have been around in the same way with nineteenth-century literature. I suppose the bookshop which comes closest to it would be, maybe, Seven Gables Bookshop in New York City. Howard Mott was, in a small way. Judging from this distance, he wasn't a big-time operator. He was more of a bookman in conducting a more pleasant, leisurely kind of business, and not a big operator. David Magee was in a position of doing it, but he never did that much either. What he's done has been in more recent years.

You've seen some of his catalogs, have you? He's formed whole collections for the universities in Utah. They are really what you might call "beginner collections." Those elaborate catalogs of his were really just high spots, mostly. Less common things were scribbled in amongst them. The dealers have changed over the years.

At first, we were buying quite a bit from certain English dealers. One that I had bought from for quite a long time in a small way, but always and steadily, was Brimmel. He handles both Victorian novels and children's literature. Every catalog he's ever sent has had something in it--sometimes a whole slew. We got books from a lot of different English dealers--not just the standard ones, but some of those that went into business and then went out, rather shortly, such as G. P. Romer. I don't know what ever happened to him.

It's just too bad that in those years, the university wasn't sending somebody like me, for instance, to England. We would have saved an enormous amount of money, and we would have got a lot more books. Powell would go. Of course, if only one person had to go, he was the one. He was looking out for not just the University Library here but also for the Clark Library. He was excellent at it. He had a great flair for buying things without taking too much time about it and not buying a lot of duplicates.

If you're traveling, you can't check everything.

You can send this back and have them checked, it's true, but it's all rather quickly done. It requires that you have some sense about what the library has and doesn't have. If you don't have that, you're going to make some awful mistakes. There aren't that many people. Believe me, they're very rare people. Powell admitted to me later that he had finally gotten to the point where the library was too big for him to do that. He was engaged in all kinds of other problems that bored him stiff--administrative problems. Also, the library had gotten enormously big. There is a point it reaches that you can't remember too much, unless you have kept your eyes focused on certain sections only. But, after all, the head librarian should be interested in an enormous lot. The Oriental Library, for one thing, is just one item. Just think of the range of things that are important to the library: certain kinds of geology, in which the library is supposed to be the best; crystallography; Australian and New Zealand history; what the medical school is interested in; and what music is interested in. You have to remember those things, too, if you are the head librarian. I don't know that there's any one person now....

JUTZI: Did you go back at all on any trips?

SMITH: Powell sent me on domestic trips, but not on European trips. I guess he felt that there wasn't enough money to go around. If there was only going

to be one person, he was the one. If that was the case, it certainly was true, because he brought in some marvelous collections. He also brought in masses of stuff that were not large collections in themselves. They were a bit here and a bit there. He brought in, for instance, the de Rothesay map collection. That was just one of many collections that he bought on that same trip. But dozens and dozens of collections, he bought in the field of English local history. I think the de Rothesay probably came in as a result of his looking for that.

It was Vosper, finally, who sent me to England on my one trip, which was cut short because of my father's serious hospitalization. They thought he was dying, and I had to come home; but he wasn't, as it turned out. I was about half-through, and I cut my trip short.

I never got to visit some of the collectors that I was going to see. Eric Quayle, who has since sold a lot of his books, was one. He had Victorian novels, and he had that same mixture that Brimmel owned. He's a private collector. He also recently did a book on collecting detective fiction which I think is probably by way of being a catalog for somebody to say, "How much do you want for your collection?" It's very pictorial, and it's not a scholarly job; it's just simply a bookseller's kind of job and an interesting-looking book. Well, he was one of a number of

collectors that I had in mind to visit. I missed a few. I never got around to Ireland, where I wanted to go, and to Wales, to visit the castle at Hay. There were several specific collections that I should have seen while I was over there.

JUTZI: Is the best way to buy books to actually travel that way?

SMITH: Yes, of course, because you see collections that haven't been cataloged in shops, and you learn about collections that may be available that haven't even gone on the market. Maybe you can buy them, or maybe you can get them in some other way--such as the people I know of who are collectors over there. Over the years, if you were interested in a subject, you'd get these names. These names creep out of hiding. Some of them are naught to be obscure, but they can't keep obscure if they're really active in buying. You learn their names. A visit to them might very well pay off if you pursue it. You might get something as a gift; you might, more likely, get to buy. And of course, if the university can buy; it can outbid a bookseller, as a rule. But somewhere in between what might be the retail market price and the dealer's wholesale price, you can get your collections. You can buy whole groups of books if you're able to travel about to see them. At least in those years, it was possible to buy and not worry too much about duplicates.

You can always realize something on them, too. Since our budget was very modest to begin with, we enlarged it by the use of duplicates. One of the things that I took up with Powell and Vosper--at the time Powell was head librarian and Vosper was his associate librarian--was the handling of duplicates. I had a little session with them, and they agreed at the time that Special Collections could have first choice in duplicates for use in trading with dealers. It became a major source of money--the principal source, really, for some years--as far as unattached money was concerned. With the credit I could get from the sale of duplicates, I bought what I pleased. I didn't have to ask anybody's advice. I usually didn't have to ask advice, anyway, unless it was something that was quite expensive. I would usually not try to buy expensive books out of the money that was allocated. I had a limit in my own mind. I might break the rules; I didn't have any ironbound rule about it. If I thought the book was rare enough and they could never get another copy, I would just keep it quiet about what I paid for it and get it while the getting is good. But that didn't happen too often. Usually, we'd try to raise money for books that were expensive, really expensive.

JUTZI: What were some of the sources for raising money?

SMITH: Well, it would be other budget funds. Over there, in that building, we were right next door to acquisitions, and I kept myself posted on the status of other people's budgets. Some would be very slow to spend their money, especially as half of the year went around. Some people get desperate about it, because many of the people who were spending money for books had no confidence in themselves; and they were right. [laughter] I think some were not right, they were just timid. I found that there was the Latin-American Fund, which would be spent by a lot of very timid faculty people, every one of them. I don't know whether there is such a fund now, but there was one for some years. I remember one year it went without being spent; the entire allocation, I believe, was unspent fairly late in the year.

Once January comes around, you should have spent most of your money, even though you have months to go. You can then buy ahead, perhaps, if you've got the nerve to. If you think you can govern yourself reasonably well, you can buy on the cuff for next year's budget. July 1 is the beginning of the new fiscal year, and the bookkeeping has to be wound up at least a month or so before that. I don't know what the date is now. I usually have kept pretty well aware of what that deadline date is. We were always overspent, which is the way to be. Not too much overspent. In passing

through the Acquisitions Department, I always took a look. They didn't hide the figures. It was no secret, except that other people weren't as interested as we were.

TAPE NUMBER: III, SIDE TWO

FEBRUARY 20, 1974

SMITH: You asked about the children's book collection. I don't know whether I went over this before or not, but it was Larry Powell who started that collection. I don't know the exact date, because it was before I came, but I imagine it was in the mid- or late forties that he bought the [Olive] Percival Collection. It was only 250 books or thereabouts.

When I came to the department they were stored away in a tin coat closet--those awful pieces of library furniture. There was nobody who knew really what was in the collection, except for some amateurish catalog that had been made by some student. It wasn't a bad catalog, but it wasn't in the public catalog; it was just in with the collection of odd-sized cards. On occasions, Mary DeWolfe, who was then the departmental secretary, would show--usually [to] sort of gushing female visitors--this collection. It really served no purpose except to get sentimental about. I thought it interesting. I always did think the early children's books were an interesting subject. So I pulled the collection out of the tin container and had them cataloged. I had them put out where they could be seen on the shelves, even though they weren't

originally cataloged at all. Finally, we got some cataloging done on them.

The library was very grudging about cataloging them at all. They didn't want to catalog them. That's why they hadn't done so. They were very thrifty. I guess they've always been pretty thrifty--because it is an expensive business--but I think thrifty in the wrong way. This does not apply merely to the children's book collection. But I always felt that the library was so anxious to catalog those things that didn't need cataloging--the things that everybody has got--and they're conventional things that you should be able to know about. It's the difficult things, the unknown things, where there's no bibliographical guides--the pamphlets and the broadsides, the oddball things. You have to have clues to them.

We have somebody this very morning who is using the children's book collection. It's an art history project, and it's some obscure illustrator she's working with. She knows that he illustrated some children's books between 1800 and 1820, but she doesn't know which ones. Because there's such a skimpy job of cataloging, no illustrators are brought out, except the most obvious ones like Kate Greenaway and Walter Crane. But there are many obscure illustrators, and some of them are fairly important. Also there are some well-known engravers like [Henry] Corbould, and she's

interested in him; but she's also interested in some minor men, and she's going to have to just wade through a lot of books. You just start at one end of the collection and wade through the entire damned collection. That's the only way, really. There is no other way.

JUTZI: They never felt the children's collection was worth anything, or was it just too much trouble?

SMITH: Well, I don't know what their point of view was about that. Obviously, Powell did, or he wouldn't have bought the collection. Of course, he's the head librarian; he wasn't involved that much in the processing. That was going to have to be up to somebody, and I suppose he felt that somebody would finally come along who was interested in it and would force the thing through. And I was the one that just happened to be there. It could have happened years later. Eventually, it would have happened, because children's literature, at least at UCLA, has been a fairly popular subject in the English department.

Also, the connection with the elementary school has sort of fanned up a little interest in the collection as such, even though it isn't the kind of scholarly interest in the collection that I would like to see. Nevertheless, there's that moral support. Wayland Hand has always supported the collection, partly because of the folklore material that does appear in some of it, and partly simply out of friendship, because I have

supported his program in different ways. Anyway, I think I did mention to you before this this man [Harry] Stone who did a job on Dickens readings. That was the first. I latched onto that very early in the game and supported the demand to have the books put in public catalog, as against just the local catalog, which we finally had done also in a grudging way--that is to say, simply the main entry and that's all.

So, the steps always have been very grudging as to whether this collection was to be cataloged. The only answer to the thing finally will be probably a bibliography, which is something that I've been hoping to work on. It's just too massive a thing without some support, some library support. I have inherited [d'Alte Aldridge] Welch's beginnings of the bibliography on English children's books.

You wanted to know about my part in getting that collection. Well, that began with the contacts that Welch made here. He got so that he knew all the collectors of children's literature that applied to his bibliography. It always was a double-barreled interest, He was interested in English children's books as well as in American. He finally got out of his American bibliography, as you may know, just before he died. He never saw it.

Welch was murdered. It was just one of those casual murders that are so popular in our time--a

parking-lot murder. It reminded me a little bit of the death of Thomas Day, the eccentric writer of children's books, whose death was based on his doctrines. He believed, for instance, that animals were rational beings, that a horse would listen to reason. You don't have to beat these poor creatures, you simply reason with them. And so in reasoning with his unbroken horse, he was killed, poor guy. He was a wonderful man.

In the same way, Welch was a wonderful man, and he argued with the man that held him up. He told his wife--because he didn't die for some months--how it happened. He was held up in the lot of the country club (not the country club, but I guess it was a swimming club or athletic club in Cleveland); and he tried to persuade the young man. He said, "He was a nice-looking young man; I didn't want him to get into trouble. I tried to take the gun away from him. I said, 'Come on now, friend,' and just reached for the gun." He reached to sort of gently persuade him to let go of the gun, and the man shot him--a young man.

We had by this time gotten to be quite close friends, sort of pen pals. He visited us here. But most of our relations were by mail. We were very good friends in that way, and I used to send him books by the ton, because he had to see the book. He couldn't be constantly making a trip out here.

He wasn't retired; he was a professor of biology at a small college in Ohio, John Carroll University. It's quite a small college. They'd been very lenient with him. He, incidentally, was working in ecological problems, partly for the government, too. He did some studies on Lake Erie that was nearby there. He said at the time when we first met--about 1959--that it was a hopeless thing; it was an absolutely dead lake. He was very depressed about it. But he was doing studies in the relationship of insect life to streams and so forth. But his real baby was children's books, which he had gotten into as a young man, quite a young man. He had got a PhD from John Hopkins at a very early age. He skipped the MA, or something like that, and wrote a dissertation on some kind of snails of Hawaii.

He had, as Mrs. Welch told me after his death, collections that she didn't quite know what to do with. She didn't know that they had any particular value, either. One collection was on shells. She offered them to some museum, which was very glad to have them and later gave her an appraisal, she said, a huge appraisal. Apparently, it was just the most perfect collection that could be made, because he was that way, you know, completely thorough. He had a tendency to err in bibliographical descriptions. It just seemed to be part of his nature. But the classification

itself and his approach were very thorough. He knew far more about this subject than anybody alive. Nobody alive now could approach him in his knowledge of collections in the world and the books themselves and their physical history--not so much the contents as the bibliographical history. He made no pretenses. He was often in demand for speaking on the subject of children's books; but he always explained carefully that he was not a scholar--he was a bibliographer, rather. They accepted him. He was a very entertaining speaker, because he had a nice sense of humor. He visited us here, and he spent some months with us.

I was at him for a long time to say what he was going to do with his collection. He told me in a letter, poignantly phrased (which we still have in our files): "Wilbur, please don't ask me about my collections. I'm fond of them. I want to keep on thinking that I'll live forever and have them." I never mentioned it again to him. [laughter] He was so cute about it. But nevertheless, in this long association with him, he recognized our collection later in his life as being the key collection for his final bibliography, which would be of English children's books. This was going to be his place of business.

In the first volume, the American children's books, it was the American Antiquarian Society, which had by far the best collection of all the collections. Our

collection here doesn't compare with that, which really was built up over decades of wonderful, close, hewing-to-the-line collecting. Clarence [Saunders] Brigham, who was the director of the American Antiquarian Society, was a real model collector. I gather with rather small funds, comparatively speaking, he built it by sticking to the line closely--to certain lines of collecting--and having made his mind up not to collect this, but to collect that. Everything he touched was the best collection they built.

You may have seen some of the bibliographies. There usually is a boasting, a little table. I think the early American newspapers was one of Brigham's earliest compilations. He has a little scorecard in the front part. This is typical of those compilations of his, in which he says, "The American Antiquarian Society has 285 out of the 385 . . . " or whatever the score is. "Harvard has approximately half that many, and they're second." [laughter] It gave you a very clear-cut, competitive schedule of holdings. In everything that he started there, they have that kind of superiority. Yale, now, probably has caught them in American novels; but still, that was where Lyle [H.] Wright was hanging out. Lyle was right there and in the Library of Congress.

The same is true with some that have not been done yet, like American hymn books. The second biggest

collection for some time was known to be at Indiana. I later learned that the Indiana collection was made entirely of duplicates from the American Antiquarian Society. I think we have passed Indiana now in that, but that's another book collection we got started. Maybe Wayland [Hand] told you where that collection started?

JUTZI: No.

SMITH: Did I say hymn books? Another one is almanacs. Almanacs and songbooks were two collections that were started here in Special Collections in any kind of size, in support of Wayland Hand's program. They had bought almanacs, some Pennsylvania Dutch almanacs, that were put in the stacks, where they certainly didn't belong. We pulled them out and then began to build a collection, and it was based on some money that my mother had won on a radio show. Did you know about that?

JUTZI: No.

SMITH: Well, my mother was an amateur folklorist herself, a collector of songs, mountain songs. She did a book back in the twenties on the subject of songs of the Smoky Mountains and that area--Appalachian folk songs. She also was a sort of pioneer in radio, as a producer of radio shows back in New York in the early twenties--mid-twenties, I guess it was. After a career there, she came out here and sort of retired and was remembered by some old-timers that she'd worked

with, who sent for her when they began to have these crazy quiz programs for which prizes were given out. You remember, there was a scandal about people being tipped off? Mother was the winner of the biggest one of all. It was called The Big Surprise. They called on her because they thought it would be popular to have one which dealt with American folk songs. That had been the theme of her series of programs on the radio, anyway, and they knew that she knew an awful lot about it and thought that she would be a good contestant. As it turned out, she was; and she won the $100,000. Incidentally, that was one of those things where elderly people are called in, and sometimes they want them to win.

But it is such a shock; it throws them off base. It wasn't so much winning the amount of money, but it was the whole dramatic production that apparently nearly killed her. It resulted in her death, finally. In the meantime, in order to make a little bit more palatable the enormous chunk of money that was taken out of this (she finally wound up with, I think, something like $30,000 out of $100,000) she gave the money away to the right places that pleased her, like some school down in the Appalachians, some school for mountaineers. She gave money to them and I think some Negro college, too. She gave money here and there, and I persuaded her to give some money to UCLA to build up

the folklore collections, which she did do. And this was the start of building the almanacs and hymnals and everything else that related to what Wayland wanted. At the time, he was particularly interested in those two categories.

Betty Rosenberg helped to spend some of that money at the beginning. She had some connections in Philadelphia, and she ordered U.S. almanacs. Later we bought the Morton Pennepacker Collection from Scribner's. We built that collection up to be (we were told by the bibliographer of that terrible bibliography of almanacs, [Milton] Drake), one of the biggest collections in the country of almanacs other than simply collections of imprints, which a good many of them have, like New York imprints. We collected more or less on the lines that the American Antiquarian Society did. Now I understand the Huntington has a big collection. They didn't have before. They now have a big collection, one of the biggest collections of early almanacs. They probably have some earlier ones than we have. But I think we probably went as far as Wayland wanted to go with it.

Well, to get back to the Welch business. I learned, after going through his collection, that he was buying [English] children's books in anticipation of the bibliography and also in support of the American, because the two [English and American editions] are

interlocked. He always wanted to try as well as he could to trace the actual edition from which the American first edition was based. He didn't start out with this idea; so the final results are a little bit spotty.

He had in his room, his study in Cleveland, the two collections facing one another across the room. They were about the same size physically. In fact, he had started his English collection before he started the American one. I think what led him to do the American bibliography first was the presence of the Antiquarian Society. It was more or less a ready-made thing waiting for somebody to come along and do.

There was also the fact that he was in a country where he could, at the time, go on cheaply building up his collection. No one else was buying these books. [Abraham S.W.] Rosenbach was buying very selectively for his own private interest, and there was the American Antiquarian Society. I can't think of another library that was buying at all unless they were simply routinely buying imprints of the state--children's book or whatever. That's what you see when you see a census. The bibliography, which is part of the census, locates the copies. You see, for instance, that some institution in Rhode Island has a considerable number, but you notice that they're all Rhode Island imprints. Yale will collect Connecticut imprints and so forth. So nobody was collecting the

field as a subject.

But we were active here, and I think that what persuaded d'Alte to think of UCLA as a possible place to put his books was the fact that something was being done about them. We weren't just sitting and receiving books the way the Library of Congress was doing, for instance. They had a big collection--still have. They simply sat there and did nothing. They just simply sat and received books if somebody would happen to give them. The British Museum was for years doing the same thing. They did accept the books, but they didn't actually make any effort to get them. Now they have a setup at the Library of Congress. I don't see any sign of real activity there. They get out some rather feeble bibliographies from time to time. But they do have a person in charge. Virginia Haviland gets out little booklets on the subject once in a while.

While I never brought the subject up again with d'Alte, it must have been sort of simmering in his mind. I don't know what prompted me to bring the subject up as I did, but he had told me that he was leaving his collection of American children's books to the Antiquarian Society. I saw the present director at a party back East, and he asked me about this. Did I tell you that?

JUTZI: No.

SMITH: We talked about d'Alte. He liked d'Alte in the

same way that I did: you know, an oddball, cantankerous, but charming fellow. So we were laughing about our dealings with d'Alte, and he asked me a question: "Do you know what he's going to do with his books? Is UCLA going to get the English books?" And I said, "Well, I hope so, but I have no way of knowing. He did tell me that you were going to get the American books." "Oh! Really?" he said. He shook my hand. "Well, that's wonderful," he said. "He told me that he thought UCLA would get the English ones." Well, he never did put that in his will, but he had apparently made his mind up some time ago. I don't see how he could have resisted doing it, considering his personal friendship with different directors, starting with Brigham. Brigham was one of the people who helped him to get going and encouraged him to do something. All the rest of the people there at the Antiquarian Society were helpful to him, too; so it was natural that he would want to do that.

Well, his will actually left the books to his widow, but the will also left us with the microfilm--which is a good research tool--of the Antiquarian Society's holdings. It sort of makes up our deficiency in American children's books for researchers. That was about it as far as we were concerned.

JUTZI: He didn't leave the books to Special Collections?

SMITH: He didn't leave them to anybody. You see, he

didn't leave his English books to anybody. So that was one of the things I had in mind, naturally, when I went to see Mrs. Welch. I don't know what the time was that intervened. Apparently, I simply wrote her a letter. She must have understood that this was exactly the reason I was coming. I wasn't coming just to hold her hand. I was coming to see what might be decided about the children's book collection. She hadn't made her mind up about it, either; so the whole thing was left over. I stayed with her several days.

I met a rival collector there. It was rather an amusing experience. Miss Ruth Adomeit, who was from Cleveland, collects miniature books and has, I think, the second biggest collection in America, quite possibly in the world. I don't know whether you want to hear that story or not. It does apply somewhat. She wanted somebody to see her collection, somebody who could talk about it, at least, because there aren't that many people who would talk with any kind of a knowledge about such a collection.

So she picked me up in the evening. She had a little station wagon, and we drove around to her place. Was that the way it was? Yes, that was the way it was. I was just trying to think about the elevator, because the elevator was a sort of an introduction to the whole thing. It was an absolutely minute elevator. I got in there, and it was like a coffin

going up slowly to the second floor. We went up in this awful elevator, ever so slowly; and when we got to the second floor, it stopped with a great sigh.

We entered her apartment, which was very cozily occupied by two elderly women who were sitting, either knitting or sewing, in a very nineteenth-century-looking scene. The whole setting was too perfect. It was full of antiquarian items of every description, even including a little tray of comfits or old ladies' candies. [laughter] They were comfortably sipping their elderberry wine or whatever you might like. Well, I was briefly introduced to these old ladies. They were relatives of Miss Adomeit.

I was then whisked back. She didn't want to waste any time; she wanted me to see her collection from A to Z. So we walked down a hallway full of miniatures until we got into the final nest. Her father had been a painter, a pretty good one. We passed some of his paintings on the wall, and then we came to tiny little book cabinets and bookcases, one after another. I sat down at a table at the end of this hallway. There was a little room. She began to take the small books out, which were quite interesting to me; but at the end of about an hour, I began to get a little weak. [laughter] It was just one after another, and she never stopped talking. I found it interesting enough, but it just simply overwhelmed me. I was awfully glad to get

out of there at the end of about an hour or two hours. Perhaps it was longer; I don't know. At any rate, we had a cup of tea or something like that, and I left.

That night at Mrs. Welch's (I was sleeping at Mrs. Welch's house), I had an awful nightmare. In this nightmare was simply a big head, an enormous head--that was me--and I couldn't breathe too well. My face must have been in the pillow. But I kept looking at these books which were minute. And every time I breathed out, they would collapse--a little army of minature books would collapse--and sort of slide back and fall down. And then I'd breathe in, and I was afraid of breathing in lustily because I was breathing in the books. Like little motes of dust, they would come slipping into my nostrils. So for some time, I was in a panic whether or not to breathe properly. Finally I turned over and woke up. But this cured me, if I'd ever had any fancy--and I never did--for minatures as such. It simply was just too much.

I think the final payoff and the thing that killed me about the story was the story that she told of visiting a man, I believe in Kentucky, who was reputed to have made the tiniest book in America. What he did was really not quite kosher as far as small books were concerned, in my opinion. He took the spring of a watch, and out of that spring, by the use of magnifying

glasses and God knows what other tools, he made a little pen, a little point. She had to go through the mountains and over streams and homemade roads to get to his place. It was a long, hard trip; and she had to hike several miles to get to his place in the backwoods to get him to make her one of these little books. But she did, finally, and she showed it to me.

It was in a little bottle (I don't know if it was a glass or a plastic bottle) about so big. [indicates two inches] I think this was what really stimulated the nightmare. She told me what was written in it. I don't remember now what it was. But she said, "You see, it's got a brass clasp on it." "Really?" I said. "Yes," she said. "Can't you see it?" And of course, I couldn't see it; it was so minute. The thing was about the size of a mosquito, the book itself. She said, "Hold it up to the light." So I held it this way and that, and finally, sure enough, from the middle, right where it should have been, there was a little spark. That was the sign that a little piece of brass was there, which was the clasp that held the book together. The ridiculousness of the little book bounced around in this tiny little vial was what probably brought on this horrible nightmare, which was really quite a terrible nightmare.

Well, Ruth Adomeit invited herself to participate and share in the Welch collection, which I resisted

as well as I could. She took some of the best books. I told Mrs. Welch about it and resisted it, and Mrs. Welch took them back from her. So I don't think we are too great friends these days. She couldn't resist. Some collectors just simply have no morals when it comes to books. She felt that, "Well, here we are neighbors, collectors; and he would certainly want me to have my pick." But that isn't true at all, because he knew all the collectors in the world. He knew dozens and dozens of collectors in England and America. If he had felt that way about them, there wouldn't have been any books left at all by the time they got through giving them out. So I resisted. She still has a few of his books.

Anyway, after staying with Mrs. Welch for several days, I left. Nothing had been settled. She did write me a little later. She said that she had talked it over with the children. I met the children while I was there, and one of the girls, who looked very much like her father (who wasn't a particularly handsome man at all), was a sweet girl; and she told me, "You know, Daddy used to say children's books are not for children." She said this laughingly but, all the same, a little wistfully.

She kept a few of the books that she thought that she might someday work on. I think she kept two or three only, but they were very choice items. They

were early Mother Goose items, which was the thing that interested d'Alte in the very beginning, when he was a boy, sixteen.

When he was a boy, he wrote a paper on early children's books. He was living in New York City then, and the children's librarian at the New York Public Library had helped him with the collection they have, which is a pretty good collection. The man who built that collection, Walter Schatski, is an ancient old chap and still alive. Well, she helped him along, and this became another one of his interests. When he went later to London with his mother, his father gave him £100 to spend in whatever way he wished. He spent all of it on English children's books--not American, but on English children's books of the eighteenth century. Imagine, a sixteen-year-old boy doing this at the time. He got gems, of course. I'd like to have seen the list of eighteenth-century children's books that he got then for £100. They were a giveaway at that time.

She wrote me, as I said, after I'd come back here, that they had talked it over and decided that the books should go to UCLA. She felt that d'Alte would approve of that. The final clinching argument, she said, was the girl's remark. She said, "Let's stop kidding ourselves. You know, we don't want to sell Daddy." It was very appropriate because, after all, he spent a

whole lot of time with those books. They did represent him. So she completely wilted under that.

He had lived at one time in Hawaii (I'm just trying to think of the different kinds of collections he had, because he was a collector by nature), and he collected Hawaiian antiquities of one kind or another, including some fabulous ceremonial costumes of feathers and extraordinary things. They must have been very valuable, indeed. He had all kinds of little oddments around the house.

The books that were in his study, of course, we did get. But I looked outside of his study in the hallway and shelves on the stairway landing and pointed out to Mrs. Welch that those books, too, are appropriate, because while they didn't fit in his bibliography, they were children's books. He didn't include books that had school with the title. Well, naturally, if you collected children's books, you've got to have those, too. It was just one of the ways bibliographers try to narrow down their subject matter somewhat. I'm sorry now that we didn't put more money into schoolbooks, because early English schoolbooks are very hard to get. [Tape recorder turned off.]

D'Alte dealt with all the dealers; they all knew him. They didn't all like him, because he could put on an act of moral indignation if they didn't send him the book or send him a Xerox of the title page or

help him bibliographically. Righteous indignation would come forth. I know I had to soothe Max Hunley's feelings over this, because he scolded Max vigorously for not giving him information on books he had. I was on Welch's side in this, of course, and tried to intervene--and successfully, too, I would say. Max is just lazy, that's all.

Welch would tell me about books in the later years of his collecting, the last two or three years, I would say. He was not buying books if we had them. He'd made his mind up by this time. He'd gotten acquainted with our collection. What he was doing then was collecting books that would augment the books that were accessible to him elsewhere. If you look at the book collection, you see that's about the way it happened. He would see a book somewhere else, and he'd say, "Wilbur, so-and-so has a copy. Buy it." I remember the first time he did this, it was Dave Magee, who had a copy of [Charles] Perrault, a 1697 Perrault fairy tales. He said, "You'd better buy that. If you don't, you'll never have a chance to buy another one." Well, we have had one chance to buy another one--but it's only one--in those years. If we'd waited, we would have had to pay three times as much; so I'm glad I did buy it. I bought a number of things that he pointed out to me because he didn't feel he could afford them. After all, he had several children--I

think four children. And while he wasn't poor, he wasn't rich either. He was a thrifty-minded man.

JUTZI: Are there any collections like the Welch Collection that you wanted to get but haven't been able to?

SMITH: There are several collections. When I went to England and had abruptly to leave England, there was one person that I failed to see. It was Eric Quayle, the bibliographer and collector, who since that time has published several books on his own collections and has begun to sell his books. He's the man who did the book on [Robert Michael] Ballantyne. He had a Ballantyne collection, the best collection, including manuscripts. He had the manuscript of Hudson's Bay and letters. The collection was offered to us first, and we were interested in the Hudson's Bay manuscript. It's the only interest I could get on the part of the faculty here; so we had to turn it down. It was sold finally by Dawson's of Pall Mall. I don't know who bought it.

He has got out these illustrated catalogs since then of collections. All the books he has are more or less appropriate for UCLA. He has children's books and then boys' books; that is to say, the Ballantynes, the Mayne Reids, and so on. He's got Victorian three-decker novels, too, including a collection of early detective fiction which he illustrated in one of his books, which I take to be a sort of a bookseller's

catalog. I think that he's doing two things at a time: recording his collection, and advertising it for sale without putting an actual price on it. Before he did those, when I was in England, I had every intention of visiting him, hoping to try to drum up a little activity or a purchase: but I never got around to doing that or many of the other things that I planned to do.

While I was there, I was also going to visit Ireland and several people connected with the Edgeworth family to see what they had. There were some that had had materials for sale. One of the descendants of Harriet Edgeworth lives in Ireland now and had such things as a manuscript--not a very good one, as I found out, a transcript. He had a contemporary oil painting of Harriet.

So there are collections like that which I failed to even see when I was in England because I went around bookshops first and didn't deal with private people as I should have done. I visited the bibliographer of [John] Newbery, Mr. [Sydney] Roscoe. I visited him at his house. I also had hoped some time or other to persuade him to sell his books. He has a small collection but a very choice collection. He had just done that Newbery bibliography. He was a direct descendant of William Roscoe, who wrote the Butterfly's Ball, which is the first frivolous children's book, 1807. When I

visited him, we went in the front door. I went with Stanley Smith, the London bookseller, who pointed out to me as we entered the house: "You see the painting at the end of the room there? That's Mr. Roscoe." That was William Roscoe, the Butterfly's Ball man, as a boy about eight or ten years old--a very charming painting. I got a big kick out of being in the room.

[Sydney] Roscoe himself is a white-haired, pink-cheeked Englishman. I think he has probably 600 or 700 children's books, among them some that we don't have here which are probably unique.

There are some other collections in England. One of them has gone to the Victoria and Albert Museum just in the last year, I believe. That was the Roland Knaster collection. In this country, I had vague hopes of getting the [Elizabeth] Ball collection, but the Morgan [Library] people beat me to that. In fact, I believe it was on the occasion of the opening of the Lilly Library in Indiana. I was by myself, and I went back to attend that affair. I was in the airport at Indianapolis, and who should I see but [Frederick Baldwin] Adams and one of the curators, whose name I should remember because he certainly is important. They were looking like sheep-killing dogs when they saw me, because they had just been to visit Mrs. Ball; and they knew that I would have been very anxious about that. But they'd succeeded in getting her to part with

her books. Maybe it was imaginary on my part, but I thought afterwards they certainly looked like a couple of conniving characters. [laughter] They were quite pleased to tell me that they'd concluded the transaction. They never have absorbed those books. They really don't know what to do with them. It's hard to catalog children's books if you don't know who the authors are, and they don't know. There are few people around.... In fact, I just talked on the phone to Justin Schiller, who is the most enterprising and brightest of the young booksellers in the children's book field now. He gets out very elaborate catalogs. He was telling me that he's been working with Walter Schatski and apparently the [Edgar S.] Oppenheimer collection, which is the great collection that we hoped to get.

TAPE NUMBER: IV, SIDE ONE

FEBRUARY 20, 1974

SMITH: One other collection that I thought I should mention that I visited--and still hope that the library might get--is the collection of Victorian novels owned by Robert Lee Wolff, professor of Byzantine history at Harvard.

It's funny how these collections are owned by people. Well, it's just one of those contradictions of human nature, I suppose. D'Alte was a biologist, but he was really much more interested in children's books. This fellow Wolff that I visited at Harvard, a very amiable man, had all the earmarks of a man interested in Byzantine history. You go in his house, and you see books on subjects that are appropriate, and you see icons on the wall--real good ones, too. On the way in, when I visited him, I started to look at some, and he said, "Come on, you're not interested in that. Let's go and see something really interesting." And we went up the stairs to his Victorian novels.

He has an enormous collection. He was a little bit of a Johnny-come-lately on it. He did know Michael Sadleir. He collected books that he felt Sadleir didn't collect, but he also was drawn into collecting some of the same books. He brags about his collection in two

pieces--I think it's a two-part article--that ran in the Book Collector several years ago, maybe two or three years ago. He tells about things that Sadleir didn't have. No doubt about it, he has done a wonderful job of collecting.

We knew about his collection. Booksellers who sometimes wanted to put me down would say, "Oh, the Sadleir Collection's fine, but you take that author, for example. Now, Sadleir has two or three of his titles, but this man Wolff has got a whole shelf full of them." But I kept thinking about this collection and talking about it with several people in the English department here. I remember talking with Mimi Dudley about it, because she, at the time, was working on some kind of an index for the Sadleir bibliography, and she knew about the Wolff collection. She said so confidently, as several others did, that the Wolff collection is sewn up; that's going to Harvard. Well, I'd been around long enough to know that was a foolish thing to believe. Collections reputed to be going somewhere usually don't. There are too many things that happen between the time that it may have been thought of and the time of the actual fact.

So I did visit Wolff, as a side trip when I went back East. I don't remember now what it was a trip to, but it was a side trip deliberately to see Wolff at Harvard. He lives in a house which he boasted

about as we came up to it: "Isn't that just right for me, now? That house is dated 1870. It's a real gem of a Victorian house, too." It's all part of this wonderful folly of being a mid-Victorian man. His collections on some of the authors that he's interested in, like Rhoda Broughton, have manuscripts as well as all the books--usually autographed copies. He probably has close to 10,000 volumes, and mostly three-deckers. We came up to the end of the stairs, and I saw some bookshelves that apparently had been ousted from his main collections, which were books in boards and labels, of a little earlier period than the Victorian. I said, just offhand and facetiously, "I'll take that lot." He turned around and looked startled as though to say, "Okay." Apparently in his mind, he had sort of ruled them out of his collection--just one of those things that happens, by the way: you decide, well, you won't go in for that period.

But we had drinks in his room, large drinks of bourbon, and a very chatty, amiable time. He knew why I was there; he knew I was there to see about buying his collection. He told me right out that he had thought of giving his books to Harvard; but the time had come when his books were worth about ten to twenty times as much as he had paid for them, and he decided that it was irresponsible of him towards his family. He has several children. I know one of his boys was about to

row on the Harvard rowing team against Cambridge or Oxford at the time we were talking.

Well, he finally said that he'd give us first refusal on his collection. He wasn't about to sell it, but he was in the midst of making a bibliography somewhat on the order of the Sadleir bibliography, in which he would describe his books. This would also be a double-barreled thing, which I think the Sadleir bibliography was itself. They often are. A man reaches the point where he wants to tell what he's got, sort of share his knowledge, and at the same time to advertise his books for sale. I think that probably is what Wolff had in mind, too, whether he primarily had intended it or not. But it's a perfectly legitimate thing to do. And I hope very much that UCLA will follow through on that.

We became quite friendly, but the trouble is, I lost touch. We were doing some trading of duplicates, and he told me several of his less wonderful sources of books. People never tell you their best source, naturally. He told me several people who had books I guess he had ruled out himself and also people I never got around to visiting when I was in England. But since that time, since that jolly evening at his place, both of us have had heart attacks and much has happened. So much has happened that we were just cut off. I've never communicated with him once since then. I've been thinking about doing it, but it's a little

embarrassing, you know, after several years pass with so much that has happened. I don't know why, it's certainly not rational. I mean to write to him just to have him confirm the deal.

In the meantime, I've let UCLA people know. I keep bugging them about it. There are very few people in the library that are really terribly concerned about particular collections. They take things as they come. They've got other things to worry about, apparently. They realize that they should, I'm sure, and Norman Dudley, I think, would certainly go along with it; but still, it doesn't seem to keep him awake at nights. That's the trouble. That's why I've got to keep stirring them up.

While there's a lot of duplication involved, there's so much nonduplication. There is stuff that is in Wolff's collection that is not in ours; in some cases, the entire output of an author that we have nothing of, not even one book, he's got the entire production. He bought things that apparently Sadleir either didn't want or just didn't have a chance to buy at the time. They were friendly competitors.

As I said, he's been writing on his books, too. He did a book on George MacDonald, based partly on his collections. I think he had manuscript material; he had some unique material of MacDonald. I believe he had one under way on Broughton, in addition to the

bibliography, because he showed me part of it when I was visiting him, showed me the cards he had made up.

There may have been other collections, and there've been collections that we failed to get, like Bob Woods's collection of Western Americana. There may have been many collections which we missed which sometime probably should be written up, because it's always interesting. "Why did you fail to get such-and-such a collection?" and so forth.

Sometimes it was because of the hazards of budget problems. I remember once we had a deal cooking with John [Edwin] Smith on the Irvine campus, and we went back East and visited a bookseller who was retired. His entire stock was for sale. We had cooked this up between us. When we saw the collection, it worked out just about as we had thought. He wanted 90 percent of the collection, and I wanted 10. We were going to sort of do it on an ad valorem basis. The man accepted our terms. He was a little Irishman named William F. Kelleher. He smoked enormous cigars. A very entertaining little chap he was, too. He lived over in New Jersey, and his books were in his house. He had retired, but just as I keep haunting this place, he kept on buying. He became an appraiser. And he still acquired books, and his house was absolutely jammed with books, including the cellar and the garage. He parked his car out in the yard, because he couldn't use

the garage. The two-car garage was completely full of books.

Well, we didn't buy that collection, because when we got back to California, John found out very shortly that his budget was eliminated completely. It was in those tough times when Irvine--and I think one of the other campuses, too--had to just say, "All right, we can't afford you. Your book budget is wiped out." It was the following year, you see, that we were facing our acquisition problems. My 10 percent of the money I could have got all right. John couldn't do the rest of it; and so that killed it.

The library could have done more buying of that kind. I may be wrong; but I'm not wrong, I'm sure of it. We were in a better position than almost any university. Our libraries in California were at different stages of development. In my time at the university, some had no books in the beginning. A little bit later, it started up; so that in any large collection that you proposed to buy, the duplication would be negligible. And so it was with the William F. Kelleher collection, which was Southwestern Americana and American fiction. There are many other collections, some that we tried to get and received, and others we didn't receive because we fumbled the ball and we made mistakes.

JUTZI: Could you tell me what faculty members had been particularly helpful in backing you in acquiring

books?

SMITH: In the English department, Majl Ewing; Ada [B.] Nisbet; more recently, Charles [B.] Gullans; and Brad Booth. I say Brad Booth, of course, is the Sadleir Collection. But Brad was not really an acquisitions man; it was just that one collection that he was after--that's enough. He simply was not the kind that plagued us. You have to have people that do plague you. They should do this.

JUTZI: To push you?

SMITH: To push you, yes. Say what you want; let you know what he wants. I think its a great pleasure to have such people around. They're not nuisances; they make you feel that you're doing something worth doing, because they're so keen.

Hugh [G.] Dick, I should mention; he was quite good at this. And in the history department, Roland [D.] Hussey, in a small way. But he was very good; he was extremely well aware of what the holdings were--in fact, so well aware that when you bought a collection, he would plague you: "What ever happened to that pamphlet that was in that collection? I remember ten years ago, I remember seeing it before you cataloged it." He was always right. That was the worst of it, because after spending two weeks, you might be able to run it down. Sometimes, because the library would catalog things in their super-thrifty way, like a

collection of pamphlets on the subject of so-and-so, they were often treated in a way that made them impossible to find. Little clutches of pamphlets would be treated in some thrifty way and put all together. There are things in the stacks that are treated this way, and I think myself that it was a mistake in some cases to do this.

John [S.] Galbraith was a plaguer. He didn't lead to any great collections in Special Collections, except some minor additions here and there, but he was a good library man. I think I've mentioned all those in the English department who were particularly good at this.

Gullans as book chairman has been, I think, the best, the very best. He is very much like Hugh Dick, only more on the ball all the time. Hugh Dick didn't try to urge the library to build only in his own area, but he saw the bigger picture. It's been true of Gullans.

Of course, I did mention Wayland Hand. There is [E.] Maurice Bloch in the art department. We had a little man in the French department once who was an excellent bookman. He went to the University of Texas later. He was collecting seventeenth-century French poetry. He helped us in our collecting of Pierre du Marteau imprints, which are the fictitious imprints.

In the music department, there were several people interested who were good bookmen, like Walter [H.] Rubsamen, whom I had plenty of trouble with. He was

a kind of childish fellow but a wonderful bookman all the same. He knew his stuff. He always wanted to start a special collections over in the music department, which Vosper and I resisted. He persisted simply by being childishly stubborn about it--not by arguing, but simply going ahead and doing it. "Oh, yes, I won't do that anymore," he would say; and he went right ahead doing it, you know, buying collections.

Walter Rubsamen and Maurice Bloch and Larry Powell and I all managed to get money out of Chancellor [Franklin D.] Murphy. Larry Powell would have to be mentioned, because by this time he had retired as librarian. He was probably the most successful of the lot of us. We had been told by Vosper--we had been told absolutely correctly, too--that Murphy was a man who would respond to direct questioning for money and so on if you had a good story to tell, but only if you did this personally, not by means of letters and so on and so forth. That didn't work at all. But if you could somehow convince him that you knew what you were talking about, he'd find money, because he was all for the arts, music, and so on. This was in that interim period when Vosper was librarian at Kansas. Murphy had become chancellor here; and Vosper was yet to come, but he knew he was on the way.

I didn't know about Powell until later, because Powell got his ear, apparently, very early as director

of the Clark Library, which he went on being after he had retired. He got Murphy to really break the ice in getting monetary support for the Clark Library, which they never had given. The Clark had its endowment, but that endowment became feebler and feebler as inflation drove up all the operating costs and the price of books. It became very weak, and with the years the upkeep of the place was dominant and would take all the money. There were piddling sums of money left for books. So Powell approached Murphy. I don't know Powell's side of the story; it's probably completely different. But just looking from the outside, it appeared that he persuaded Murphy that it was important to get state support of the Clark Library, and they did get it.

Now, as a result, they have more money than anybody around here to buy books. I'm glad to see the money channeled that way, although we were very jealous of the Clark Library, as the money they get can't be spent on our collections. I thought it was a mistake, myself. My point of view is this: the Clark Library's range is so narrow, why should it command such a large share of the university book budget? Whereas here, we try to support anything that's appropriate in any kind of program--a research program in the humanities, at least. The range is ever so much wider; and therefore, it needs more monetary support. That was my way of

looking at it.

JUTZI: Murphy was instrumental in getting money for libraries?

SMITH: As I said, I'm on the outside, and I really don't know the inside story. But I can't help thinking that Murphy was the responsible person. Librarians are generally not high-powered people. Murphy is. It takes a person like Murphy, with a lot of brass and a competent manner, to beat down the kind of people that become regents--big businessmen, the kind that like to call themselves "practical, hardheaded, realistic." Those are the terms they like to use. I don't know what the formula is. I'd love to know. It'd be well worth knowing, just as I'd love to know how it was that [Harry Huntt] Ransom could break down these hard-boiled regents of the University of Texas and get them to put money into something besides football stadiums. It would really be something wonderful to know. Nobody had been able to do it before, and my prediction is that at Texas there won't be anybody else to do it for another couple of generations, at least.

JUTZI: Have the Friends of the UCLA Library been an asset to Special Collections? Have they helped at all in acquisitions or money, in developing collections?

SMITH: In my opinion, the Friends of the Library has been a waste of time. It's nice to have, but I say it's a waste of time, because it seemed to me that an awful

lot of time has been put into it. If they hadn't, it would be a nice thing, a nice little public relations work. But sort of weigh it up. I don't know if anybody's ever done this, but it could be done--to weigh it up and then see what you come out with. The purpose of it in the beginning, I think, was to get money to buy books that we couldn't afford to buy and to augment our holdings in important ways. You could make up a list of things that the Friends have bought, but try to balance it off against what they might have done if they had done it in a little different way. I think, myself, that what the library should have done, if it was going to have a Friends, was to make it a more exclusive thing, to make a big campaign to get very rich people into it. Because what you want is money. You want good will, too, but you want money. The library has never succeeded in getting just one major contributor, beyond Mr. and Mrs. Theodore E. Cummings, who made one gesture our way, and then were not satisfied with what they got in return and never made another. UCLA is old enough now to have alumni that are very wealthy people, in addition to the possibilities of people who are not alumni but simply live in this area and are very rich men and women. So I think that in the long run that the Friends have not done much good.

There is one single acquisition that came that I

can think of as important. It was almost an accident. It was a by-product of the Friends. If you didn't have at least one, it would be really a miserable history. That one was a man named Walter [Otto] Schneider. I don't know whether I ever told you about him or not. But he was a person that nobody had ever heard of.

When we started the Friends organization, I made up the original master list, mailing list. I made it up at Mr. Vosper's request, I believe. I don't know whether it was Vosper or Powell. I made that up from other lists, including a dealer's list. Glen Dawson gave us their mailing list. Then we took the list of the Zamorano Club. We took the list of the Friends of Music; we took this list and that list. I suppose there must have been at least ten or a dozen lists, some of which had deadwood. We tried to liven it up to see that we weren't sending our mail to people who were no longer living, but I think it was a reasonably good list. I suppose some of the people we were sending it to were Friends of the Huntington Library, but still, some could afford to belong to several friends groups. I think the trouble was that the dues were too low. It was just simply that beyond having a dinner and issuing little keepsakes, there wasn't much money left, you see, for books.

JUTZI: How did the Schneider Collection come through the Friends?

SMITH: I tried to retrace how this happened, because I never yet have met a man who said, "Oh, yes, I knew Schneider. He lived here for many years and was collecting for many years." He was a lone wolf, kind of a little hermit, and lived in a little room at the Los Angeles Country Club. It was on the second floor. He was the comptroller and had a modest salary. He spent all of his money on recordings and on books. I think that he simply was on the mailing list for Friends of Music. He was just accidentally caught in that. He always supported music wherever he was, apparently. He'd been a refugee from Germany right after World War I. It must have been before World War I, because I believe he was at the L.A. Country Club beginning in 1915. Imagine, all those years there and unknown.

Our first knowledge of his existence, apart from simply being on the mailing list, came from a letter from the lawyer. He had died, and the lawyer said that Mr. Walter O. Schneider has left all of his books, recordings, and other things to UCLA Library. So I was asked to go down and see what this amounted to. I went down to the L.A. Country Club and was shown up into his room. I saw the books that he happened to have there at the time and also the rest of it--his recordings and the little setup that he had for receiving books. Apparently, he would order books by mail from dealers all over the world--continental

dealers and English dealers mostly, although he bought wherever he could find things.

He would send for the books, and after he'd gloated over them sufficiently and read or whatever he wanted to do with them at the time, he would pack them up tidily and put them in cartons of the very strongest and the most durable kind--beautiful quality. The twine was the best, strongest twine you ever saw. Everything he had was that way, including all his recordings, all his books, all the prints he had. Everything was in fine condition and shipshape. It was that sort of a setup. Really very satisfactory. And everything he owned was that way. He had luggage; it was the strongest leather you ever saw. Even though he had really a modest salary, he had these standards of quality.

More than 90 percent of what he had was in the warehouse. I loaded up everything in his room. I don't know what ever happened to the record player and that sort of thing; I suppose maybe the country club kept them. The recordings were chamber music of the finest kind, and all in mint condition. You get recordings often in gifts. Usually they're not wanted by the library; they've got them already, or they're scratched or the wrong recordings. But Schneider's was evidently a very superior collection. Just like everything else I said he had, it was superior.

He collected in graphic arts and bibliography,

and was particularly interested in illustration of the narrative kind. Apparently, a friend of his was the Flemish woodcutter artist Frans Mazereel. I don't know whether you know Mazereel's books or not, but they were really picture books without texts; although he illustrated a lot of books that had texts as well. There were expressionist books of the early twenties and German books. You get a little tired sometimes, they're so overpoweringly black and white. They're awfully good, too, for what they are. He had evidently, as I said, been friends with Mazereel; and so he had really a definitive collection, including drawings and one large oil painting which he had gotten from Jake Zeitlin, as I found out because we took over all his records and so on, too. I asked Jake later. He said he remembered him, but I doubt it, because the man is a will-o'-the-wisp. He popped into the shop when he evidently heard that Jake had this painting. That kind of information does get to people who are interested. That was probably the end of his dealings with Jake, because most of his other dealings seemed to be by mail. The books were really quite wonderful.

In going through his papers, you can piece together a man's history--even if you don't do it too systematically--just by the way it comes out. We'd run across, for instance, his passport, which he kept renewing. It was a very pathetic little document, because he never got

back to that part of Germany that was evidently his home. The relics of it were all there--the signs of his wanting, at least, to make it possible. That was very sad. He had apparently one relative here that he didn't like, a young woman who was writing begging letters. He hadn't much use for her. I couldn't say that I blamed him. I don't know how he was personally, but apparently he was a very withdrawn man. You just don't live in a place for forty or fifty years without being known by somebody.

At the country club, they had a lot of respect for him and apparently liked him. The maid told me, "You know, he had a birthday just a few months ago, and we had got together and thought, 'Well, let's give Walter a fine recorder.'" He needed one, apparently. So they chipped in the money and gave it to him, and they said they couldn't understand his reaction to it. They said, "Happy Birthday, Walter," and they wheeled in this recording machine. Walter was doing some reading or something at his desk, and they said he hardly looked up. He said, "Oh, I see. Well, just put it over there." [laughter] How do you explain a man like that? I found him quite a mystery; and yet I sympathize with him in many ways, especially because he had such good taste and liberal views, apparently, as reflected by the things he collected.

He had a surprising mixture of things. He had

old runs of graphic arts magazines and books like The Fleuron--all these things in mint condition. He had, as I said, this huge collection of books illustrated by Mazereel and packages of drawings. He had lots of prints. He had an Eric Gill collection, hundreds of prints, including many that the Clark didn't have which we sent to them. It even included some original sketches of Gill. All of these things would be usually in pin seal folders of different sizes, with clear plastic envelopes. He had a very good collection of the English engraver Stephen Gooden. He had an excellent collection of Stephen Gooden. And then he had little bits here and there. I was delighted to find, for instance, an original watercolor drawing by the German illustrator Ludwig Richter. He's not too well known these days, but he is really a charming illustrator. It fits in, incidentally, with our collection of children's books. He had one good print of Dürer, with margins. He had a whole suite of engravings of [Jacques] Callot and a few of [Giovanni Battista] Tiepolo--some really quite wonderful prints. This really represented the bulk of his income, I'd say. It filled up a bay in the Bekins storage warehouse. Everything was very tidily put away, everything in immaculate shape and beautifully wrapped in the best quality paper. Two manuscripts of Bertrand Russell showed up in there.

JUTZI: He bought those at an auction?

SMITH: I don't know how he had got those exactly. I never did follow the whole story through. I had all the records there; I could have found out, of course. It can still be done, because we still have those records. You don't like to wash out a man's complete history. The man was absolutely alone. Libraries do get this kind of thing. It is the end of the line. This is the end of the whole family line. The man had no brothers or sisters, so, in a way, you sort of wipe out a whole career. This was true of the Blanchard Collection, in which the library got everything. There was no heir. It's true of a number of people in the library's collection. It finally comes down to a library or museum, and then the history's wiped clean.

JUTZI: Do you think that special collections and the university libraries are going to be able to grow and expand like they have been within recent years? What do you think about the future of UCLA specifically?

SMITH: It certainly isn't clear. It isn't a bit clear, because I don't know what has really happened in many of the other universities. I stuck too much probably to my own job without getting around to see what's been happening all these years since they started, since we started, since the whole movement of developing special collections here and there. Some of them started out in a way that really wasn't justified, in my opinion. If at the time they had started there had

been any question of their motives, I don't think they could very well argue the case, because many libraries appointed people who were completely bewildered by the prospect. They didn't know what the library wanted, for one thing, and they didn't know what to do. If the library said it simply wanted a rare-book setup and you decided what the collection might be, they would be left in a kind of a bewildered state.

Partly it is a result of libraries growing so fast. There's been a lot of pressure for libraries to grow faster since World War II ended. This library was especially under pressure to grow fast, because the city was growing fast and the demand was for new schools.

A lot of the things that went on, a librarian couldn't hope to really keep up with. I know that the administration of his library got to be a terrific bore to LCP [Powell], and I wouldn't be surprised if it didn't to Vosper, too. Before they got through, the thing mushroomed on them so fast and the pressures were on all sides. We'd see little reflections of it here and there while we groused over the comparative neglect on the part of the librarian of this department. We thought Special Collections was overlooked. I know that the librarian was under tremendous pressure from all kinds of things. The law school and the School of Medicine wanted this and that. I could see little

signs of it.

I remember I was in Powell's office one time when the dean of the medical school came in, and they were talking about computers and that kind of thing. I got the feeling that this high-powered dean was sweeping Powell into something that he couldn't resist. The power was too strong. I don't know; it seemed to be kind of a hysteria to get things done without reasoning them out, thinking them out. I think they are still caught up in a lot of nonsense and are doing things that are a total waste of money. I'm convinced of that. You talk with librarians who never say so in meetings apparently, but every one of them that I talked with feels exactly the same way. Do you find that this is so?

JUTZI: Sometimes. Not in all cases.

SMITH: Yes, I know. There are really people that give lip service to everything that's popular. It seems to be the thing to do. You wonder if they really feel that way. I have not been involved in it and don't really understand too much about it. What I have done is to resent the proportion of the money that gets into this thing, especially when I see the net results that are offered and hear the talk of the people who are in back of the programs. They're not convincing at all, to me.

JUTZI: In the other respect, is there material still

to be bought, to be gotten?

SMITH: Oh, yes. Yes, there is. It's true that there's less of it--all the more reason to try hard to get it. There are still rich collectors. In these last few years, I've lost track of who the rich collectors are. You suddenly get surprised; you hear of people whose names are totally unfamiliar, and they have magnificent collections of this and that. I don't know whether on this recording I mentioned or not Mr. X (as he used to be referred to at one time) that I tried to run down--John Galvin, who was an utterly unknown person. Oh, his name appears on the title pages of some books. I seriously doubt he's ever had anything to do with the books, except the publishing, the money backup. I don't know just how important his collections of books are. He certainly has paid enormous sums of money for some things--manuscripts and books as well. So there are people like that--all those people who got rich after World War II, and after the other wars, too. There are these multimillionaires who go in for buying. You hear their names once in a while. The dealers keep them pretty close.

JUTZI: What particularly have you enjoyed about this work that's made you stick with it? What have you enjoyed most about the job?

SMITH: Well, what I've enjoyed most about it, and what I've done mostly, is to build up collections.

INDEX

A

B

C

J

K

L

M