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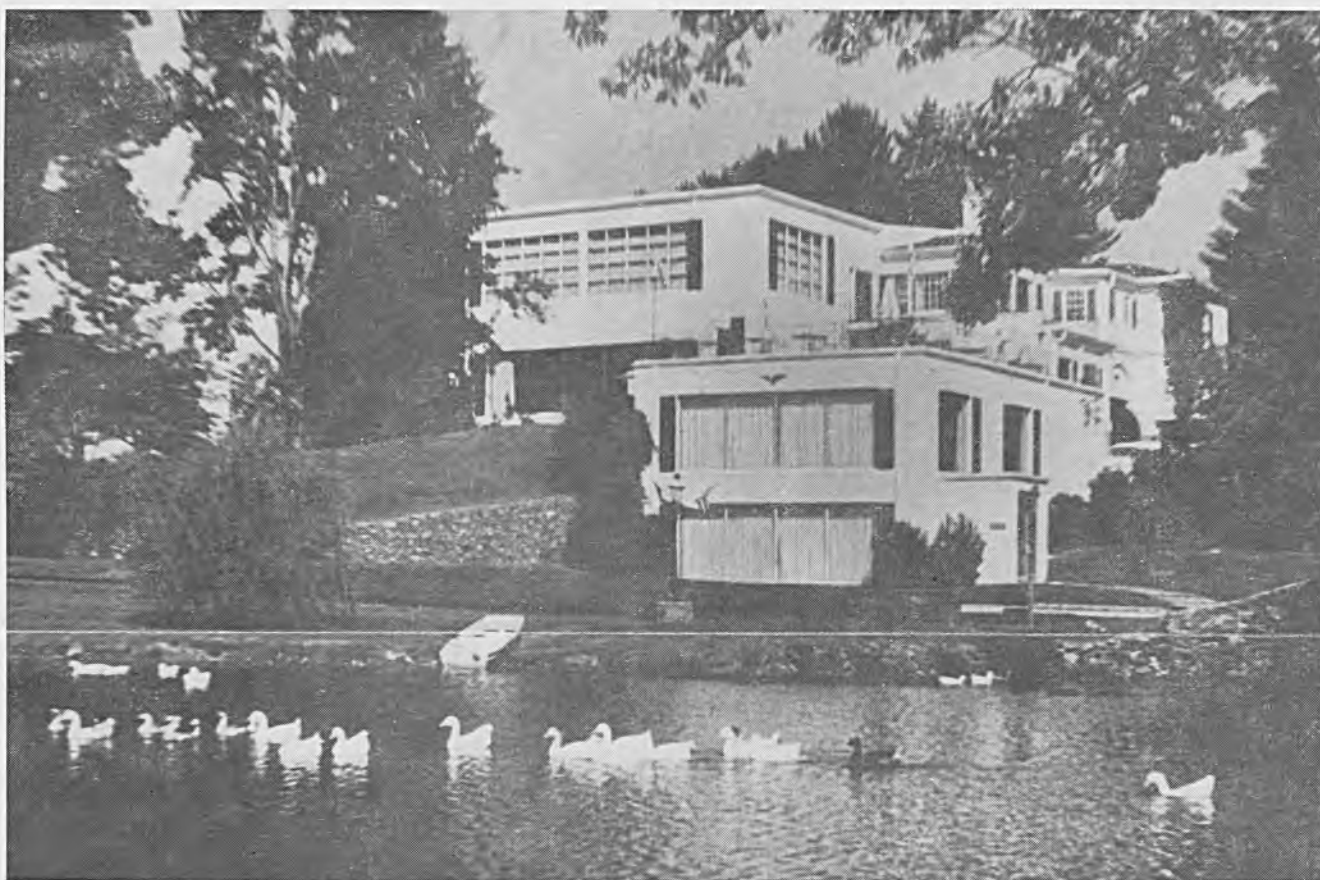
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Oral History Association

# NEWSLETTER

Volume III, Number 2, April, 1969

Plans Being Made for 4<sup>th</sup> National Oral History Colloquium; Meeting  
Starts on November 7, 1969, at Airlie House in Virginia



This is Airlie House in Warrenton, Virginia. Operated as a conference center by the Airlie Foundation, it is nestled in the scenic Virginia countryside about forty-five miles southwest of Washington, D.C. Located nearby is the Manassas battlefield and other sites of historical importance during the American Civil War. The Oral History Association will conduct its fourth National Colloquium on Oral History at Airlie House from November 7 to November 10, 1969. Plans for this meeting are outlined inside this issue of the OHA **Newsletter**.

**PLANS FOR AIRLIE HOUSE COLLOQUIUM INCLUDE TALKS BY BARBARA TUCHMAN AND LUCIUS BATTLE; DISCUSSION OF ORAL HISTORY IN AFRICA, AND HOW LAWYERS VIEW PROBLEMS OF ORAL HISTORY TAPES AND TRANSCRIPTS**



Officers and Members of the OHA Council met at Airlie House on February 19 to plan next November's National Colloquium on Oral History. Peter Olch, at left, of the National Library of Medicine is Program Chairman.

Forrest Pogue, top center, Director of the George C. Marshall Research Library, is handling local arrangements for the November meeting. Knox Mellon, right, OHA Treasurer, tells what the budget will permit.

Gould Colman and Alice Hoffman, bottom right, OHA President and Secretary, attended the planning session at Airlie House. Also present were, left, Willa Baum and Oscar Winther.

The fourth National Colloquium on Oral History will get underway at Airlie House on the afternoon of Friday, November 7, with a meeting of the OHA Executive Committee. After dinner, and welcoming remarks by OHA President Gould Colman, a panel of interviewers representing projects in the Nation's Capitol will discuss "Oral History In The Washington Environs."

Saturday morning, November 8, begins with "Critical Evaluation of Oral History Products" by Saul Benison. Then program reports will be given about specialized projects.

David Cohen of Johns Hopkins University will talk after lunch about "A Field Study of Traditional African History." At 4:00 p.m. group sessions will consider such topics as "Can Film Complement Oral History Interviews?" (in this instance interviews recorded in Chicago last summer during the Democratic National Convention), and "Press Relations and Publicity Problems of Oral History."

Barbara Tuchman is the featured speaker after dinner Saturday evening. The author of **The Guns of August**, and **The Proud Tower**, she will discuss "Ventures In Oral History."

Sunday begins with Lucius Battle's "An Interviewer-Respondent Comments On Oral History." A former diplomat who is now Vice President of the Communications Satellite Corporation, Battle has had experience on both the questioning and answering sides of oral history interviewing.

Group sessions on Sunday will include such topics as "Basic Problems in Oral History Programs" and "Studies On The Accuracy of Oral Interviews."

Sunday afternoon features H. Mason Welch discussing "A Lawyer Looks At Oral History." Late in the afternoon a business meeting of the OHA will include the election of new officers.

The Sunday evening slot is still tentative as this newsletter goes to press; Theodore H. White has been invited and will appear if he makes progress toward completing his forthcoming book, **The Making Of The President, 1968**.

Monday includes an OHA business meeting and a final judgment by Nathan Reingold of the Smithsonian Institution entitled "A Critic Looks At Oral History." The Colloquium will adjourn after lunch.

Social amenities, according to the Program Committee, will not be neglected. All reports about the cuisine at Airlie House are favorable.

Oral Historians are urged to make plans to attend this Fourth National Colloquium from November 7 to November 10, 1969.

## Keeping Posted: News About Oral History

### RECORDING THE HISTORY OF THE CHEYENNE TRIBE: NEW BOOK SHOWS HOW ORAL HISTORY CAN PRESERVE KNOWLEDGE OF INDIAN LIFE ON THE GREAT PLAINS

John Stands In Timber was a Northern Cheyenne Indian who began collecting folklore and reminiscences about his Tribe in 1905. This material, consisting mostly of old programs, newspaper clippings, and notes written on scraps of paper, accumulated in a woodshed behind his cabin until 1956, when he met Margot Liberty. She was teaching Indian children at a government school in Montana.

Miss Liberty recognized the value of the information that John Stands In Timber had gathered (her father was the late Henry Pringle, the famous biographer of Theodore Roosevelt and William Howard Taft); she suggested that together they collaborate in an oral history venture to assure its preservation. John agreed, and their joint effort continued until John's death in 1967, when the book containing his recollections was in press. It is now available (**Cheyenne Memories** by John Stands In Timber and Margot Liberty, with the assistance of Robert Utley, published in 1967 by the Yale University Press, 330 pp., \$7.95), and is highly recommended to oral historians who want to examine how an interviewer-historian was able to preserve these memories of the Cheyenne Tribe.

Born in 1884, John Stands In Timber was among the last of his people to have personal contact with the generation of Plains Indians who fought at the Little Big Horn and Wounded Knee. In fact his step-grandfather, Wolf Tooth, who raised him, appears to have been present at most major Cheyenne events in the last three decades of the 19th century.

Miss Liberty and her subject first organized the papers in John's woodshed into chronological order. Then they began the taping sessions: "He could squint at some old memo and be off for hours of narrative," she reports.

At times they would drive to remote areas on the Plains that had particular significance in Cheyenne history, and John would recount what happened there. As his driver she would follow his directions across barren stretches where trails consisted of tracks that were almost invisible.

Miss Liberty learned not to press him for stories. "I soon found it far better to trust his own instinct. Where he did not volunteer material freely, he usually had little to say. Where he did have a contribution, it checked out excitingly well against the significant published record."

Skillful use of footnotes demonstrates how Miss Liberty identifies where John's narrative differs from versions recounted by other Indians or by formal scholars of Indian life, such as George Bird Grinnell.

"My aim in editing," she explains, "was to keep as closely as possible to John's own speech. I hoped to provide his friends with an occasional slight scent of the Absorbine, Jr.



**John Stands In Timber (1884-1967), preserved the memories of the Northern Cheyenne Indians.**

liniment that clings to him like an elegant male cologne, and a glimpse of his hands sweeping through the ancient and evocative signs of the Plains."

In addition to tales of battles lost and won, John's recollections contain several amusing sidelights about the influence of white culture upon the Plains Indians.

This is a book that should prompt others to record the memories of American Indians. Moreover, it should be valuable to those who teach oral history seminars or training classes because it adds significantly to the limited number of books now available that offer concrete guidance of this kind.

### SHOULD HISTORIANS OF THE U.S. LABOR MOVEMENT RECORD ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEWS? SAYS ONE: "I AM ABSOLUTELY 'HOOKED' ON THIS METHOD AS A SOURCE FOR THE LABOR HISTORIAN"

Nuala McGann Drescher, Associate Professor of History at the State University College at Buffalo, strongly endorsed the value of oral history interviews in a paper delivered at the first annual Pacific Northwest Labor History Conference held in Spokane in April, 1968.

She told her audience how interviewers for labor history programs at Wayne State, Penn State, and Cornell obtain historical information: "The usual procedure involved in such programs is to send an archivist or a specially trained staff member (and it takes special training to exploit this resource fully) with a union representative to tape interviews with men who have played significant roles in the formation and growth of the trade union movement." Then she noted: "I am absolutely 'hooked' on this method as a source for the labor historian, but I cannot avoid expressing a fear that the big institutions which possess the funds, the staff, and the contacts are doing only half the job."

She continued: "Almost invariably the emphasis in oral history projects is on the leadership. In my work I have found that the ideas of leaders and the key decisions that affect the destiny of an organization are readily available from the printed record or the papers of officers. Anecdotes and explanations that reinforce and clarify come out in the interview situation, hence are invaluable."

So too with interviews recorded with average members of the union: "Aspects that do not come out under the 'great man' approach are rank-and-file attitudes, the reactions of the ordinary man to these key decisions, insights, into the personality of a given international president that he himself is not likely to have or to be able to transmit even if he did have them. (Continued under **Labor History** at the bottom of page 4.)



## STUDS TERKEL IS PREPARING "AN ORAL HISTORY OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION"

Studs Terkel, the radio celebrity of station WFMT in Chicago, is familiar to tape-recording enthusiasts for the interviews with Chicago citizens he taped and transcribed for publication in a best-selling book called **Division Street: America**. Now he is preparing a sequel to this portrait of Chicago life that is titled **Hard Times: An Oral History of The Great Depression**.

"I've talked to farmers in Iowa and South Dakota, miners in Appalachia, New Dealers and anti-New Dealers, bootleggers and bankers, the bigtimers and the little people," he explains. "I've got Russell Long telling about the role of Huey in the early '30's in the eventual passage of Social Security. I've got James Farley, Raymond Moley, Burton K. Wheeler; Wright Patman, the unreconstructed Populist who impeached Andrew Mellon; David Kennedy, Sally Rand, E. Y. Harburg, who wrote the lyrics to 'Brother, Can You Spare A Dime.' I've got guys who rode the freights. Hamilton Fish, the first Red-hunter, W. Clement Stone, who made it during the Depression. Charles Mott, the old man who owns Flint, Michigan, remembering the sit-down strikes. I have a witness to the Republican Steel massacre."

Terkel estimates he has 400 to 500 hours of taped interviews already gathered for this social history of the 1930's. His technique in **Division Street: America** was to choose excerpts from transcribed portions of his interviews that most effectively conveyed the tenor of life in Chicago as described by people who have spent their lives in that city.

Taping interviews about the Depression and transcribing them for **Hard Times**, he declares, is more difficult than trying to capture the voices of Chicago. "The trouble is I've got 200 Marcel Prousts who all begin, 'Oh I could tell you things about the Depression,' and their tales are all good. My problem is to slash and cut to fit them in, and that's the agony."

Publication of **Hard Times** is tentatively set for January, 1970. "It's a rough book," Terkel says. "I'm in an overwhelming forest now, trying to cut my way through it."

### WHILE THE ORAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION WAS MEETING LAST NOVEMBER IN LINCOLN, THE ASSOCIATION FOR RECORDED SOUND COLLECTIONS WAS MEETING IN LOS ANGELES

UCLA was host to the 1969 meeting of The Association For Recorded Sound Collections on November 21-23. Most of this meeting was devoted to matters that approach the concerns of some oral historians (setting manufacturing standards for discs and tapes, preserving and restoring sound, "fair use" and copyright problems, spurious recordings, etc.), but William Malloch, Music Director of Radio Station KPEK in Los Angeles, clearly showed how the interests of these two groups can coincide.

Malloch discussed his study of Antonin Dvorak, the famous Czech composer (1841-1904), and the reminiscences he has gathered from those who knew him. Malloch has located elderly musicians in New York and Los Angeles who played under Dvorak's direction and who vividly recalled in tape-recorded interviews the composer's musicianship and personality. He described how a senior citizen of Spillville, Iowa, where Dvorak summered briefly, recalled walking with the composer in the fields and observing how he noted thematic ideas on a shirt cuff. The composer's youngest daughter was interviewed in Czechoslovakia a few weeks before she died. Malloch illustrated his research project by playing excerpts from a series of broadcasts prepared for KPFK that utilizes the audio data he has gathered.

### INDIANA HISTORY BEING RECORDED

Oral history is a new function of the Indiana State Library in Indianapolis. Six interviews, totalling about 14 hours, have been taped within the last few months. These interviews include the recollections of Mrs. Virginia Jenckes, former Congresswoman from the 6th Indiana district; Mrs. Kim Hubbard, wife of the creator of "Abe Martin"; Wilson C. Oren, a veteran of the Philippine Insurrection; and Harold Feightner, Indianapolis newspaperman in the 1920's and the 1930's.

### LABOR HISTORY (continued from page 3):

These are intangibles which are rarely reflected in the traditional historical sources. Only the interview technique, used broadly with the unpolished, inarticulate, sometimes illiterate, now aging member of the local, will elicit this sort of information."

As an example of what can be discovered through oral history interviewing Mrs. Drescher told about interviews with rank-and-file members in one of the mass-production industries: "It was discovered that certain key decisions, which ultimately had national implications, were made not because of ideology or even the *realpolitik* of the situation as is usually supposed, but rather because Joe Doakes slept with John Doe's wife and got caught."

Her paper, entitled "Three Problems For The Labor Historian," was published as an article in the January, 1969 (Volume 60, No. 1) issue of **Pacific Northwest Quarterly**.

### NEW ORAL HISTORY PROJECT IN MEDICINE

The American Gastroenterological Association has inaugurated an oral history program by an interview with Burrill B. Crohn, M.D., an international authority on intestinal diseases. Dr. Crohn, now 84, is perhaps best known for his discovery and later delineation of regional ileitis (Crohn's disease). The interviewer and organizer of this oral history program is Dr. James D. Boyle, Chief of the Gastroenterology Section, Veterans Administration Center, Los Angeles, California. The American Gastroenterological Association has very kindly agreed to place a copy of each of their oral history memoirs in the National Library of Medicine. The purpose of this program is to document the history of gastroenterology in this country.

### COLD STUFF FROM THE ARCTIC: GETTING IT WHILE ITS HOT —

The Center for Polar Archives, a specialized depository within the National Archives and Records Service, recently initiated its oral history program with a two-hour session with Major Roy F. Jones, an arctic specialist whose considerable pioneering and field experiences in the Arctic since the early 1920's is now on record for future historians. The Center for Polar Archives has made contacts with and arrangements for recording oral history interviews with a dozen or more polar specialists this spring.

### HOT STUFF FROM CANADA: HOW THEY GOT IT IN THE 1920's

Tales about rum-running during the Prohibition Era are being recorded by an historian at Plattsburgh (New York) State University College. Dr. Allan S. Everest is interviewing old-timers who can recall how fast cars loaded with liquor crossed from Canada into the United States in darkness and tried to escape Revenue agents on the back-country roads of northern New York state.

# Keeping Posted: News About Oral History Projects

## LBJ ORAL HISTORY PROJECT: 275 ON TAPE: MANY MORE TO DO

The Lyndon B. Johnson Library Oral History Project reports that 275 colleagues and contemporaries of the 36th President have already been interviewed on tape. The LBJ Project has a "must" list of 500 prospective interviewees and hopes of recording interviews with another 500 people when the "must" list is completed. Joe Frantz, Project Director, reports only about six refusals to date from prospective interviewees. Among these is J. Edgar Hoover, Senator Richard Russell of Georgia, Walter Lippmann, and former Secretary of Labor W. Willard Wirtz.

## ROHO TO INTERVIEW ON CALIFORNIA WINE INDUSTRY

The Regional Oral History Office, University of California at Berkeley, has received a grant of \$20,000 from the California Wine Advisory Board to conduct interviews with men who have had a formative influence upon the state's wine industry. Interviewees selected from long-established grape growers, vintners, wine marketers, enologists, and viticulturists will be taped by Ruth Teiser, project director. (Charter members of the Oral History Association will recall that Ruth Teiser brought a collection of California wines to the Lake Arrowhead meeting for an after-hours wine and cheese party.) ROHO is also pleased to announce the acquisition of one of UCLA Oral History Office's star transcribers, Richard Robb, who will handle the clerical work of the wine project. The cause of Robb's move from Los Angeles to Berkeley was to pursue graduate work at Berkeley, not to improve his winemanship.

## APS GRANT FOR RESEARCH IN COLUMBIA ORAL HISTORY MATERIALS

The honor of winning the first grant for research in oral history materials ever awarded by the American Philosophical Society belongs to Sidney Chang, Assistant Professor of History at Fresno (California) State College. Professor Chang plans six weeks of research this coming summer in the Chinese Oral History Project at Columbia University, an enterprise conducted since 1957 by Professor Franklin Ho and Professor C. Martin Wilbur of Columbia's East Asia Institute. Transcripts in this collection center on the political, economic, cultural, and military history of the Chinese Republic from 1911 to 1949. Professor Chang's credentials for winning this APS grant include a doctoral dissertation entitled "The Kuomintang's Foreign Policy, 1925-1928."

## HOW ABOUT YOUR ORAL HISTORY PROJECT? ANY NEWS?

Your editor needs news to edit a newsletter—that's obvious. Tell us what you're doing so your colleagues can keep posted.

More important, tell us your **thoughts** about oral history as well as your doings. Have you pondered changes in the common features of most oral history programs—interviewing techniques, transcription, editing, legal agreements, use by researchers? Have you developed new practices or confronted problems that the rest of us have escaped? Have you stumbled upon bibliographic aids that others should know about? Do you have strong feelings about the proper use or flagrant mis-use of oral history materials in any monographs or articles you have recently read? Let's hear from you.

## NEWS IN BRIEF . . .

John T. Mason, Jr. has been appointed Director of Oral History at the United States Naval Institute at Annapolis, Maryland. He would like to hear from institutions with manuscripts on naval or maritime subjects so his files can include information about their whereabouts.

Gould Colman of Cornell discussed "Oral History In The United States" when the Society of Ohio Archivists met in Columbus on May 5. He was followed on the program by John Popplestone of the University of Akron who told about "The Oral History Project on American Psychology."

Professor Vincent Harding of the Martin Luther King Center in Atlanta, Georgia, plans an oral history project that will begin with members of Dr. King's family and then branch out to include leaders of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and the civil rights movement generally.

Columbia's Oral History Research Office is cooperating with Professor Harding's program. In conjunction with the Urban Center at Columbia, the Oral History Research Office is offering special assistance to any reputable institution that is interested in launching an oral history project designed to provide source materials for Black Studies programs.

An oral history project contemplated by the A. N. Marquis Company, publishers of **Who's Who**, has been shelved temporarily because of other projects demanding priority.

## ON THE HORIZON . . .

The 8th Annual Institute For Archival Studies, a two-week program directed by Dolores C. Renze at the University of Denver that begins on July 27, will devote two days to "Oral History: Its methodology, techniques, and administration." This year the Institute hopes to include a field trip to Salt Lake City to participate in the World Conference on Records and the World Convention and Seminar On Genealogy being sponsored concurrently from August 5 to August 8 by the Genealogical Society of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Plans for these two conferences include seminars entitled "The Indian oral history program under the Doris Duke grant," and another about "Oral history as a genealogical research tool."

The Archives Section of the Canadian Historical Association will include oral history in its discussions when the Association holds its annual meeting in Toronto on June 5 and 6. For the past year a survey of existing and potential interest in oral history in Canada has been underway, and the results will be analyzed at the Toronto meeting.

Lewis A. Dexter of M.I.T. has a book coming soon entitled **Elite And Specialized Interviewing** that includes excerpts from the First National Colloquium on Oral History sponsored by UCLA at Lake Arrowhead, California, in 1966. A survey of oral history programs in New England by Charles Morrissey will appear this spring in **Yankee Magazine**.

## RECENTLY IN PRINT . . .

"Oral History and the Medical Librarian," a paper delivered by Peter Olch, M.D., at the 1968 meeting of the Medical Library Association in Denver last summer, has been published in the **Bulletin** of the Medical Library Association, Volume 57, No. 1 (January, 1969).

Amelia Fry of the Regional Oral History Office at U.C., Berkeley, is the author of "Along the Suffrage Trail," an article in the January, 1969, issue of **The American West** that is based on a portion of an ROHO oral history interview with Sara Bard Field. The article tells about an incredible 1915 automobile trip by Suffragettes from San Francisco to Boston and then to Washington to persuade a reluctant Congress to grant nation-wide suffrage to women. Highways were rough in those days, and thereby hangs the tale.



## RICE UNIVERSITY CRISIS TO BE DOCUMENTED

Hard on the heels of events that stirred Rice University comes an oral history project about them, the University's first venture into the field. On February 21, William Masterson, president of the University of Chattanooga and a former dean at Rice, was named its new president in a surprise move by the trustees. Student and faculty reaction to the method of selection was such that Mr. Masterson resigned five days later.

The Center for Research in Social Change and Economic Development provided a grant of some \$7,500 for the project in response to an application that pointed out:

"Issues comparable to those at other universities were dealt with quite differently here, rendering the experience relevant to educational problems of our time and distinctive enough to have special significance."

Student demonstrations were orderly but singularly effective, and one of the projects aims will be illuminate the apparent paradox, as well as to explore the roles of faculty members, trustees, and University personnel in the crisis. Richard Lytle, University Archivist, is administering the project, employing as interviewer a mature graduate student from the University of Houston on the premise that no "insider" would be as able to pursue all facets. Professors Harold Hyman and Joseph Cooper of Rice and Professor Louis M. Starr of Columbia are the project's advisers. About 80 persons are scheduled to be interviewed.

Acting President Frank Vandiver and others at Rice have hopes that this will lay the foundation for continuing oral history work there.

## ORAL HISTORY WAKENS INTEREST AT SMITH

Signs that Smith College, largest of the "Seven Sisters," as the prestigious Eastern women's colleges are often designated, is preparing to launch an oral history effort appeared in April when Friends of the Smith Library invited Dr. Louis M. Starr to give the principal address at their annual meeting. Dr. Starr emphasized the value of a project on the College itself as it approaches its centennial in 1975, and suggested that a Coolidge project should also be launched while many Northampton residents who knew the former President and Mrs. Coolidge are still alive. There were many indications of interest, Starr said.

Meanwhile Bryn Mawr, another of the "Seven Sisters," has quietly got into the field through a program launched by its alumnae, who serve as volunteer interviewers. About a dozen tapes have been recorded to date, chiefly interviews with notable alumnae, although funds for transcription are not yet in hand.

## OHIO REORGANIZATION INCLUDES ORAL HISTORY

The Ohio Historical Society in Columbus has unified its manuscript and archival services into a new division that also includes an Oral History Department. David R. Larson, manuscripts librarian of the Society and participant in recent Colloquia of the Oral History Association, will direct the new division.

## NOMINATIONS REQUESTED TO FILL OHA VACANCIES

The Executive Council of the OHA has announced the appointment of the following Committee to nominate candidates for election at the Annual Meeting at Airlie House this November: Rev. Thomas E. Blantz, C.S.C. (Department of History, Notre Dame, Indiana 46556); Mrs. Elizabeth Spedding Calciano (Regional History Project, The University Library, University of California at Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz, California 95060); and Samuel Proctor (**Florida Historical Quarterly**, P.O. Box 14045, University Station, Gainesville, Florida 32601).

Section 7 of the By-Laws of the Association states: "There shall be a nominating committee composed of three members appointed by the Executive Council at least sixty days prior to the date of the election. This committee shall consult the membership for suggestions, shall make nominations for officers and members of the council, and shall promulgate its report at the beginning of the annual meeting at which the election is to take place. Other nominations may also be made from the floor by any member of the Association . . . Only individual members shall be eligible for election as officers or members of the council."

Alice Hoffman and Knox Mellon are willing to serve another term as Secretary and Treasurer. The offices which must be filled are: (1) Vice President—President-Elect; and (2) Member of the Executive Council to succeed Willa Baum whose term expires. Members of the Association are asked to send their suggestions to any member of the Nominating Committee before July 15.

## ANNUAL DUES FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE OHA

Individual members pay annual dues of \$7.50. Institutional Members pay \$25.00. Non-voting student and library memberships are \$5.00 (these members receive OHA publications that are sent free to other members).

Life memberships are available at \$150. Institutions that generously choose to become Sustaining Members pay between \$100 and \$150 each year.

Correspondence concerning membership should be sent to Knox Mellon, OHA Treasurer, Immaculate Heart College, 2021 North Western Avenue, Los Angeles, California 90027.

## OFFICERS OF THE ORAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION

Gould Colman, Cornell University	President
Oscar Winther, Indiana University	Vice-President
Alice Hoffman, Penn State University	Secretary
Knox Mellon, Immaculate Heart College	Treasurer
Forrest Pogue, George Marshall Library	Member of the Council
Willa Baum, Univ. of California (Berkeley)	Member of the Council
Peter Olch, National Library of Medicine	Member of the Council
Louis Starr, Columbia University	Member of the Council