

Drip

Thomas Carlyle collection given UCSC

University of California at Santa Cruz became recipients of the much-prized Norman and Charlotte Strouse collection of Thomas Carlyle during informal ceremonies at the university last week. Accepting the gift upon behalf of the university was UCSC Chancellor Dean E. McHenry.

"The Collection is an important and useful contribution to the scholarly resources of our fledgling campus," said Chancellor McHenry. "We are hopeful that the trust and confidence evidenced by Mr. and Mrs. Strouse in giving it into our keeping will provide the basis for special collections of equal merit being entrusted to us by other collectors."

The gift will occupy a place of honor in the University's Special Collections as the first significant collection on English Literature to be given to the University Library, according to Donald T. Clark, University Librarian.

The bulk of the almost 300 items in the Strouse Collection consists of Carlyle's writings in rare and first editions, many of them inscribed, and Carlyle manuscripts and autographer letters. In addition, there are 45 biographical publications about the Scots essayist and historian and 20 books from Carlyle's own library. Other items

include 6 portraits of Carlyle, letters written by his wife Jane, and 6 pieces of memorabilia. Among the latter are a fragment of an arm bone and a jaw tooth found on Naseby Battlefield by Edward FitzGerald and given by him to Carlyle, notes from Elizabeth Barrett Browning, and one of Carlyle's school books.

The Strouse Collection has been designated one of the finest, if not the finest, of Carlyle in private hands by Robert Metzdorf, formerly of Yale University library and Parke-Bernet.

Since its arrival at the university, the collection has excited the particular interest of Murray Baumgarten, assistant professor of literature in UCSC's Stevenson college. In commenting on the collection, Baumgarten notes, "Most interesting of all, personally, since my dissertation was on the ideas of history of Thomas Carlyle and John Stuart Mill, are the two volumes of Mill's Political Economy with Carlyle's marginal annotations. All of them are striking and most in the great Carlyle manner -- they add a good deal to my sense of his reactions to Mill (as well as the fact that Mill sent him this presentation copy) and, what is even better, make vivid

the relationships between the two men. As well, through these annotations it is possible to catch a glimpse of Carlyle thinking about something as important to him as political economy -- the dismal science -- which, of course, his whole life's work was intended to combat."

A prominent collector, Strouse's central interest is the art and history of the book. His library, considered one of the great collections on the subject, now numbers some 5,000 volumes, the first of which he acquired at the age of 19. "... anyone who collects is apt to stray from primary objectives through sheer love of collecting," he writes. "If the interest in a subsidiary collection is sustained across the period of time, the collector often finds himself in possession of material far too important to be kept within a private library. . . . This is the situation I found myself confronted with this past year, as I brought the catalogue of my Thomas Carlyle collection up to date. . . ."

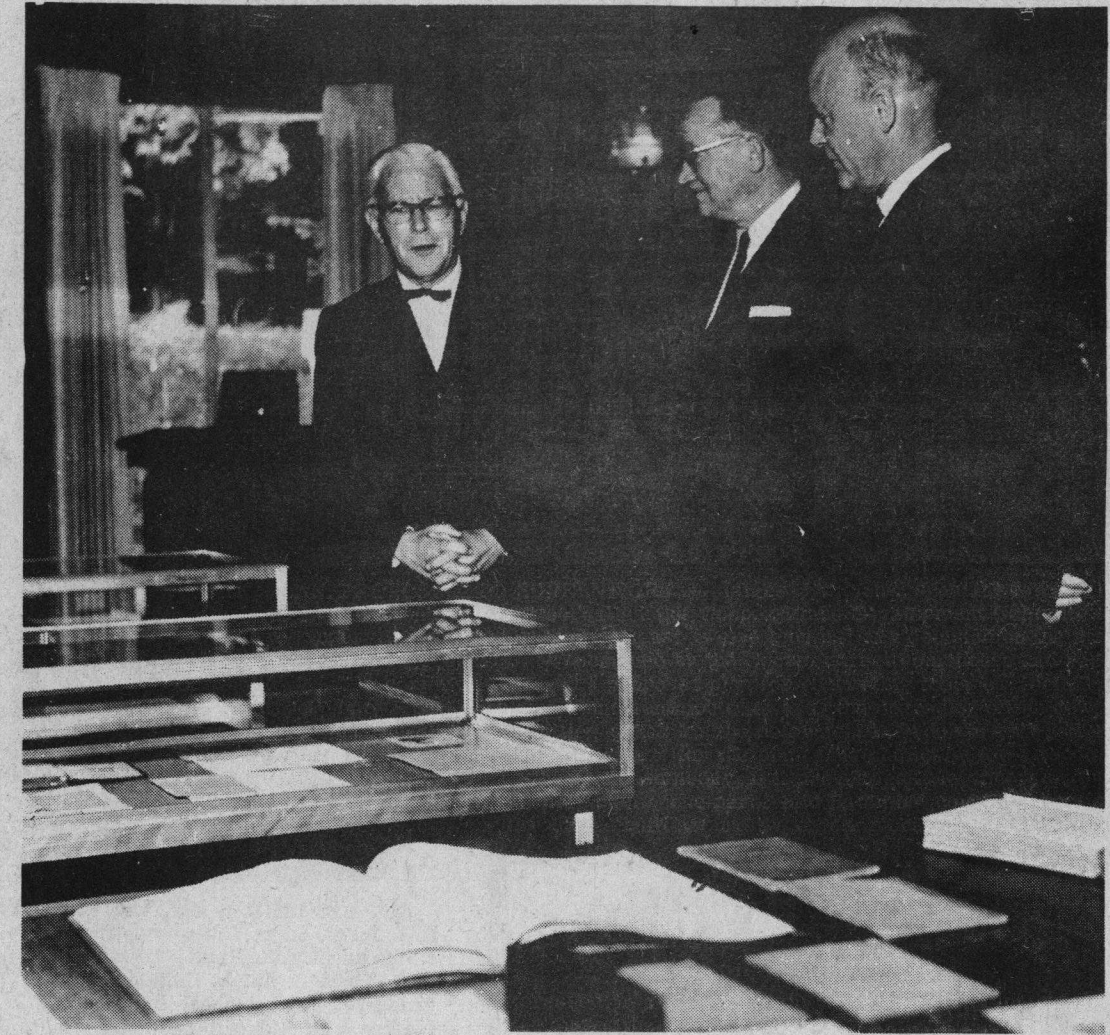
Strouse's first interest in Carlyle was excited by a stray copy of Sartor Resartus that came to his attention as a find press item.

"It was a tough piece of meat because of its rather

Germanic style," he said, "but once becoming accustomed to Carlyle's strange rhetoric, I proceeded to read everything he ever wrote, and quite naturally began to collect. First editions, then first editions inscribed, Carlyle letters and manuscripts, and so on, ending up with such high spots as the extremely rare first edition of Sartor Resartus inscribed to his mother-in-law, two of his personal Bibles, his own Latin school book and the German grammar given to Jane Welsh as his first gift when wooing her."

As a corollary avocation, Strouse is an amateur printer, with a pilot press in his triplex apartment on New York's Beekman Place, and an English Albion press at his summer cottage on Silverado Trail near St. Helena, California. His imprint is the Silverado Press, the name being the outcome of his intense admiration for Robert Louis Stevenson who honeymooned in Napa Valley and of whose works and artifacts Mr. Strouse also has an impressive collection.

Vocationally, Mr. Strouse is in an industry closely related to the printed word, as chairman and chief executive officer of the J. Walter Thompson Co., the largest integrated advertising agency in the world.



RARE BOOK COLLECTION GIVEN UCSC -- Officials of UCSC accept from Norman Strouse, center, a dazzling gift, the Norman and Charlotte Strouse collection of Thomas Carlyle. Left to right, Donald C. Clark, UCSC librarian, Strouse, and UCSC Chancellor Dean McHenry -- News Photo.

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