

Dear Dr. Drew:

Here are some questions to think about for taping.....

1. Could you tell us a little about your background? Where was your home? Where did you go to school? What influenced you to choose the field of teaching, especially English?
2. What circumstances brought you to this campus?
3. What were your impressions of the campus upon your arrival? What was it like physically, socially, culturally, educationally, religiously?
4. Since you have been teaching under all the presidents from Dr. Rockwell, could you give us some of your impressions of each? In your opinion, what contribution did each president make to the college?
5. In your teaching career, have you seen much change in the student body? How do you relate to students?
6. What changes have you witnessed in the faculty? Are there any outstanding faculty members you remember with affection and even gratitude?
7. What courses have you taught throughout your teaching career, especially at SUCB?
8. Do you have a favorite course? Courses? Of course, this leads to the question: What of your favorite authors? Who are they?
9. You might like to divide the above into the three categories of teaching, writing, and collecting.
10. What are your plans for the preservation of your valuable collections of manuscripts and first editions ?
11. What honors have you received? Story behind it?

You may think of others.... If so, good!

Thanks a million....

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Sister Martin Joseph". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name "Sister Martin Joseph".

DR. FRASER B. DREW

Personal Reflections

October 26, 1977

SMJ: Oct. 26 1977, Dr. Fraser B. Drew, Distinguished teaching professor of English at the State University College at Buffalo, will now answer some questions concerning his years here at the college. Dr. Drew, could you tell us a little about your background? Where was your home: Where did you go to school? What influenced you to choose the field of teaching? Especially English?

Drew: I suppose that my background should start with my birth. I was born in Vermont in 1913, both my parents were also born in Vermont. My ancestry is roughly 1/2 Irish, 1/4 Scotch, and 1/4 English. Family is from the Irish country of Kerry; Galway, the Scottish Inverness; and the English, in Shropshire and Devon. All of this has been filtered through Massachusetts, Virginia and Vermont. Now, would you like to know something about the schools I attended?

SMJ: Did you go to parochial school or public school?

DREW: I went to a public school in Randolph, Vermont. Later I went to the University of Vermont. My favorite subject in school would be geography. I majored in Latin at the University because

they did not teach geography there.

SMJ: Were you planning on being a Latin teacher when you finished?

DREW: I always wanted to teach, never wanted to do anything else. there was no decision as what I wanted to do as the desire for teaching developed naturally.

SMJ: You know, that is the difference in young people today. They find it so difficult to choose a profession. I can recall my own self, I knew from way back that I was going to teacher or a librarian.

DREW: You and I were very fortunate. I worry about some of our students because it will be difficult decision for them.

SMJ: What influenced you to choose the field? The field of English?

DREW: It is sort of a long story, Sister. I will start, and you can close me off if I go too far astray to bring me back. I finished the University of Vermont with a Latin major and a French minor. I won a university fellowship at Duke University. Took an MA there in Latin and Greek, then started on my PhD. Suddenly I decided I wanted to do something else. I was a little tired of going to school. I landed a position at a small junior college in Vermont called Green Mountain. It was a co-education school. I was put in charge of the men's dorms and given some Latin and ___ courses to teach. At the end of the first year, the Dean of Women died and the English teacher was made Dean of Women. Latin was canceled, and guess who got the English? I stayed ahead of the class for the year, decided that I liked it, taught there two years

more, and then went to graduate school for English. Actually, I didn't finish the degree until after I had come to Buffalo State. I finished at UB. UB's two first PhDs in English were given in 1952, and mine was one of them. The other went to a man by the name of Gus Stavrou, who taught at Canisius for a time before his early death.

SMJ: You have two Masters don't you?

DREW: I didn't actually take the Letters at Syracuse because I wanted to apply the 30 hours of credit toward the PHD at UB, and UB accepted it.

SMJ: So, you really have the equivalent of two Masters. Latin and Greek from Duke and English from Syracuse. That is very good. Well, it was just an accident that influenced you!! What circumstances brought you to this campus?

DREW: I will have to go back a way on that one too. I had gone to work for United Aircraft Corporation in Connecticut in 1941 planning on staying until Fall and then going back to school, perhaps to Syracuse to continue the degree or somewhere else. We had Pearl Harbor in December, and I was frozen to the job for the next four years, until August 1945. That was my service. I was very fortunate to be there rather than off on some battle front. It was interesting work, and I would not have to have given it up. It was non-academic and different from anything else I had done before and have done since. When the war ended and Japan surrendered, I was free and loose. I joined a Teacher's Agency as one did often in those days. I was just about ready to accept a position at the University of Hawaii when word came that President

Rockwell of Buffalo State would like to meet me in New York City.

SMJ: Had you placed your resume at various locations?

DREW: No. I had used an Agency. So, I met him at the Hotel Biltmore under the clock at midnight on August 22nd. He had been to a concert at Lewiston Stadium, so I knew he was going to be late. I agreed it was as good as any place!

SMJ: You went to the bar and had a drink, didn't you?

DREW: No, we didn't. He was very serious at that time. However, I did enjoy many good drinks with him later!! We went up to his room and talked for two hours. It was a very easy conversation. I was 32 years old, single, and had been offered a job at the University of Hawaii, and yet, he was able to get me to come to Buffalo. I was tremendously impressed by the man. It was a decision that I never regretted making, not even during the terrible snow storms we had in Buffalo during the winter season!! Dr. Rockwell helped me a great deal. Within six years I had my PhD. I went from being an instructor to being a full professor. He gave a lot of encouragement to me.

SMJ: What was your impression of the campus upon your arrival here? Physically, socially, culturally, educationally, religiously, etc.

DREW: Even though it was 33 years ago, I remember everything very well. I had never been in Buffalo, and I especially loved the Elm trees, the architecture, the walks we could have in Delaware Park, that time the expressway was not yet on the scene. The campus was small, only four buildings on the quadrangle and perhaps only 1000 students. The war was just ending, and the student

population seemed to be nearly all women. The English Department at the time had just six people, all of whom are now gone, of course. In 1945, I don't recall just how many faculty members we had, only two of them are still living, Dr. Czurlies and I. We are the only two left.

SMJ: Was Dr. Sugarman with you at that time?

DREW: She came the following year in 1946. I really liked the idea of a tightly knit faculty. We were a little family. There was a reception at the beginning of every year, and a fancy dinner at the end of every year. We knew each other's problems and troubles. In retrospect, I think the college was very rich culturally. Much of this was due, I feel, to the interest that the president of the college took. He had a great interest in the Performing Arts; he loved his plays and music, and he encouraged it through the college. Educationally we are not so diverse as we are today.

SMJ: Yes, this used to be the finest Teacher Education College in the State.

DREW: Even then, there were good strong Liberal Arts Departments, History, Biology, English especially... a good many others also. Religiously?? One interesting thing happened soon after I came here, Sister. We had an interfaith chapel, added to this campus, and the services were for Protestants, Jews, and Catholics. It was an interdenominational committee that operated the chapel. Dr. Rockwell was a man of deep religious convictions, and although an Episcopalian, he respected every faith. He was also a specialist in 20th Century Literature, and he was involved

in the Newman Club along with Dr. Mae O'Brian and several other Catholic women who were on the faculty. Every year, Dr. Rockwell would attend the Newman Club's closing breakfast awards ceremony.

SMJ: I did not know that he was an Episcopalian, I had the impression that he was a Presbyterian!! Since you have been teaching under all the Presidents, could you give us some of your impressions of each of them? In your opinion what contribution to the college did each of the Presidents make? This is a tall order, I know!!

DREW: This is a tough question, but I have quite a bit to say about most of them. In my 33 years I have seen 4 presidents and 2 acting presidents. I feel that all of the presidents were competent administrators. They brought different strengths to their administrations. Dr. Rockwell's 32 years with the Buffalo Normal and then SUC Buffalo had the longest tenure of course. He is the founder, the builder of the modern college. He instituted the first for year degree programs in Home Economics and Elementary Education, Industrial Arts and Exceptional Education. He also instituted out MS degree in Education, and led us to our first Middle States Accreditation which was very important.

SMJ: Would you say that he was a man with a vision?

DREW: Yes, he certainly was. He had close contact with everything that was happening on the campus. He was not looking around, he was looking "ahead".

SMJ: He was highly respected by the other colleges and administrations!!

DREW: I would say so. He was very effective in dealing with

other colleges and administrators.

SMJ: Did he retire in 1960?

DREW: No, he retired earlier than that, Sister, it was in 1951, the end of the year 1951. I like the idea that the first building that we see when we come on the campus, is the one that was named after him. That was done during Dr. Bulger's Presidency.

SMJ: In April of 1963 they had dedication week. That is the time of all the buildings were named, I believe.

DREW: My special task for that was to prepare the text for the bronze plaque that hangs on the wall under his picture. It is a quote from the Roman poet, Horace. Since I owe so much to him personally it would be hard for me to be completely objective about him. He was to me, and others on the staff, a very benevolent father figure. He urged us on to do more in advanced study, towards excellence in teaching, and personal fulfillment. To this day, I have a picture of him on my office desk and on my desk in my home. So, I look at him every day.

SMJ: That is a beautiful loyalty you have for him. That is just beautiful!! As the years go by, Dr. Drew, you realize that his memory will become fainter and fainter, because there will be fewer and fewer people who will remember him. That is why I want this tape.

DREW: Very few of us now would remember. I was also very fond of his wife, Marjorie. She was a lovely woman. Well, I just don't know - is there anything else I could say about him?

SMJ: This is your tape, go on.

DREW: Outwardly, he was very dignified and very elegant.

Underneath he was warm, real, kind; just as kind as any one can be.

SMJ: You didn't call him Harry did you? You probably would address as EK possibly or Dr. Fretwell, but you would under no circumstance call him Harry.

DREW: You know, after he retired, I would see him as often as I could. HE would say to me, "Why don't you call me Harry?" I would say, "Ok I will try." But, you know, I never did.

SMJ: Of course, perhaps if he were living in this day and time, he would be called Harry. That was a different period all together. You had a certain respect then that we just don't have now. From what I read, he did not hesitate to "tell you off" if need be.

DREW: Oh No!! You could always get a yes or a no from him, and very often it was a "No".

SMJ: I guess you knew where you stood.

DREW: I have a little story that might amuse you. One day, he summoned me. I went in as always, happy to see him. However, I was feeling a little apprehensive that day. If he would have told me to jump out the window, I would have. He said, "Fraser, I have a job for you." What would it be I asked. We have a temporary building over here, which will be a men's dormitory. I would like for you to move into the building and keep an eye on the boys. My heart SANK. I had a very comfortable apartment, was working on my degree, and did not like the sound of this. I knew that I would have to be very careful in the way that I approached this. So I said to him, "Well Dr. Rockwell if you wish me to do it, I will." Let me tell you what my problem is. You have been

encouraging me to finish my doctorate, and I am eager to finish it, I am close now, and I would hate to interrupt it to start another task, but it is up to you, whatever you feel would be better for the college." There was silence for a minute. He looked at me, and then he said, "Very Well, just forget about it, Thank You just the same". He got up and shook my hand, then walked out the door. He was not angry nor annoyed with me. He was capable of changing his mind and would do so.

SMJ: That's good. Alright, who was the next President? Was it Dr. Rice?

Drew: Yes, Rice came next. He and his wife Dorothy were very dynamic. I remember them well from the college dances. They would cover the dance floor from one end to the other. Dorothy was usually in a flame colored dress. They led a very active community life, good for public relations, good ambassadors of good will. They were a very handsome couple. Dr. Rice continued to expand the college physically and also with the curricula. I did not know him very well personally. As Department Chairman during the later part of his administration, I had my contacts primarily with the Deans. They were the Deans under Dr. Rockwell, and they continued under Dr. Rice. Dr. Ralph Horn served as acting president during the Rockwell to Rice interim and again between Dr. Rice and his successor. I was very comfortable with Dr. Horn, as he was willing to listen and to help. Both Dr. Rice and Dr. Horn increasingly involved faculty in college policy making. That is an important contribution that I felt they both made.

SMJ: Yes, that was the difference I suppose, but that was

"the time" in which they had their tenure. It was not like that yet under Dr. Rockwell, It was not that anywhere. So you can not criticize his being what you would call "autocratic", because that is the way it was. We can't judge that past on what is the present. Is that enough on Rice?

DREW: Yes, I think maybe on Dr. Rice and Dr. Horn. Then, of course, came Dr. Bulger. I think of him as a very versatile man being very good at public relations. He was committed to expansion of the college. Under his leadership, we added more masters degree programs, and we became a multi-purpose college.

SMJ: We grew tremendously under Dr. Bulger. That was the baby-boom era, wasn't it?

DREW: I would think so Sister. We became a liberal arts college and a teacher's college. From that time on, we were many different things. I also like to think of him as being the promoter along with Dr. Edna Linderman, of the Burchfield Center, which to me is one of the real graces on this campus, one of our claims to fame. Personally, Dr. and Mrs. Bulger were very friendly people, and I enjoyed being in their company. Now, in the interim before President E.K. Fretwell, Jr. took charge, the acting president was a History Professor and a former Vice President named Houston T. Robinson. He was an excellent caretaker of this increasingly complex operation. We were now so large and so diverse that we required the special talents of the new president Dr. Fretwell, who is now in his eleventh year.

SMJ: I am not sure that he is in at this time.

DREW: Like several of his predecessors, he also is a builder

and a very able public relations advocate. He has also extended our horizons considerably beyond those of the past in addition to local interests and consistent urban commitment and a great deal of clout at his level. Dr. Rockwell has also taken us to recognition beyond New York State. His interest in international education, while it was shared by several of his predecessors to a lesser degree, is now very strong. During Dr. Fretwell's presidency, the students of the college have been given the opportunity to participate constructively in the development and the implementation of the college politics, curricula, college life, etc. He perhaps has brought the students into a much greater degree than any of his predecessors, that is a real change.

SMJ: he, himself has been to China on one of those International Tours. I believe he has also been to Poland. Each President has built upon the foundation of the President he replaced, and I think that is great. Never have they torn down anything, they continue to build. As you so very nicely said in the beginning of this interview, each was competent and we can be proud to have had each one as President of this College. It says a great deal for the college that all the men made contributions. We can be proud of them all.

DREW: I think we have been very fortunate with the men and with them personally. Think how approachable, courteous and gracious the Fretwells are. They are very interested in the faculty, staff, and students.

SMJ: I think if the college were smaller, they certainly would be closer to many of us. The size mitigates against such a

relationship. He is gracious to any and all whom he meets. That speaks well of him.

DREW: When he has a chance he tries to wonder around to get a feel of what is actually happening on campus.

SMJ: Also, he can't go incognito because he is so tall. Everyone knows him by his height. In your career, have you seen much change in the student body? Also, how do you relate to students?

DREW: Basically no, I have not seen that much change in the student body.

SMJ: That is a surprise answer.

DREW: I thought it might surprise you. I really have thought about this. The students I found here in 1945 were not so large a group, no so diverse a group, especially in their professional interests. The students at that time somehow seemed to have been a happier student body, that is one difference that I have noticed. Academically speaking, we have always had students of superior quality and who were a joy to have. I see no change in the probable percentage of those superior students. Perhaps, as in all colleges, we have more students today who are academically weak, particularly in English. That is one thing that has changed for the worse! You asked me how do I relate to students?

SMJ: Yes, do you enjoy teaching? Do you have any idea as to how the students like you? Do you have any idea of that on the basis of your evaluations?

DREW: Yes, they tell us quite a bit!! I relate to them well. As a matter of fact, I am under the impression that the letters

from the Alumni and the Anonymous performance ratings from the students were the chief factors my nomination for the first Distinguished Teaching Professorship back in 1973. I am just as happy now with my students as I was in 1945, 1955 or 1965!! My classes fill well. This might interest you, Sister. I was working on my doctoral dissertation on teaching methods, concluding among other things: The formality of matter, the warmth of being, along with high standards of performance and respect for the subject matter, have contributed to the good relationship that my students and I have enjoyed through the years.

SMJ: Well, you know you read about students and young people today, and I have talked to some teachers on lower level of education in grade school and high schools, and they say that teaching today is much more difficult that it was in the past. The discipline is not the same; respect is not the same; students do not have the attention span they should have; and it makes it harder to teach. You almost have to be an actor like Bob Hope or Jack Benny to keep their attention and keep them awake. But you don't seem to find this?

DREW: I just don't find that true, Sister. Maybe now that we have discussed it, I will be looking for it in class. One of the real joys of teaching, has been the continuation of friendships.

SMJ: I was going to ask you that, have you kept up with some of your students?

DREW: Last summer, I was teaching a graduate course in Irish Literature. Two of my former students who have been here in 1946 and 1950 came back to take this course. It really delighted me.

Actually 2 or 3 of the closest students, with whom I have kept in contact were from the class of '48 and '54. I have gained a great deal from personal relationships that I have made and continued through the years.

SMJ: What changes have you witnessed in the faculty members whom you recall with affection and gratitude perhaps?

DREW: Oh, I can answer that one! The faculty has grown by several hundred percent. I don't think that I know more than one third of the faculty that we have today. We seem to be fragmented into buildings that seem to keep us isolated. We have many specialists now and a wide spectrum of competencies. The PhDs are now the common place. It was a distinguishing rarity in 1945, and that alone is a big difference. The very best teachers are now a distinguished lot as were those in 1945. I would like to mention 3 or 4 of those faculty members whom I recall with both affection and gratitude if you don't mind!! My first two friends on campus were two ladies of Irish background: Stella O'Reilly of the Campus School and Mae O'Brian of the Education Department. Stella has long since passed away. Mae retired only last year after devoting her life to hundreds of students. Stella taught for only one year after I got here, as she was close to retirement. When I went through the receiving line at the first faculty meeting of the year, I was a little nervous, of course. When I got to the end of the line, this beautiful snow-white haired women said to me, "My name is O'Reilly. When you are finished, please come back and talk to me." Let me think of some others in addition to Stella and Mae. Charles Metzner, have you heard of him? He was a one-man language

department: Latin, German, French-whatever we needed!! He was my ally when we used to fight battles on old educational policies. I could always count on Charles to be right there with me! There were three people in English who are no longer here, but I remember them in particular. We had to share an office with several others, eight of us all together in a tiny office in Rockwell Hall.

SMJ: Did you have a secretary?

DREW: Oh no. No secretary! However, we got along surprisingly well! I didn't even have a secretary when I was Chairman of the Department with 18 people under me! I did all of my own typing and filing!

SMJ: Times certainly have changed!!!

DREW: We have improved; things are better.

SMJ: Who were the teachers in the office?

DREW: One was Ms. Weinberg, who is now retired and lives in Nebraska. She was like an older sister to me, and used to tell me when I stepped out of line. I do miss her ways. I still correspond with her. The closest thing to a playmate that I had was Conrad Schuck who retired early, approximately seven years ago. He and his wife moved to Southern California. The third person you would remember, Sister, is Wilson Gragg, the Shakespeare Man!! He and I ate lunch together nearly everyday. He died suddenly. It was an ideal way for a teacher to die. He had been teaching class, came out of the class and went to his office, as it was my day to go down to his office to eat lunch. When I went in, Dr. Gragg was not feeling well. The hospital was called and notified in advance that Dr. Gragg was ill and would be coming right over. He passed

away right then and there. His death put to rest the fear that he had about retiring later in the year, and which is what he was going to do. Those are a couple of people I recall with much affection.

SMJ: What courses have you taught during your career here at Buffalo State College? You have already mentioned Greek and Latin.

SMJ: At Buffalo State my original assignment was 20th Century English, American and Irish Literature, and it still is! I also do Freshman Composition.

SMJ: Did you initiate any courses yourself?

DREW: Yes, I have. I initiated three graduate courses: Studies in Modern American Poetry, Studies in Modern English Poetry, and Irish Literature both at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

SMJ: Are the Irish literature courses popular?

DREW: I can always depend upon them to fill even during the summer session.

SMJ: To what do you attribute that?

DREW: I think we have a strong local cell here, the Irish from South Buffalo and the Tonawandas come in. Many of my students come in with German and Polish names. They tell me their Mothers were of Irish descent. I think, that it is by word of mouth primarily.

SMJ: And it is a personal interest. You must get a great deal of satisfaction out of those classes in knowing those students are there because they really want to be.

DREW: Yes, they are the most satisfying to teach. Last

summer, a principal from Grand Island came with three of his teachers. Two years earlier, one of his teachers had taken my course and inspired the four of them to take the class also.

SMJ: Well that is just great Dr. Drew! Do you have a favorite course or courses?

DREW: Yes, it would be the graduate course in Irish Literature because the undergraduate course I have only given once. I prefer all the Irish courses which are at the graduate level. I also have an opportunity to renew friendships with many students who took my undergraduate courses, and it also gives me an excuse to go back to the old country too.

SMJ: That leads, of course, to the next question: Do you have any favorite authors?

DREW: Yes I do. I was anticipating this question, and I jotted down a few names. For writers before the 20th century which is my favorite area, my two favorite poets were Latin; Horace and Virgil. For early English writers: Chaucer, Mallory and most especially Lord Byron. I like to teach about Byron because I feel people have the wrong impression about him, both as a writer and a person. In my own century, the writers I suppose that I like the best are: Houseman, Gates and Jeffers.

SMJ: You do not name Joyce?

DREW: No. However, he interests me very much, but I don't have the love for him that I have for the others. For novelists I would pick: Thornton Wilder and Ernest Hemingway, and probably an Irishman named Brian Mann. He is not known to well, and he is a school teacher. His novels are marvelous. I try to sell them

whenever I can.

SMJ: How do you keep up with all of the tools that to use to teach?

DREW: One way of course, is travel. When I go to Ireland, at every place I stop, I buy several paperbacks. If the weather is too bad at night, and I can't get down to the nearest pub or theater, I will read. When I get to the next town, I usually leave the books with a book seller to ship back to the States for me, and I buy several more. When I am in Ireland I do a great deal of reading, walking, talking and listening. That is one way of learning.

SMJ: I suppose that you read the newspapers, book reviews, etc.

DREW: Yes, I take two Irish papers and read as many journals, on which I can get my hands. I try to keep up with a few writers such as Jeffers and Houseman whom I find particularly interesting.

SMJ: Do you take the New York Times? Do you read the book review section of the paper or not?

DREW: Yes, it is an excellent one. Either I but it or borrow it. At times I will go to the library to read it. It certainly is a must. I enjoy the book reviews in the Buffalo Evening News also.

SMJ: Do you!

DREW: Charles Brady, at Canisus, I think, is the most remarkable man whom I have ever met.

SMJ: Does he still write? I understand that he is very frail.

DREW: Very frail, yes. He has been for years now. I used to

audit his courses whenever I could. He was absolutely marvelous.

SMJ: You might like to divide the above into three categories: teaching, writing and collecting. I think you did that too, didn't you?

DREW: Uh huh! Actually the teaching, writing and collecting all run together. They are all related. I would like to talk a little about that collecting part if you don't mind.

SMJ: Of course!!

DREW: The writing is quite informal. It is about my Vermont childhood, travels to other countries, essays, etc. It is partly scholarly such as my book which is a critical study of Mayfield, and my journal articles. By the way, I just placed my 100th journal article. Number 101 is now ready to go out and look for a place!! It is sort of a milestone for me.

SMJ: Beautiful, just beautiful!!

DREW: Even the travel essay usually deal with countries of the authors who are the subject of my scholarly research and the figures in my college classes. You see, they all go together! Then the collecting hobby feeds the writing and the teaching! I started collecting in what I think was a sort of interesting way. I felt that students in my Contemporary Literature classes would like have for there own, books that had actually passed through the hand of the writers to ask them if they would be willing to sign for my students and me, any books that I sent to them as long as I sent along mailing labels and return postage. I didn't think that the response would be good, but all 25 responded. Then I went crazy, Sister.. you will love this!! I sent out letters to 100

additional English, French, Irish and North American writers to ask the same question. Well obviously they did not all answer.

SMJ: Probably 99 answered, right?

DREW: No. Two of them had died while this project was in process; some just ignored the letters, and who could blame them? They are busy people, and can not answer every crackpot teacher who writes to them. A few of them wrote back marvelous rejections!

SMJ: Do you still have those letters?

DREW: Oh, I cherish them. Ezra Pound and Evelyn Waugh sent unpleasant letters in return.

SMJ: Why would they do that do you suppose?

DREW: I suppose they figured that I was a perfect stranger interrupting, asking a favor and they were not going to do it. So they let me know how they felt. But they were wonderful letters just the same for a collector!! The interesting thing about Waugh is that after he had written back this unpleasant letter, two weeks later a package arrived and it was a book, inscribed "With affectionate regards to Fraser B. Drew." It came with no explanation. Perhaps he confused me with someone else or perhaps he was feeling guilty. I wrote back and thanked him for the letter and the book.

SMJ: I was going to ask you if you thanked him. Did you answer those letters? The rejection letters?

DREW: I did answer his. I did not answer the others, nor did I try to reach the people who did not respond. I respected their decision enough not to try again.

SMJ: All of that kept you rather busy didn't it?

DREW: But you see what happened for all of those that answered affirmatively. I had to go out and buy the books! It turned out to be very expensive. It was a bad year for lunches and clothes and things! But such good things came of it. I had 250 books to give to students over the next 10 or 15 years. I also started a library of my own which is very good. Even more interesting was the development of correspondences with Maysfield which helped me with my book, and one with Robinson Jeffers. Now that he and his wife have passed away, I continue to correspond with both of the sons and a grandson, one sister-in-law and one daughter-in-law. I am really caught up in the life of the Jeffers family and the promoting of his reputation as a writer.

SMJ: Your gift of those books to the students is recorded in the school paper the RECORD. As I read through past issues of the RECORD, I noticed this and wondered where you got the books. Now I know!! It must have been a slim year for you!

DREW: It was a slim year, but it was worth it. Most of them were first editions and not so terribly expensive. They meant a great deal to some of the students.

SMJ: Do you feel that the students really appreciated the gesture?

DREW: Many of them did and still write to me.

SMJ: That was another question that crossed my mind. You went to a lot of trouble and perhaps spent a good deal of money, I just wonder if they appreciated it? To do not do that anymore, do you?

DREW: No, I don't. I don't have the energy and the nerve to

do that any more. It really was an imposition in a sense; although, it was for a good cause.

SMJ: Of course you were rather young when you did this. Maybe, it was just the boldness of your age.

DREW: I believe it was. I wouldn't dare do it again!!

SMJ: That is very interesting. Has any one else done this?

DREW: Not to my knowledge.

SMJ: Did you want to say more about your Hemingway? You have met him haven't you?

DREW: Yes, I have met him.

SMJ: What famous people have you met now?

DREW: I think the most significant meeting of all time for me was 3/4 of an hour that I spent with President DeValera of Ireland. He was a childhood hero, and usually we can not meet our heroes during our lifetime you know. And here I was in His office.

SMJ: How did this come about?

DREW: Through a friend in the St. Patrick's Scholarship Fund and who was a close friend of Fr. Toomey in South Buffalo. You may have heard of him, as he was an interesting character. He had roomed in college with DeValera's half brother. He had been in touch with the President and wrote to say that two young friends were travelling in Ireland and would very much appreciate the courtesy of the President receiving them. He explained what I have been doing with Irish Literature here in the US and I think that delighted the President. When he found out that we actually been out in one of those little _____ to the offshore island of the Atlantic to investigate the old civilization of the Alaskan Islands

(?) then he really warmed up to the conversations.

SMJ: He realized then that you were serious about it.

DREW: That day meant a great deal to me, even more than the day with Ernest Hemingway, although that was tremendously exciting. I had a nice quiet morning with Robert Frost once at his cabin. That was very important to me.

SMJ: Well, you know, Dr. Drew, this is an unfair question again, because you can not compare apples with oranges. These men are all different, with different experiences. Which one did you enjoy the most? Although it would be difficult to say "I enjoyed this one more than because... each one was probably unique." So, you have met Robert Frost, Ernest Hemingway, President DeValera and Kevin Maysfield who was ill.

DREW: He was very ill but did come to the telephone to speak with me. I appreciated that very much. He sent me books that I was unable to find. He was generous, most generous!

SMJ: Well you know, right here in Buffalo now, since you are teaching 20th Century Literature... have you met Talyor Caldwell?

DREW: You know I never have. During my first year in Buffalo, at a little reception at the home of Professor Barmer for the University of Buffalo, I recall talking with Mrs. Caldwell but have never seen her since. I would like to talk to her about her book that dealt with the Irish immigrant family. "Of Captains and Kings" was the name of it and there was a television mini-series done on it, if I recall.

SMJ: You know she lives right over here on Middlesex Rd.

DREW: I didn't realize she was that close. I thought she

lived out in Eggertsville.

SMJ: Have you done enough on that question now?

DREW: I think so, because the other collection has to do with...

SMJ: What are your plans for the preservation of your valuable collection of manuscripts and first editions?

DREW: Some of them have already gone.

SMJ: They have found a resting place?

DREW: Yes. The Laugston Hughes collection of a few letters and books that he gave to have already come here to Buffalo State as you know Sister. There are a few John Maysfield first editions, most are in memory of Dr. Rockwell. I hope to add a few more things to these collections. The collection of Frost, Brook, Wilder, Stewart, Williams etc., have already gone to Bailey Memorial Library at the University of Vermont. The University of Vermont was my first alma mater. They put me through entirely on scholarships, even room and board. I will never be able to repay that debt. The Mayfields Collection there is exceptional. It is suppose to be one of the most expensive in the world, comparable to those at Texas, Oxford and Columbia. I hope it is because Vermont is a small University and does not have many collections.

SMJ: How many letters do you mean in "a collection."?

DREW: Oh, I suppose there were 1000 letters and approximately 300-350 books. In addition, I have a great deal of his correspondence to various other. Some I purchased and some he wrote to me. I have some that a poet named Louise Townsend Nichol in New Jersey gave to me. He had written them to her. Then, there

are other types of memorabilia, pamphlets, newspaper articles, books written about Maysfield, you know, the usual material.

SMJ: Primary and secondary sources?

DREW: Yes, yes. I still have four major collections. The Robinson Jeffers which is virtually complete, a collection of Hart Crane which is small because he wrote so little. I also have the Modern Irish Collection which is a large sprawling, formless collection, from the first edition of his first book, down to the most inexpensive paperbacks.

SMJ: How many items would that be?

DREW: I could not judge but it is fairly large. From the viewpoint of the collector or the library and the viewpoint of use and financial value, the Hemingway and the Jeffers are the big ones. I try to protect them. I have them in a good room, controlling the humidity both in summer and in winter. I also have a Doberman Pincher and a very sophisticated alarm system, so I do protect the collection by various means.

SMJ: I guess there would be too much to put into a vault? Do you have some in a file cabinet?

DREW: I don't keep them all in absolutely mint condition, as I like to take them out and use them on occasion. They are in open shelves, so they are exposed to a great deal of dust. No one is allowed to dust them!! I take fairly good care of everything. I have been very lucky with them. We usually think of collectors as being rich men. I am not a rich man. All I have is my teacher's salary and what little I have picked up from speaking and writing, and I no longer do that. The writing is usually for my journals,

and that does not pay. If a collector keeps his eyes and ears open, is patient and develops friendly contacts, is sincerely interested in what he is doing, and if he is LUCKY, he can build good collections without a lot of money. Let me give you one example of luck. I picked up a book in a little shop in New Orleans at a time when I was on my way from Texas, to see Ernest Hemingway down from Cuba. I went into a bookshop that was not one of the best there. I asked the proprietor if he had any copies of the Doulbedealer which was a publication that lived a number of years in New Orleans. Faulkner, Hart Crane and Hemingway had published some early material in it. He laughed at me and said "Oh I have a whole shelf full back there, and a pile of them." I found a copy of a very early Crane and Hemingway publication. But what I found most of all, most importantly of all, was a copy of a book called Marble Fawn. This was not Hawthorne's Marble Fawn. I do not collect Faulkner. I don't very much like him, but I knew he had written such a good book. I felt it might be valuable. I asked the bookshop owner what it was worth, and he told me it wasn't anything special... how about \$12.00? I didn't know if it was a first edition or not but had hoped that it was. I paid him the money and took the book home. I checked it out to find that it was a first edition! The last copy I know of to sell at an auction in comparable condition, not inscribed, sold for \$2700. That was good appreciation!! On the other hand, I bought some books that are not worth half of what I paid for them!!

SMJ: Do you still have the book? You could sell these collections couldn't you?

DREW: Yes, however I would have to pay a heavy tax on them, where if I were to give them to....

SMJ: Would you consider, I'm just asking this you know. Suppose I had a collection, would I give it to a University, for example: Hemingway. It seems to me that if you had a number of small collections, give it to a University, rather than have all the little things laying around. Give them to a college, a museum or a larger collection else where to be added to.

DREW: I think it is much better for the use of scholars. The best Hemingway material is at Princeton or at the John F. Kennedy Center. That is where Mary Hemingway has given so many manuscripts. Texas has a fine one also, and there are several others. They have marvelous collections in literature. If my Hemingway collection were as good as or comparable to Mary Hemingway's, I would put it where hers is, so that everything would be together. Of course mine is nothing in comparison to hers! Mine would probably do more good to ordinary students at a place like the University of Vermont.

SMJ: Now, of course, if you were to send it there they would register it with the Library of Congress, then everyone would know where they are. In a sense it does not matter so much where the material is, as long as they let you know where.

DREW: Now when Maysfield authorized my.... (Too much static to be able to understand what Dr. Drew was talking about at his point in the conversation)

SMJ: Well that is fine, is that enough on that?

DREW: Do you know what somebody told me once about being an

authority on Maysfield? That I was smart in picking him, because no one else was interested!! therefore, I would not have ant competition!!

SMJ: Wasn't he a poet laureate?

DREW: Yes but his reputation has not been what it should be. At least that's the way I feel.

SMJ: To begin with, you liked him?

DREW: Yes, I did. I felt that someone should do a book about him, an authoritative collection. But that comment was good for my humility!!

SMJ: Yes, that comment was something! Is your book still in print?

DREW: Yes it is. As a matter of fact, they printed 1200 copies. Royalties start after 800 have been sold. The last report said that 791 had been sold, pretty soon...

SMJ: When did you publish it?

DREW: I published it two years ago. The critical study of minor figure does not sell. Only libraries are really interested.

SMJ: I would expect all of the college libraries...

DREW: I was just amazed that it would sell only nearly 800 copies, I thought that it would remain at \$1.49 or something.

SMJ: Do we have a copy here in Butler Library?

DREW: Yes, we have two copies here in the library.

SMJ: I did not know that. Very good. Are you ready to go on to the next question? This is very important one now. What honors have you received? If so, what is the story behind them? You mentioned you wanted to say something about that.

DREW: This is a silly beginning but I think you might like it. I have been very fortunate since the age of just seven. When I was in fourth grade....

SMJ: You were in fourth grade at the age of seven?

DREW: Yes, I had an early start!! But I am beginning to burn out now!! I won an award for a 50 word essay on my "canary" in a national magazine!! That was my first award at the tender age of just seven!! I think we should skip right over highschool and college.

SMJ: You found writing to be very easy, didn't you?

DREW: It was always fun.

SMJ: Your teachers didn't have to get after you to write paragraphs or anything, did they?

DREW: No, they just had to keep after me to stop, to shorten them. What pleased me the most in my first teaching job was being elected best teacher in the second and third years of the school. Of course there were only 25 on the faculty, so the competition wasn't huge. This was at Green Mountain in Vermont. Seriously, there have been four honors in recent years that are dear to me. They go beyond the usual research grants. The University of Vermont gave me its Distinguished Alumnus Award in 1968, before I gave them any collections, I was very pleased about that! Then in 1970 the United Irish Society of Buffalo and Erie County named me Irishman of the Year at its Annual St. Patrick's Banquet. Do you know who the guest speaker was that night? It was a Congressman by the name of Hugh Carey!! He is now governor! The honor of greatest sentimental value was one we have discussed earlier, being received

by received by President DeValera . Although, I don't think we need to discuss that further! My friend, Jim Brophy, who is a graduate of this college, class of '54, was with me. Professionally the highest honor came in 1973. Chancellor Ernest Boyer of the State University System Board of Trustees, had initiated in that year, the rank of Distinguished Teaching Professor. Each SUNY campus was invited to submit a nomination. I was the person who was nominated by two committees of administrators, faculty members, alumni and students.

SMJ: Now this was the first year it had been instituted. In the statewide competition, 9 professors were selected as the first 9 Distinguished Professors and I was one of them. I was the only one from Buffalo or Erie Campus.

SMJ: That must have been quite an honor?

DREW: I think it pleased Dr. Fretwell that Buffalo State College received one award and UB did not. I probably should not say this on tape!! But it did please him. That is a normal reaction, and it doubly pleased me!! President Fretwell made arrangements for attendance at the press conference and the luncheon that Chancellor Boyer gave in Albany for the nine of us for his executive Vice-President. The promotion to the to the new rank not only gave me distinction itself, but a silver medal, a salary raise of 2,500 which was gladly welcomed, especially when you are getting close to retirement you know! Something like this raise can make a difference in the pension that you collect, you know. I think it is only fair to add here that Dr. Fretwell, according to ground rules, could have given me a raise of anything

between \$500 and \$2500. Vice President Schwartz and Dr. Fretwell decided to give me the \$2500 award. I was very grateful to him for that.

SMJ: What year was that, Dr. Drew?

DREW: That was in 1973. I thought about the other people who worked just as hard and could receive it. This will sound like a ridiculous comparison but it has some meaning.... When Ernest Hemingway received the Nobel Prize in Literature, he said no one who receives this award can do so without humility, if he thinks of all those who did not receive it. On the much lower level of this performance, that is what I thought about while accepting the promotion and the award.

SMJ: It is almost an embarrassment isn't it? There are others that might look at you and say, or think, what did he do that was different from anybody else, you know!?

DREW: I met Dr. Czurlles on campus the next day. He would of been my candidate. He shook hands with me, he was sincere. Dr. Gragg was also a great teacher. So was Dr. Bungler. They were all so good! I suppose that promotion was the peak of my teaching career. I am still teaching and hope to continue teaching for a time longer. In fact I was thinking about this the other night, thinking of retirement or of continuing on. I decided that I would like to continue on for about four or five years more.

SMJ: Do you have any other things that you would like to say? Or do you feel that just about covers it?

DREW: I think that just about does it, Sister. Unless there is something else that you can think of.

SMJ: No, I can not think of anything else.

DREW: We have pretty much covered everything.

SMJ: Yes, I think we have.