

him, and according to reports of those who knew him he was a very egotistic, arrogant man, though of obscure origins, a self-made man who wrought out his own career until it crumbled in 1934. His career was in bibliography and in publishing endless arrays of books, catalogues and bibliographies. For this he was recognised in the '20s in various ways. He was made an honorary fellow of Worcester College, he received an honorary MA at Oxford, and he was elected to Membership in the Roxburghe Club, the first, foremost and most prestigious bibliophilic club anywhere.

Thus when Wise was in his mid seventies, in 1934, there came upon the world of learning at large this sudden shock, this devastating shock, in the publication 2nd July of that year of Messrs Carter & Pollard's *Enquiry into the nature of certain 19th century pamphlets*. Carter & Pollard I would remind you, in 1934 were young men—Pollard just out of Oxford, Carter just out of Cambridge, both in their mid twenties and they, here in this book, dared to question the whole validity of Wise's expertise, and to bring into ruination his entire career. They did not, as you will remember, choose to accuse him directly. They also took the precautions further of asking their Counsel, Mr Lyell, if there was anything in the book that was libellous, and were advised on strict legal authority that every leaf in the book, every page, was indeed libellous, but that they should go ahead and publish it in any case. And so, in this crisis, Wise blustered for a while but then was advised on medical advice to say nothing further, lapsed into silence and died three years later. Whether his death may be attributed, as sometimes alleged, to the publication of the *Enquiry*, I cannot say. At any rate there were indications at the time of issue that Wise would in due course publish a statement; and it was rumoured that this publication would be issued in the States because the Libel Laws there were less rigorous than they are in the U.K. However, upon legal advice Wise suppressed that statement and, so it was thought, this was destroyed. Yet by the strangest combination of circumstances the statement was not destroyed. It was discovered some several years back and we now have that along with everything else at the University of Texas—almost everything, that is, pertaining to Wise. Since then this with other curious documents has been published by our Humanities Research Centre.*

Now as to what may be discovered here. Mr Turnbull you will remember from Dr McCormick's article in your *Library Record* started collecting books in the U.K. in the late 1880s; and according to Mr Lawlor, one of the friends of your library, he spent some five hundred

* Professor Todd has subsequently given to the Turnbull Library his edition of these papers, titled *Suppressed Commentaries on the Wiseian Forgeries*.