

## **Wilfred I. Smith, O.C., C.D., M.A., Ph.D., D.C.L., F.S.A.A.**

Wilfred Smith, Eldest son of the late Claude and Deborah Smith of Shelburne retired in October, 1984, as the Dominion Archivist after 34 years at the Public Archives of Canada. Recent honours related to his career include appointment as an officer in the Order of Canada, presentation of the outstanding Achievement Award of the Government of Canada for 1983. Honorary Life Memberships in the International Council on Archives, the Association of Canadian Archivists and the Canadian Historical Association.

Dr. Smith was born and grew up in Port La Tour, one of six children of Mr. & Mrs. Claude Smith, who moved to Shelburne in 1943. He attended the Nova Scotia Teachers College and taught school in Villagedale and Jordan Falls before entering Acadia University where he obtained an honours degree in history before joining the Canadian Army as an infantry officer during World War II. He served in the British Army as a Canlean officer and was wounded in Normandy. Subsequently he served with the Governor General's Foot Guards, retiring with the rank of Major.

He obtained post graduate degrees from Acadia (M. A.) and the University of Minnesota (Ph.D) and was a lecturer in history at the University of Saskatchewan for two years before joining the staff of the Public Archives of Canada in 1950. After a series of promotions in the next few years, he was appointed Dominion Archivist in 1970. As Dominion Archivist, Dr. Smith is credited with a number of developments which have enhanced the efficiency and international reputation of the public Archives of Canada.

These include the initiation of national collections of film, television and sound and computer records, the use of technology to develop conservation methods such as mass deacidification of paper records, the first use of videodisc for archival material, automated systems for central and retrieval of records and improvements of records management systems for the federal government.

Dr. Smith has contributed many articles to professional journals in several countries on history, archives and records management. He has undertaken missions to provide archival assistance and advice to other countries including the United States, New Zealand, Mexico, China, Pakistan and the Caribbean countries and has served UNESCO in several capacities including that of Secretary of the International Advisory Committee on Documentation, Libraries and Archives. He has been a member of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, the Permanent Committee on Geographic Names and the National Library Advisory Board. In addition, he has been Honorary President and Vice President of the United Empire Loyalist's Association, Honorary Vice President of the Canadian Heraldry Association and a serving Brother of the Order of St. John. He is a member of many professional associations including the International Council on Archives (Executive Committee Secretary General), the Society of American Archivists (Council, Vice President, President), the Canadian Historical Association (chairman, Archives Section, Editor of Historical Booklets)

Earlier honours included the Canada Decoration, 1958, the Centennial Medal 1967, an honorary doctorate from Acadia University, 1975, the Jubilee Medal 1977 and the Royal Society of Canada Centennial Medal, 1980, as well as special awards for contributions to records management and micrographics.

In retirement Dr. Smith will continue to reside in Ottawa, where his chief preoccupation will be historical research and writing. He will of course, pay regular visits to Nova Scotia.

Members of his family living in Shelburne County, are sisters Evelyn of Shelburne, Ruth, Mrs. Walter Wilson of Barrington Passage. A brother, Donald, lives in Winchester, Mass, and a sister Dorothy, Rochester, N.Y.. A brother, Albert, Cleveland, Ohio, died in 1972.

[a bio that was printed at the time he retired. Unfortunately Wilfred died in a car accident just outside of Ottawa in 1998.]