Hannah Whitall Smith's book, *The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life*, has been a religious devotional classic for over 100 years. Its simple holiness message has had an impact on the lives of millions of individuals. A check of general bibliographic sources uncovered over 30 different English language editions of this title since its original publication in 1875; a strong testimony to its continued popularity and worth. In addition, Mrs. Smith authored at least 18 other books.

The reader can perhaps understand the excitement that began to develop in the B.L. Fisher Library last October when Dr. Melvin Dieter called from Oxford, England to ask if the Library would be interested in purchasing the religious portion of Mrs. Smith's papers. Dr. Dieter, Professor of Church History at Asbury Theological Seminary, was on sabbatical at that time researching the lives of Hannah Whitall Smith and her husband, Robert Pearsall Smith, as part of his continuing investigation into the history of the Holiness Movement. He had been working in the Smith family archives at the home of Barbara Strachey Halpern, Hannah's great-granddaughter, when the possibility of the purchase arose. We immediately encouraged Dr. Dieter to explore the possibility further. When he called that week to tell us that our offer had been accepted, we were overjoyed.

It was not until later, however, when Dr. Dieter returned to Wilmore with the materials that those of us in the Library discovered the full extent of the purchase. Mrs. Smith (and her descendants) had not only collected personal materials related to the evangelistic work in which she and her husband had been involved, but she also gathered books, pamphlets, newspaper clippings, and memorabilia...
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on a large number of religious groups and reform movements.

The following essay by Dr. Dieter attempts to place the collection within the context of the Smiths' lives. Selected items, illustrative of the types of materials in the collection, follow the essay's chronological divisions.

The collection contains over 3400 individual items. The large number of letters to Mrs. Smith, over 750, provide a unique glimpse into a multifaceted life. Their content ranges from thank you notes from admirers of her book, *The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life*, to strategy suggestions for the international temperance movement. Holographs from well-known religious figures of the time are prominent; e.g., A.S. Booth-Clibborn, Basil Wilberforce, and Andrew Jukes, as are communications from other notables, e.g., George MacDonald, William James, Susan B. Anthony, and Walt Whitman. A particularly valuable group of 48 letters was written to Mrs. Smith by Frances Willard, a prominent figure in American and international temperance work.

The collection includes 34 individual photographs of Hannah and family members, plus three excellent shots of Frances Willard. In addition, a photo scrapbook contains 156 mounted photographs recording the Brighton Convention, Robert Smith's 1875 evangelistic tour in Europe, and numerous English Quakers. Many of these relatively early photographs were probably taken by Robert himself.

Another significant portion of the collection is the "religious fanaticism" section. These materials formed the basis for the book, *Religious Fanaticism*, which was compiled by Ray Strachey, Hannah's granddaughter, after Mrs. Smith's death. The items, approximately 2000 in all, provide a fascinating insight into the religious ferment of the 1890s and 1900s. Collections of materials on men like Alexander Dowie (founder of The Christian Apostolic Church, Zion, Ill.) and William Harris (founder of The Brotherhood of New Life) are particularly rich. Accounts of early pentecostal revivals in England are numerous. Over 60 religious groups are represented ranging from the "Abode of Love" (J.H. Pigott) to the "Pentecostal Dancers" to the "Sun Worshippers" of Ottoman Zar Adsht Hanish.

In addition to the archival materials, there are over 9000 photocopied pages from the Smith family archives, materials which were not available for purchase at that time but which provide invaluable aid in studying the collection. Copies of journals and
The Hannah Whitall Smith Collection

letters by Hannah Whitall Smith help to fill in an otherwise incomplete picture depicted in the correspondence to her and in her printed works.

The collection is being arranged and cataloged at this time. When these processes are complete, a comprehensive research aid will be available to individuals interested in this subject area. Although access to some parts of the collection is presently restricted, requests from researchers for access to limited portions of the collection will be considered.

A Special Thanks

The B.L. Fisher Library, as well as the Asbury Theological Seminary community as a whole, would like to thank Mrs. Barbara Strachey Halpern for the opportunity to purchase this valuable collection. Her concern that these materials be placed where they would receive proper respect resonates with the Library's desire to collect and preserve the history of the Holiness and other related movements. Through her gracious gesture, a significant period in the early development of this movement, and in modern history in general, will be better understood.