

## Prologue

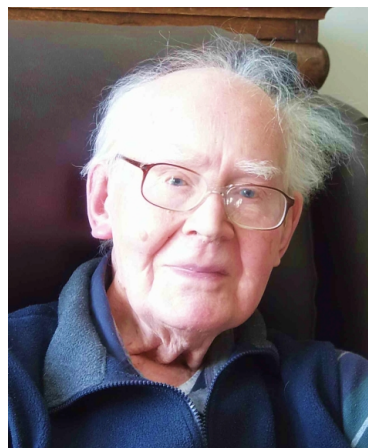
I only 'came out' as a collector of Penguin books a couple of years ago. Although I had been collecting since the late 1970's, it was not so long ago that I made my decision to start selling the books, and it was even more recently that I started my own 'virtual collection' on the web that inevitably lead to me going public. Not that it had been a secret. My friends and family knew, but it was not part of my public persona, was not listed as a hobby. I had been a member of the Penguin Collectors' Society in the 1980's and only recently re-joined. In developing my virtual collection on my website ([www.penguinfirsteditions.com](http://www.penguinfirsteditions.com)), the idea for which came from the growing number of digital images I was accumulating while selling the books, I looked for more information and images to fill the gaps in my own collection. I came across the Stirling University Mitchell Penguin collection and for the next half year pestered the archivist, Helen Beardsley. 'But', I asked myself, 'why had I bothered to collect Penguin Books at all?' This is a question I find it difficult to answer and a subject about which I am beginning to study. Where better to start, thought I, than to ask Angus Mitchell, who gifted his collection to Stirling University Library, why he had collected Penguin books and what led his collecting bug to end up as a fine collection now available for others to use.

Alec Spencer  
30 May, 2014  
University of Stirling

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### Dr Angus Mitchell

Penguin Book collector and former  
Chairman of the Court of the University of  
Stirling, 1984-1992.



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### Angus Mitchell

I met with Dr Angus Mitchell at his home, a flat in a leafy part of Edinburgh, on a sunny morning in May 2014. Angus, in his ninetieth year, was somewhat frail and was handicapped with a rare muscular disease. His wife, also a nonagenarian, let me in. Though physically disabled, Angus clearly had lost none of his keen mental faculties and displayed a wonderful sense of humour. I explained the purpose of my visit – to test out some ideas and questions

about collecting Penguin books and also to gather some brief biographical details. And so we began.

Angus Mitchell was born in India in 1924, and was educated at Marlborough College and Brasenose College, Oxford. In the latter part of the war he served with distinction in the Royal Armoured Corps and subsequently joined the Scottish Office – ending his career in 1984 as Secretary of the Scottish Education Department. Having retired at the age of 60 he went on to other things, serving on boards of charities, and undertaking a stint as Chairman of the Court of Stirling University from 1984 to 1992.

Angus was a small boy, nearly 11 years old, when Penguins were launched in 1935. They became part of his life from then on and, rather more so, as he got older and started obtaining a few Pelicans. After doing school certificate at Marlborough at the age of 15, he states “I unwisely thought I was going to be a mathematician and did that for a year and that was a mistake. I then switched to history, which has really been my chief intellectual interest since then. I took a degree in History at Oxford (a shortened war-time degree of 2 years and a term), without realizing at that time what a valuable preparation for the Civil Service a history degree was.”

“I didn’t at that time take any special interest in Penguins. It was a nice cheap way of getting good knowledge on certain things – like the H. G. Wells *History of the World*. The sort of thing any student would be likely to pick up cheap for sixpence in those days.”

### **Starting to collect**

Angus couldn’t give a precise date when he started collecting. “It would be two or three years after the Penguin Collectors’ Society was set up that I heard about it – and thought – that’s interesting.” [*The Penguin Collectors’ Society (PCS) was formed in 1974*]. “And I suppose at that stage I was beginning to be attracted, if that’s the right word, by the thought of making a collection of something. I had been a stamp collector as a boy, like so many others, and took that quite seriously until I was a teenager, when other things took its place. I had quite a good collection, particularly of German and French stamps, but gradually lost interest in that, and didn’t dispose of my collection until I was thirty or something, and wanted to make more space.”

“I think possibly I was stimulated into starting systematically by having read somewhere about the PCS. It may have been an article in *The Times* about PCS, where they called themselves “cheerful nutters” or something like that – which they are, of course!”

“In fact I did mildly start collecting one or two other things, like Wemyss china I took an interest in for a time. I rather like it, I’ve still got two or three, but then of course that got so expensive – in a sense I ruled that out because you can’t get a really good collection of Wemyss unless you are a very wealthy man. Whereas, Penguins by contrast, you can make an interesting collection for a very little money!” “And of course now the charities like Oxfam are beginning to move into that area you get double merit – you add to your own collection and you also do a good turn for the charity.”

Although Angus has no firm recollection of how it all started he proffered: “I think I began like so many others, saying ‘Oh, let’s see if I can get the first one hundred of the main series’. I would have been, I suppose, in my fifties then, in the 1970’s, and I suppose I had been subconsciously looking for something useful and interesting to do outside one’s work.”

Angus’ desire to collect was not through any strong literary interest. He never managed to read all the books he acquired. “I tried. If I got a new one that looked particularly interesting I would very often read it, but not every time.” And gradually his collection grew, and it didn’t take him too long. He was able to pick up Penguin books quite cheaply “let’s say ninety percent of the first one-hundred. And then, of course, you said ‘Oh, here’s number 121 and it’s only ten pence in a bookshop – must get that while it’s going – particularly if it had its dust-wrapper!’ I was not at all a perfectionist in the sense that I would far rather have number 121 looking very scruffy and with no dust-wrapper than to say I must get a first impression in fine condition.” Penguin Books mostly printed reprints in their main series from other publishers. And Angus added: “Of course, we all went off and called them first editions, which is not correct, it was a first impression”. When he found his number ‘121’ or whatever, which was printed around 1938, and acquired it, he might try to improve on it later on.

### **The collecting bug**

Angus had a ‘little blue pocket book’ in which he kept his notes simply on numbers and series. He had a system with annotations to show ‘yes I’ve got that but it’s a 3<sup>rd</sup> impression, and a poor copy, and I’ll try and improve it’.

And how did the ‘collecting bug’ take hold of him? “Having started on the main series, of course, and then you gradually get more greedy – if that’s the right word – and think ‘Oh well I better have a go at the Pelicans as well’. The Specials, the early *Penguin Specials*, I think I probably have read most of them, almost as they came out. *The Problem of Spain*, and *The Problem of Czechoslovakia*, which I think came out just a few weeks before the war broke out, before Hitler’s occupation. And they, I would say, were compulsory reading for anybody who was reading history at school. And they were fascinating. Anyhow, what I am saying is that having started on the main series I had not realized what a wealth of interest there was in the minor series. Start with *Specials* and *Pelicans*, then you move on. You suddenly discover that there are picture Puffins and things – quite delightful!”

“When I started off with the first one hundred of the Main series and then, of course, soon realized that that was only a small part, and you gradually get tempted to extend it and you suddenly discover there’s a minor series like *Russian Review* you never heard of before. This was certainly one of the attractions of collecting, when you suddenly realized that there is the potential for wider interest in other series whose existence I had been quite ignorant when I started.”

Had Angus found out about the other series from the PCS publications or because he had gone into bookshops and discovered other series? “I’m not

sure, it would have been a mixture. I can't remember as our children grew up, whether I went out looking for *Puffins*, specially, to read to them, or *Picture Puffins*? But I wish I had. Particularly since they were so vulnerable to child abuse – as it were. I think I got one of the *Cut-Outs*. And even, of course, the oddballs. I never managed to get hold of the prints, the war-time prints – do you remember?" The four prints by Topolski? "The Topolski's, that's right. You know, I envied them. They occasionally came up for sale at large prices and I thought I am not going to pay £50 for one of them. What I will ask you to hand over to the collection is one of the *Penguin Prints* (which I will give you later). I think I didn't hand it over with the rest of the collection partly because it's not a book, and I wasn't sure if it would really fit in." "I've only got the one, and it may be quite awkward for Helen Beardsley to display. It deserves to be framed and put up along the rest of the university collection. It's an interesting piece of history and a diversion from normal publishing, if you like. And also, it was probably one of Allen Lane's bright ideas which didn't come off, of which there were quite a few!"

"I suppose these are different ways in which the (collecting) bug affected me, but less seriously than in the case of Penguin. I did dabble quite a bit in family history and genealogy and you will see up there there's a whole set of *Who was Who?* from 1880. Now that was very much helped by one of my sons who was also interested in family history and he said "Oh you haven't got the 1890 volume – here it is". That'll probably go, when I die, to the Scottish Genealogy Society of which I've always been a member, and I've got a good set of *Burkes* and *Debrett's* over there too."

### **What to collect and not**

Angus had indicated that he decided to limit his collecting of Penguin books to those published before 1961 or thereabout. I asked him if he had made a conscious decision about first impressions, or would a reprint do to fill a gap? "I thought it made much more sense to get a tatty old reprint than to leave a gap and hope to get a first impression. That is a wider issue. I have often felt, for example, we often look at *Antiques Road Show*, and when other people produce their collection of extraordinary different things, don't they, and nearly always the expert, have you noticed, says 'Well this is a very nice example of a Fabergé ring or something, got a slight defect there, and if it had been perfect I would have put £4,000 on it but I'm afraid in its present condition it's only about £1,500.' I've always been un-attracted by the collectors who put so much value on getting something in perfect condition."

"Up on the top shelf (pointing) you see a little lady, red riding hood, that's an example. I was going to an antique fair in the Roxburgh Hotel about 20 years ago. As I went in a man came out and he dropped that on the pavement and it was in about five pieces – and he just walked away. I picked up his pieces, glued them together. No serious collector would ever dream of collecting such a poor quality piece. But I like it, because I still think that it is a nice piece of, I suppose, mid-Victorian china showing a story of Red Riding Hood, and you can see all the bad gluing I did – in a sense I am trying to say that poor quality things are still of great value even if they are not perfect."

I asked if he had made a conscious effort to try and acquire the first impression – even if the cover was not perfect? “Yes I did and I did make quite a few improvements as I went along. But I wasn’t going to go wild on spending a lot on money on it.”

“I don’t suppose you have Siné’s *Massacre*? This was a book from the mid 1960’s. There was a Frenchman called Siné who wrote a book and Penguin were going to publish the book which I think had a lot of pretty gory illustrations of different kinds of massacre, cartoons. Siné I think was a cartoonist. Penguin Board discussed whether they should go ahead with something which a lot of people would say ‘will frighten the children’, and Allen Lane was a lone voice on the Board, saying ‘No, we can’t possibly publish this muck, its pornographic, etc’ and it was almost tending that way. And he was over-ruled and the Board decided to publish it, and it got the print run, and a few days later Allen himself, as Chairman, got hold of one of his underlings and they took a trailer to the store, took them all away and burnt them on Allen Lane’s farm. This story has been written up and is a fascinating story, and just a few copies survived and are now very rare, and not in my collection. Any of the biographies of Allen will mention that episode. When PCS had its meeting in Reading, probably in the 1980’s, we actually went to Allen Lane’s farm and stood solemnly around the place where he is thought to have burnt the books!”

### **To what lengths?**

So how did you acquire your books? I asked. “They would almost certainly have been from second-hand bookshops. Some I got from the Annual meetings of PCS. There was always a wide selection. Indeed, I took my own boxes of swaps several times, though my swaps were nearly always either of poor quality or third impressions and therefore of limited interest to some of the collectors who were rather choosy.”

I said I noticed he had a ‘Williams’ list (a book dealer). Did you ever buy any from him over the post? “Yes, I’m pretty sure I did.” Angus showed me Williams’ list of the Second Thousand Penguins, “which incidentally, that’s where in effect the 1960 limit took me to about Main series 1600, I think, and after that I didn’t get any.”

Had he ever gone to jumble sales to look for books? “I can’t remember any specific instances, but I am sure I would have done. Oh, and in particular, of course, in Edinburgh, the annual Christian Aid book sale. I used to help sorting and selling before I got disabled. Oh yes, I would have picked up quite a few there, and not just... In fact, I got a little annoyed – nearly always they had several boxes of *Penguins* and *Pelicans* priced by worthy volunteers who were not very knowledgeable and occasionally I have said, ‘I have seen a pre-war Penguin in good condition for ten-pence and said no really you ought to charge more for that one’, because they didn’t realize. I am sure I would have bought for example some quite good ones – let’s say *Penguin History of Art* – come up there which is unlikely to be found in an ordinary bookshop. I didn’t in those days ever buy on-line.

I asked Angus about the gaps in his little blue book, gaps representing missing books. How did you feel if, when you went into a bookshop, you suddenly said “Great, I’ve spotted it”? “This is one of the joys of collection, I think when you suddenly are able to fill a gap and conversely, I suppose it was a disappointment when you find that your gap was on sale for £30 or £50! In which case I would probably turn it down.”

You mentioned you had a sister in Bath and you occasionally went to the AGMs of PCS which were held around the country. Did you restrict yourself to collecting within the Edinburgh area or did you, for example, when you were working, and visited another town, make a bee-line afterwards...?

“Very much so. At one time I was actually commuting to London for the Scottish Office every week while Parliament was sitting and I would say, more often than not, I would walk over from Whitehall up to Charing Cross Road – oh yes, I would have picked up several from there, not all that cheap but well worthwhile. And indeed visiting other places in England on holiday, or Scotland for that matter. I found a delightful little bookshop in Portree, on Skye, which I may have picked up something there. Even if I didn’t find any Penguins for my collection, they were nearly always delightful places, and now with a heavy mortality rate alas. Edinburgh was jolly good for second-hand bookshops. I would certainly drop-in two or three times a year at several of the Edinburgh bookshops.”

“I would go and visit my sister and her husband in Bath, and also visit my aged parents in Bath. On each visit I would do a little tour around several of the bookshops, which are probably not all there – but one of them, of course, is run by the present Chairman of PCS, Tim Graham, and he would occasionally ring me up and say I’ve got a number you haven’t got, or something. He’s more knowledgeable about Penguins than I am.”

“I remember on a visit to London I would occasionally walk over to the South Bank, they had rows of book sellers and sellers of other things outside the Festival Hall. I would very often go and look round them, but they didn’t on the whole tend to go in for cheap paper-backs which was what I was after. I think if you’ve decided you want to collect something Penguins have this enormous merit of cheapness. Most collections, I would say would tend be rather more expensive to do that. It wasn’t because I was poverty stricken at all, but it was a jolly attractive proposition to get something for five pence which is going to be a rare antique in fifty years time. And one might want to rescue something for one’s grandchildren.”

### **Collecting mania?**

I asked if the books had ever taken over or changed his life in any way, or dominated any of his activities? “Not dominate, but certainly influence rather than dominate in the sense that I had at least two lists of bookshops in Britain. Have you ever seen any of these? I had one hard back which was, I think, published several times 20 or 30 years ago, of all the bookshops in Britain. There was also a very much smaller one – I think it was called *Driff’s Guide* or something like that – which was done rather amusingly because there the author would say ‘this is an absolutely rotten place to go to but you might be

lucky and pick up something of interest!’ and other bookshops he would give strong praise to. He was really quite amusing in the way he wrote that.”

And did you go to some of these places? Did you have the book and think I am going to this town, I will go to this bookshop? “Yes, very much so. I can’t say I ever made a specially long journey, having seen and read in *Driff’s Guide*, but if I was in the area, and normally we would take our holidays in England or Scotland by car, I would certainly go out of my way, maybe 50 miles to see a bookshop which was listed in that area.

“I just want to interject a story. We were visiting some relations of Ann’s in California about twenty years ago. I suppose I mentioned I had my collection of Penguins. And a few months later they posted to me a very ordinary green Penguin from 1950 or something, saying ‘Have you got this one!’ I had, of course, but other people do take an interest, some of them, and try and help you along. People who know practically nothing about the subject and don’t realize what its potential is.”

### **Managing his growing collection**

So how did Angus manage all this? Was it all in his little blue note-book? “I think it was entirely through that little blue note-book. At the back of that little note-book I probably also made notes of some other things I was interested in like the Ordinance Survey one-inch to one-mile of Scotland and I gradually made a collection of that – partly for use because of course on holidays in Sutherland it is useful to know, which I quite recently handed over to a grand-daughter who was interested and welcomed the series. So there, in the blue book you’ll find a list of the missing bits of the OS series in the same book.”

I said to Angus that I had noticed that he generally wrote inside them in pencil where he had got it from and how much and that he didn’t keep a separate index or catalogue. “I had forgotten that, yes. That was probably to remind myself, for my own interest I would pencil it in. Not always by any means, but sometimes, and I hope with a date. And I know I am not the first person to do that, because we inherited from Ann’s father various books, like some Robert Louis Stevenson, for example, in which he pencilled in ‘Lucknow 1905’, that sort of thing, for just the same purpose I suppose. To remind himself of where he had bought the book. And of course, in the eyes of some perfectionists one ought not to write anything extra into a book. Personally I think it nearly always adds interest.”

I asked about the space that such a collection occupied and whether it presented any problems? “No, not in Regent Terrace. We bought at a house auction a very large book-case for our high drawing room. But even (with) that the shelves soon booked up and I had to overflow into other book-cases. No, it wasn’t a practical problem, at least for the main collection. I suppose I did find it a bit of a nuisance particularly if you replace a tatty one with a first impression then you’ve got a spare. And I had several boxes of spares which I would sometimes take to a PCS meeting and try and get rid of. I did useful swaps with other PCS members at these meetings, but that was a rare event. It’s a pity we don’t have an occasional meeting of PCS members in Scotland. I did think of that at one time, since we had a large house I thought really I

ought to invite the PCS members to come along here, to supplement what PCS themselves did elsewhere. But I never got around to that I'm afraid."

## Motivations

So what was his motivation for collecting? "Like you, I find it very hard to detect what my motivation was. I would have thought basically the same as many other people – they want a hobby. And it's a hobby with a purpose and an interest. I find it hard to go beyond that. ... If I hadn't collected them I'm pretty sure I would have started collecting something else." "I would surmise that many collectors have taken an interest purely by chance in the first instance."

"Of course, a lot of people do collect for very good investment reasons, and in practice, of course, it has been a good investment. I suppose when I handed over my four thousand odd books to the University - I would have paid over the years, though I didn't keep accounts, may be three or four hundred pounds to put them together for a collection which is now, I suppose, worth several thousand. I was not trying to collect in order to sell it again for a profit."

I suggested to Angus that there was quite a bit of literature on collecting and people's motivations. A lot about 'legacy', and about how people might seek to control their environment and bring order to an area, and also about leaving something to the future – something that they had ordered, thought about and think it's a useful thing to pass on or contribute to future understanding.

Angus reflected "I wonder whether I may unconsciously have been sort of looking for, not a memorial – that would be putting it too strong – but for something to leave behind, to one's family and to others, which would be of wider interest – I don't know? That's perhaps putting too much on it? I think in a way, it's a bit public spirited. You want to feel that you've done something for the world, to leave behind, to leave the world a better place."

Angus managed to complete some of the sets. I asked him how it felt? "Satisfied. Yes. Done my job there. Not going to read it but it's still part of the way towards the ideal of a 100% collection. Let's take the *Music Magazine*. I was not going to read it. I might occasionally want to look up a particular article. I did go a little bit further, as you have seen, by my bothering to list the composers in the series – 'oh this would be a good topic for an article in the magazine', which I failed to do. One or two of my other articles in the magazine would be homing in on a particular book. I did one about an illustrator of a book on trees. I think it is probably one of the *Puffin Picture Books* on trees, and for some reason, I can't remember why now, I thought this sounds interesting I'll find out more, and I did a little bit of research on the man to see what the rest of his career had been, his name was Badmin. It did at least enable me, as it were, to add on something useful to the collection by providing further information for others, and it amused me to do that. Not very often. I mean, I was pretty busy in the Scottish Office for most of the time, but of course one needs an outlet which is nothing to do with one's work. That I think is a possible motivation for all collectors. I think you want to get away from your work now and again, and do something of your own. It's a relaxation. I suppose all hobbies are an escape from one's work to some



extent. Or for some people, it's an escape from household duties. Not that that was a serious factor with me."

I asked him about the Penguins he picked up as a young man for study?  
"There would have been a few for study when I was doing history at Marlborough, and rather more when I came back from the war and was doing history at Oxford. Then I would have read a few Penguins for educational purposes. But I was not trying to educate myself by making this collection, at least not consciously. It has been an education, particularly I think, as you begin to read about the whole publishing history side of things, and the extraordinary people who started it and kept it running. I think I've still got *Penguin Special*, (by Jeremy Lewis) up there, several books now about the early days, and I certainly got more interest in that side of things. Because when I started I had not realized what a forward looking invention it was – to put it, perhaps, too strongly.

### **Enjoyment?**

"I suppose I enjoyed the hunt and the satisfaction of a successful hunt when you find a gap – like *Biggles*. I had *Biggles* on the list for many years and suddenly found him in an unexpected place. That was satisfying. I don't think I was showing off in any sense. I do show off in other ways, but I wasn't continually saying to my friends 'look at my wonderful collection', which some collectors might do, like if they were collecting pictures by Matisse or whatever, then they would want to show them off. I don't think I ever did that, unless there was a fellow collector of course, but I didn't have any close friends who were collectors. Although visitors, friends or colleagues who came to the house would immediately see in our drawing room this wonderful collection and some of them would take an interest. I don't think any of them offered to help me, but they would be interested, some of them."

"I suppose if I had had more time after retirement I might have tried to do a little more research on some of the obvious things – like the music series for example – but I had plenty of other things to do. This was the joy, of course, of being allowed to retire on pension at 60, it gave one plenty of time when one was still active and I was lucky in getting other jobs like the Court at Stirling which I enjoyed very much and didn't take up all that much time; I did quite a bit of Civil Service Selection Boards in London, which I got paid for." On those visits, "about eight times a year, I would go down for a three day board, I'd nearly always look in on a bookshop in Charing Cross Road on those occasions. ... if I had ever got bored or given more time, I would have been quite interested in doing further research on my collection. Largely for my own interest as much as anything."

### **Collecting a publishing house?**

I asked Angus why it was that, unlike other book collectors who may collect Keats, Agatha Christie or Kipling, or are very interested in a particular topic, they pick the book they want. But it was strange, that from the time when Penguin started, collectors like Angus or myself or others just pick 'Penguin' as a publishing house as the whole range. I just wondered if you he thought about it?

“Well some people do focus. If only for good financial reasons, or because of their particular interest in Russian or Buildings. There must be a lot of people who have got the full set of *Buildings of England* who wouldn't collect anything else in Penguin. With hindsight it was probably not very sensible to extend over such a wide range, partly for space reasons and partly because its unmanageable intellectually to be interested over such a huge range. Even the Main series of fiction is intellectually unmanageable because it covers everything. I still have a sense of regret that I didn't read by any means all of them. I probably read most of the fiction and occasional *Pelicans*, and very few of some of the *Specials*. By contrast, perhaps a *Puffin Picture Book* you could read right through in ten minutes and gives you great pleasure, or it gives me pleasure. I still sometimes wonder whether I should have kept my set of *Puffin Picture Books* to read to the grandchildren, but I didn't. But I have kept the *Buildings of Scotland* for practical purposes. I think with the light of hindsight I probably would have done better to have narrowed the collection in years, let's say up to 1950. Then I could have probably done better with a smaller collection to have taken a closer interest in some of the books I didn't read.”

“I hope that the width (of the collection) could be regarded in some way as an unselfish motive to provide a collection for other people, other than oneself. I hope, maybe, there are musicians in Stirling who are going to look at the *Penguin Scores*, which I would never do, or even play them on a piano!”

### **Stirling University**

I asked Angus if he had stopped collecting Penguin Books and, if so, why and when? “Yes, I think I've stopped. I suppose basically when we down-sized in 2005 and found this flat, by that time I had over four thousand Penguins, and I had to hand it all over to the university, which I was glad to do. Helen Beardsley could probably show you my early correspondence with the librarian, now retired, who was in charge of the Special Collections, in which I agreed with him to gradually transfer – I mean, as I had very quickly collected the Science series which was of practically no interest to me, and I simply did that as a collection – I got them for twopence-halfpenny! And I said ‘as I complete that I will hand it over to you’. So they built it up gradually before we down-sized and then I had to actually ask them to send a van over to collect the remaining three-thousand five-hundred or something like that.”

“I actually laid down certain conditions, ... under which I was happy to donate the collection, and which I trust has been kept on file. It's a fairly short thing. I said they must continue to subscribe to PCS.” [*which I was able to confirm the Library does!*] “I think I also put in some rather vague condition that they would try to fill any gaps which remain of which, of course, there are quite a few. I roughly describe my collection as about maybe 95% of anything up to 1960.”

“For lack of space, of course I had to draw a line, and I said I'll stop at anything published by 1960. But I was a bit flexible over that, I mean if there were things later – for example I still have over there (pointing) the series of *Buildings of Scotland* because I use that occasionally, and so do my family.

And I suppose I must try and remember and hand it over to the University... I tried to stop at 1960. That in a sense, you could say, from the point of view of publishing students is a gap to be filled. I mean ideally, it would be nice if the University wanted to continue on Penguins of post 1960. In order to show the way in which the publishers continue to develop their ideas. Indeed, somebody I hope is going to study the impact of the American take-over on the company and its policies.”

“I think it is very satisfying to feel that your collection is now in good hands, with somebody who will look after it and actually use it. One hopes, for good scholastic purposes and I gather there are occasional students who do. I have never met them, but it’s nice to know that someone is using your work. If Stirling had not been there, I would have hated the idea of simply putting it in on sale on the open market for somebody to buy on ebay. It was far more worthwhile to find a place that will value it. But that was not why I started.”

“I gave (a talk) to a small academic audience in the university soon after the time of the hand-over. Just about the time I retired and presented my collection, Colin Bell was Principal at Stirling, died in office after a very short time – a year or two – and he was particularly interested in *Penguin Specials*. I don’t know whether he had a collection of any kind, but it was a surprise to him when I suddenly gave all the collection over. Unfortunately he didn’t live to see it. The talk I gave must have been very shortly after his death.”  
[*Professor Colin Bell, Vice Chancellor of University of Stirling died suddenly on 24 April, 2003 from a heart attack. The talk by Angus Mitchell was given on 30 April 2003. It is available separately (qv...)*]

### **And finally,**

“Would you mind if I ask you to take to the University my *Penguin Print*? ... I’ll just have one last look at it. Yes, lovely print that. Pieter de Hooch *Courtyard in Delft*. Well, it may present poor Helen with a bit of a problem in how to display it – well it wouldn’t be displayed – but she’ll have to find a way of putting it on a shelf or something. I would really like it to be part of the collection.”

Of course, I was happy to do that and responded: “If I may, on her behalf, accept it. That’s lovely.” I thanked Angus and made my farewells to him and his wife, promising that I would keep in contact and return. Chatting about Penguins has that effect!