
Pro Rege

Volume 50
Number 2 *Fine Arts Issue*

Article 2

December 2021

Rare Books

Bob De Smith

Dordt University, bob.desmith@dordt.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/pro_rege



Part of the [Creative Writing Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

De Smith, Bob (2021) "Rare Books," *Pro Rege*: Vol. 50: No. 2, 4.

Available at: https://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/pro_rege/vol50/iss2/2

This Poetry is brought to you for free and open access by the University Publications at Dordt Digital Collections. It has been accepted for inclusion in Pro Rege by an authorized administrator of Dordt Digital Collections. For more information, please contact ingrid.mulder@dordt.edu.

Rare Books

Bob De Smith

In the rare book room,
Tan codices—
Margins doodled
By the inattentive—
Are stained with ale,
Their gutters
Sprinkled with bread, hair,
And cheese.

DNA, too, I suppose.

My father's toolbox
Preserves his greasy fingerprints,
Cuticles,
Coffee stains.

Marks on tools,
Handwritten labels,
Shed skin in the creases
Of a folding knife.

There, too, are found
His odd collection of re-purposed
Punches—odds and ends,
To apply the phrase literally—
And one-off tools,
Their precise purpose lost.

I think of this as I
Run the valley of my book,
Removing traces of me.