New edition helps find out-of-print books

A retired USL librarian, together with a bibliographer at the university, has recently completed the ninth edition of a guide that has helped book collectors find out-of-print books for the past three decades.

For more than 30 years, J. Norman Heard and Charles F. Hamsa's "Bookman's Guide to Americana" has been a reference tool for booksellers and collectors in determining reasonable prices for out-of-print books.

The ninth edition, like its predecessors, is an alphabetically arranged compilation of quotations transcribed from recent out-of-print titles in the comprehensive field of Americana, including factual or fictional works written by Americans or relating to the Americas.

Almost 10,000 titles are included. Reflecting the research interests of the junior compiler, the ninth edition devotes special attention to books on the history, government, foreign relations, business and industry and agriculture of the peoples of North and South America and their overseas possessions.

A considerable amount of national and state government publications is included.

Heard has had more than 30 years experience in acquisitions work, collection development and administration in eight university libraries.

He retired in 1981 as collections officer for USL's Dupre Library.

Heard joined the library staff in 1969, a time when the library held 260,000 volumes. Upon his retirement, the collection was just short of the half million mark.


The first volume of his "Handbook of the American Frontier" will be published this year.

Heard's research interests include ethnohistory, bibliography and help for the handicapped.

Hamsa, Dupre Library's collection development bibliographer and an assistant professor of library science, has specialized in book selection and acquisitions work since 1969. He was co-editor of the 7th edition of "Bookman's Guide to Americana." His research activities emphasize viticulture, oenology, photography and Latin American studies. He also manages a small-scale out-of-print book search service.