The current number of the Quarto, nominally the “Fall Issue,” has unavoidably been transformed into a “Winter Issue.” I apologize to all our avid readers! Small institutions periodically experience staff turnover—the Clements Library dramatically so in the past year—making it barely possible for us to accomplish our primary function of serving readers, but things quickly are improving.

Our gifted Manuscript Curator of more than five years, Rob Cox, left in the fall of 1998 to take a similar position at the American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia, accompanied by his wife Rachel Onuf, who was also working with manuscripts. Rachel is now at the David Library at Washington’s Crossing, Pennsylvania. Arlene Shy, editor of this publication and an integral and indispensable member of the Library staff for twenty-six years, retired this Spring.

Brian Dunnigan, Curator of Maps and the new editor of the Quarto, has been working energetically on a book manuscript, which I am pleased to say has just been turned in, on deadline, to Wayne State University Press, where it will emerge in the Spring of 2001 as the academic centerpiece of Detroit’s 300th Anniversary Celebration. It is a tremendously exciting project that had its beginnings at the Clements, more than fifty years ago, when the first Director, Randolph G. Adams, started an “Iconography of Detroit,” attempting to identify every known map or picture of the town in its early years. Adams never completed the project, but he located approximately sixty images dating before Michigan became a state in 1837.

Brian Dunnigan was a natural candidate to take up where Adams left off, being a widely published expert on the military frontier of the Great Lakes region—he was Director of Old Fort Niagara historical site for seventeen years before coming to the Clements three years ago. To his delight and surprise, a careful and systematic search of American, European, and Canadian libraries, archives, and private collections has uncovered almost 180 “images,” including not only maps and drawings but powder and rum horns, a wampum belt, and even a youthful drawing of Detroit by the future husband of “Whistler’s Mother.” In addition, the volume will include a striking array of portraits of the men and women, including eighteenth-century Native Americans, who inhabited and visited the City of the Straits in its first 136 years. Most of the pictures have never previously been published.

Wayne State Press is pulling out all the stops on the final product—large format, illustrated throughout in color—and for the first time, colonial historians and the general public are going to learn about one of the least known and most historically fascinating cities on the North American continent—a permanent settlement nearly as old and every bit as important as Williamsburg, Virginia. It is an enthralling piece of social and urban history, and Wayne State Press has promised to help us make the volume available to Associates on highly favorable terms. With Frontier Metropolis: Picturing Early Detroit, 1701-1838 in the hands of the publisher, Brian Dunnigan is now taking up his regular duties as Curator of Maps and assuming many of Arlene Shy’s former responsibilities as Head of Reader Services.

In September, Barbara DeWolfe joined the Clements staff as our new Curator of Manuscripts, after a distinguished first career as Research Associate in the History Department at Harvard. She worked closely with Professor Bernard Bailyn on his notable studies of trans-Atlantic migration in the colonial period and published, herself, Discoveries of America: Personal Accounts of British Emigrants to North America During the Revolutionary Era (1997). We are currently in the process of hiring a new half-time receptionist, a full-time Graphies and Picture Service Curator, and hope to add an Assistant Manuscript Curator next summer. The University has been exceptionally supportive and helpful in making this transition possible. We look forward to sharing all sorts of new initiatives in coming issues of the Quarto, which under Brian Dunnigan’s capable editorial hands, will resume its regular schedule of publication in the Spring/Summer of 2000.

The collections of the Clements Library include many images of early Detroit. While most are found in the expected media of manuscript or printed maps and drawings, this important view of the city is preserved on a three-dimensional object—a blue-transfer Staffordshire platter. It was manufactured between 1830 and 1840 and was presented to the Library in 1944 by Mr. William Van Dyke.

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James Thomas (1780-1842) was a Massachusetts man of broad experience. Appointed captain in the US Regiment of Light Dragoons in 1808, he resigned in 1811, only to return to the army the following year as a deputy quartermaster general on the northern frontier. After the War of 1812, Thomas became active in business, first as an army contractor and later as an investor in enterprises as varied as stage coaches, Maine timber lands, and Missouri lead mines. His papers, including many maps, reflect the different phases of his career. The collection was a 1999 gift from Frank Parkins of Marietta, Georgia, and includes a fine saber from Thomas’ 1808-11 cavalry service and a portrait miniature, believed to have been painted by Nathaniel Rogers (1788-1844) when Thomas visited New York City in the 1820s.

IN THIS ISSUE

Our normal practice has been to devote the majority of each issue of the Quarto to a particular theme or subject. In this issue, we have decided to adopt a slightly different approach, highlighting a miscellaneous sampling of personal or private letters, and then illustrating the issue with the unexpected—“objects,” mostly three dimensional—which the Library does not collect or possess in quantity, but occasionally and appropriately acquires as an intrinsic part of a particular manuscript archive. The objects illustrated are described by their captions.

The letters were chosen, from among many thousand similar emanations of the pen or typewriter in the collections, because they are interesting and because they are not records of the great moments in our political or military history, but very personal documents of our social and intellectual past. Benjamin Franklin’s sister gently chastises her daughter for complaining too much. The Postmaster of the United States helps arrange the marriage of the country’s first geographer—a union that produced the inventor of the telegraph. Byron’s brilliant but unbalanced mistress encounters one of the founders of modern public education, equally brilliant and almost as unsettled of mind, and suggests that knowledge is too dangerous to share with the average man.

A wealthy and refined woman of color, thirty years before Emancipation, describes racial prejudice in terms that resonate as effectively today as they would have more than 150 years ago. General Sherman gives marital advice to a blushing bride to be, and the irrepressible Teddy Roosevelt takes time away from his responsibilities as Assistant Secretary of the Navy to think about sports and help initiate the modern Army-Navy games, which have become a hallowed part of twentieth-century football tradition.

The Clements Library is particularly known for its “archival” collections of military and political papers of the period from the French and Indian Wars through the War of 1812, but even these were private and personal papers rather than official governmental records when written and when acquired by the Library. The Gage, Shelburne, Germain, Clinton, [Nathanael] Greene, [Anthony] Wayne, [Oliver Hazard] Perry, and other such collections were all the property of the original writer/recipient and were obtained from the descendants of the men who created the collections. They are here, or in most cases anywhere, only because Mr. Clements, or the University of Michigan, special benefactors, or your organization, the Clements Library Associates, bought them, often at very considerable expense. With the exception of the letter from Roosevelt to Secretary of War Russell Alger, part of an outstanding collection generously donated to the Library by the Alger family of Detroit, each of the letters printed here was acquired by purchase.

Are these letters important? Does it matter if we save letters that document mother-daughter relationships, eighteenth-century courtship practices, or personality quirks of famous people of the past?

A surprisingly significant portion of the essential documentation of our history remains, currently, in private hands—particularly so in the case of family papers and manuscript letters. The popularity of such things as antiques malls, Internet auctions, and the Antiques Road Show on television makes it increasingly certain that the trunk of old family papers in the attic or great-grandfather’s Civil War letters are going to be sold rather than donated to the local historical society.

The Clements Library does not collect, and never has collected, high-priced autographs. It goes for larger family and personal manuscript collections or individual letters or diaries that have real historical content—research value that can significantly enlarge and enrich our understanding of the people, the ideas and ideals, and the events of the past, which alone make it possible for future generations to understand the world they have inherited and the essence of what this country is all about. It is an invaluable service in the preservation and sharing of our historical heritage.

If, while reading the following letters, it strikes you as important that such things survive and are available, keep in mind that it has been funds provided by you, and by people like yourself, that have made their preservation possible.

— John C. Dann
Jane Meom (1712-94) was Benjamin Franklin's favorite sister. The two of them outlived fifteen other siblings by decades, and they enjoyed correspondence throughout their lives. Franklin, of course, was an internationally famous scientist and diplomat, while his sister lived in near-poverty, experiencing a lifelong series of family tragedies. Yet they shared much in common in their indomitably optimistic approach to life and stoical acceptance of its ups and downs. Jane Meom's daughter, Jane Meom Collas, married an unlucky ship's captain who was captured four times during the Revolution. She had recently written her mother, obviously feeling sorry for herself, and her mother's response, like Franklin's aphorisms, embodies a degree of timeless wisdom for those who are feeling life has treated them unfairly.

My Dear Child

...You say you will Endeavour to correct all your faults. It is not among the Least that you suffer your self to look all ways on the dark side of Gods providence towards you. Recollect the Extent of that expression that you had a long time Expearinced Every distres this miserable world could Inflict on you & you will find your self mistaken, but were it so the world has it not in its power to Affect us so much as we may receive by Gods Emediat hand.

I never informed you of half I met with but you know anout to see a vast disproportion between what I have had to undergo, & what you have met with, if the lose of near & dear relations is an Affliction. I have Buried the best of Parents, all my sisters, & Brethren Except one, how many of my children & in what circumstances. You know some small Remembrance of my Difficulties before your Fathers death & often you must have, which if I had don as you do must have sunk me in dispare, but I all ways have tried to recollect the mercys afforded me & the blessings I still Injoy & Indevour to be thankfull, which is a method you must take if you mean to make the best Improvement of yr. Sufferings for it cannot be so acceptable to the divine being to have us all ways reppiening & take no notice of his mercys when we recive so many more than we deserve.

Let us submit to his will & be cheerfull; this you may assure your self if it is any comfort to you that in all your afflictions I am afflicted & were in my Power would Aleviate them all, & had I a suficient Income to soport us to gather you should not be liabel to the Imposion of such compleasant folk as makes Extravagant demands while they pretend to oblige you (but I hope it will not be long before yr Husband comes home & then all will be well again). I have never yet seen it Possible for us to live together unles we could be willing to spend all we had in a year & have nothing to depend on as we could not have stock suficent to go into any busness that would suport us these times & what little I have would soon be run out were I to pay for my board. Therefore we must look on all as an over rooding Provedence which may turn out for the best at last. We shall see how little is to be Expected from fair Apearances & be beter Inabled to act with caution & prudence.

I am apt to think you might have been as happy in some plain country Farmers House & at much les Expense than where you are & then it might not have been thought Improper for you to have done some work bouth for Profit & amusement & if you had been near anouf to have seen it had the Example of the Govenors Lady, & the Ambassadors Sister, making Riffill Shirts & stockings for the Sooldiers who were in great want & could not git hands anouf to suply them.

Another thing I believe I recomended to you wonce before which was to Exchange works with the country People. You might git your self Spining & weaweing done (& at the same time keep yr self constly Imployed which would contrib greatly to a composed mind. I find I cannot live without it). Mrs. Bache got a great deal done so & so has Jenny since I put her in the way of it & you can not only do Plain work but make Bonets, Cloaks, Caps, & any thing.

You ought to see it is only yr. Imagination that I am more severe to yr mistakes than to others. You know it was allways my Judgment & Practice if I thought I had occasion to reprove any won to do it to them selves. Perhaps I am two severe with Every won & I am tould with my self two....

I am yr Sincery affectional mother

Jane Meom Collas

[Jane Meom Collas]
Ebenezer Hazard (1744-1817) was Postmaster General of the United States in the 1780s, a talented historical editor, and an ardent Presbyterian layman. He was devoted to his extended family, as most people were in that era. Jedidiah Morse, our country's first native geographer, was a young clergyman in search of a job. He needed a patron to promote his geographical publications and a wife. Hazard had already provided invaluable support for Morse with his soon to be published American Geography and had helped him secure his lifetime pastorate of the Congregational church in Charlestown, Massachusetts.

It was now time to find him his life's companion, and in this matchmaker's letter to a brother-in-law, Samuel Breese of Shrewsbury, New Jersey, worthy of the most intriguing society matron, Hazard sets up what would prove to be a successful marriage between Morse and Hazard's niece, Elizabeth Ann Breese. The marriage took place in 1789, and the first child of this fortuitous union, Samuel Finley Breese Morse, would later invent the telegraph.

New York
December 7th, 1788

Dear Sir:

Having been prevented from going to church to night, I am going to employ part of the evening in writing to you....

We have had wonderful doing in the church way lately. Finding presbytery supplies irregular, we invited a Mr. Morse, a young gentn. from Connecticut to come and supply us two months, and afterwards for three, which he did to very great acceptance. In the meantime a Scotch gentn. of the name of Muir came here from Bermuda, and when Mr. Morse's time was up, your cousin the General, and some more wished that Mr. Muir might be invited to supply the pulpit a while. The Session invited him for three months and he pleased the General and some more mightily, but the majority of the congn. did not like him half as well as Mr. Morse....the people of Charlestown, opposite to Boston, hearing of his fame, have sent him a unanimous call to come and be their minister. They are to give him eleven Dollars a week, and find him wood for his study, til he gets married; then they are to build him a house, and find him 20 cord of wood a year in addition to the 11 Dolls. pr. week.

He was at our house tother day, and Abby and he and I were talking about the call (which he has agreed to accept) and he told us Mrs. Rogers had told him there was but one thing wanting now, and that was a good wife. We joined in her opinion, and gave him very sage advice about choosing one. He said he liked the ladies this way better than those to the eastward [New England], and asked us if we could recommend one that we thought would suit him. We mentioned one and another and Abby was called out of the room.

When she was gone he asked me if Miss Breese was not a relation of hers; I told him yes: he asked what sort of a young lady she was. I could not tell a lie, and so I gave the girl a good character. He then observed that he had seen her at my house, and that he afterwards saw her sit down at the Communion Table, which gave him a very favorable opinion of her, and he had ever since wished for a better acquaintance with her and asked me how he could get it. I told him I could easily put him in the way: that you had no minister at Shrewsbury and he could go and preach a Sabbath for you—that I would give him a letter of introduction to you and had no doubt you would invite him to stay at your house and then he would have an opportunity of a better acquaintance with Miss.

He asked me if I thought she would make a good minister's wife (you must recollect Abby and I had been telling him before what sort of a wife he must look for): I said I thought she would. "Is she fond of reading?" "I don't know, but Mrs. H. can tell, and I will take an opportunity of mentioning the matter to her, and will ask her opinion whether Miss will suit you." Just at this instant somebody came in and interrupted us: after sitting a minute or two Mr. M. requested me to think of the subject of our conversation, and he would call and see me in the evening and then left me.

As soon as I was disengaged I had a tete a tete with Abby, who seemed much pleased, and yet she did not know whether Nanny would like a minister, or to go so far from her friends, and yet one can't always expect to be with their friends, and yet...

Our friend called at night. I told him I had enquired and that Miss loved reading, particularly good books. He wanted to know if she was disengaged: I said I believed she was—that I had understood she had a humble Servt. but that he was not the man to her mind, and his visits were discontinued. He intimated that he thought he should pay Shrewsbury a visit, and I promised him a letter to you by way of introduction. So the matter rests.

Now I have told you all this story that you may know the whole business as well as I do, for you know my sentiments about such things. The truth of the matter
is Mr. M. intends to come and see our girl, and even if you should have another person to preach for you on the Sabbath he is with you. I wish you not to let him go away, for you and Sister will be pleased with his company—this I say from good acquaintance with him for he has been exceedingly intimate at our house, and I believe considers Abby and me as his particular friends, and we are much pleased with him.

But you will want to know more about him. As a man, he is sensible, is a good scholar, prudent, modest, candid, of a kind, friendly disposition, and I believe a very mild, good temper. He was some time Tutor in Yale College at Newhaven, and Dr. Stiles (the President) recommended him warmly to Dr. Rogers, who has a very high opinion of him.

I believe he expects very little paternal estate, but he is very industrious and has the character of a good economist. He is now engaged in printing an American Geography, written by himself, from which I think he will get both credit and money. I have seen some of it in manuscript. He printed a small one some time ago [Geography Made Easy], which was introduced into the schools in N. England, and the whole edition sold, though it was very incorrect. The one he is now about will be a good one, and having the advantage of an introduction into the schools, I have no doubt it will be profitable to him, especially as Copy Right will be secured by the new Government.

As a Christian his profession and conduct correspond. As a minister, his doctrines are the right old stamp, his sermons are prittily composed, he discovers originality of genius, and I think delivers his sermons well except that he confines himself too much to his notes; but this I believe was very much owing to his being obliged to devote a good deal of his time to his Geography. As to his age, he is about [27]. I think it probable he cannot afford to spend much time courting, and that he will not be a great while before he will drop some hints.

If Nanny should think seriously about him she will naturally wish to know what sort of a place he is to be settled and among what sort of people. As she will of course consult sister and you, I want you to be prepared for it, and therefore tell you that the people of Charlestown have some genteel folk among them and that good old Mr. Carey [Richard Cary] (of whom you have probably heard your Mother speak) and Mr. Gorham, formerly President of Congress, will belong to Mr. Morse’s congregation.

The place is very healthy and pleasant and situated with respect to Boston exactly as Brookline [Brooklyn] is with respect to New York, only not quite so far off, and there is a very grand bridge across the river, so that Mr. Morse may enjoy the society of his Boston friends (among whom is our friend Belknap) whenever he pleases, without difficulty. The stages come twice a week from Boston to N. York in winter and three times in summer.

Now I have told you all I can think of and leave it to you Shrewsbury folks to do as you please. Don’t give N. any hint of the contents of this letter lest it might embarrass her—it will be time enough when Mr. M. has given her an intelligible hint, and she comes to consult you. I shall not let him know that I have wrote anything about him. I forgot to tell you he sings Psalms very well, and I believe can sing any part of the tune.

[Ebenezer Hazard]

[Samuel Breese]
Joseph Lancaster (1778-1838) was a Quaker reformer whose “monitorial system” played an important role in promoting the ideal of universal education in both Britain and the United States. Lady Caroline Lamb was the wife of British Prime Minister Lord Melbourne and the notorious lover of Lord Byron. Lancaster apparently had called upon the Duke to solicit a subscription for one of his educational publications. The Duke was absent, and, in Lady Caroline, Lancaster got more than he had bargained for!

1817

Will you call on me tomorrow at 12 precisely & bring your two youths, that I may try my power. I will do all you wish about the Book, & no doubt get you the Dukes name. I feel much in your sufferings about your Wife. But Friend Lancaster all must suffer who live. Can thy systems or ought thee avert calamity[?]. If so thou had only to teach. The inhabitants of the world will gladly become thy disciples.

I have read thy prospectus and sympathize with thee, not with thy plan. Mankind is too well taught already. Make schools dear, make learning difficult, unteach what has been taught and by that means alone restore every thing to order—for either must we all consent to live free and equal here—or the lower orders must be kept from tasting of the Tree of Knowledge. I disapprove thy system—but would fain assist thee, first because Heaven endowed thee with a wonderful intellect and secondly because it denied thee that steady principle of Reason which had kept thee right and lastly because thou has half ruined thy self.

Caroline Lamb

The long, fascinating, and often tragic history of relations between Native Americans, Europeans, and their colonists is well-documented in the holdings of the Clements Library. This flag, believed to date from the 1830s to the 1850s, is typical of US banners presented to native leaders in the course of treaty negotiations and councils of similar importance. It was associated with Joseph Nawinaskote (ca.1767-1857), leader of Michigan’s L’Arbre Croche band of the Ottawa people. The flag was a 1998 gift of Clements Library Associate and Board Member Richard Pohrt.
Sarah Forten was the daughter of James Forten (1766-1842), African American veteran of the American Revolution, wealthy businessman, and uncompromising advocate of racial equality. Responding with remarkable candor to an inquiry from antislavery reformer Angelina Grimké, Sarah described the deep personal frustration and anger which she, a highly educated and refined woman and as American as anyone, felt as a result of prejudice based on nothing but skin color. The century and a half since has seen the abolition of slavery and remarkable legal and economic advances. But the issues raised in this letter—especially the emotional toll which color prejudice takes on men and women of talent and sensitivity (W.E.B. DuBois or Paul Robeson being examples similar to Sarah Forten)—continue to elude solution.

“Colonization” is a reference to the movement spearheaded by the American Colonization Society, which led to the establishment of Liberia. The majority of African Americans and radical abolitionists came, by the 1830s, to see it as nothing more than an effort to rid the country of a social problem white Americans did not care to solve.

Esteemed Friend,

...In reply to your question—of the “effect of Prejudice” on myself, I must acknowledge that it has often embittered my feelings, particularly when I recollect that we are the innocent victims of it; for you are well aware that it originates from dislike to the color of the skin, as much as from the degradation of Slavery. I am peculiarly sensitive on this point, and consequently seek to avoid as much as possible mingling with those who exist under its influence. I must also own that it has often engendered feelings of discontent and mortification in my breast when I saw that many were preferred before me, who by education, birth, or worldly circumstances were no better than myself, THEIR sole claim to notice depending on the superior advantage of being White: but I am striving to live above such heart burnings, and will learn to “bear and forbear” believing that a spirit of forbearance under such evils is all that we as a people can well expect.

Colonization is, as you well know, the offspring of Prejudice. It has doubtless had a baneful influence on our People. I despise the aim of that Institution most heartily, and have never yet met one man or woman of Color who thought better of it than I do. I believe, with all just and good persons, that it originated more immediately from prejudice than from philanthropy. The longing desire of a separation induces this belief, and the spirit of “This is not your Country” is made manifest by the many obstacles it throws in the way of their advancement mentally and morally.

No doubt there has always existed the same amount of prejudice in the minds of Americans towards the descendants of Africa: it wanted only the spirit of colonization to call it into action. It can be seen in the exclusion of the colored people from their churches, or placing them in obscure corners. We see it in their being barred from a participation with others in acquiring any useful knowledge; public lectures are not usually free to the colored people; they may not avail themselves of the right to drink at the fountain of learning or gain an insight into the arts and science of our favored land. All this and more do they feel acutely. I only marvel that they are not in possession of any knowledge at all, circumscribed as they have been by an all pervading, all-powerful prejudice.

Even our professed friends have not rid themselves of it—to some of them it clings like a dark mantle obscuring their many virtues and choking up the avenues to higher and nobler sentiments. I recollect the words of one of the best and least prejudiced men in the Abolition ranks. He said he, “I can recall the time when in walking with a colored brother, the darker the night, the better Abolitionist was I.” He does not say so now, but my friend, how much of this leaven still lingers in the hearts of our white brethren and sisters is often manifest to us; but when we recollect what great sacrifices to public sentiment they are called upon to make, we cannot wholly blame them. Many, very many are anxious to take up the cross, but how few are strong enough to bear it.

For our own family, we have to thank a kind Providence for placing us in a situation that has hitherto prevented us from falling under the weight of this evil; we feel it but in a slight degree compared with many others. We are not much dependent upon the tender mercies of our enemies, always having resources within ourselves to which we can apply. We are not disturbed in our social relations; we never travel far from home and seldom go to public places unless quite sure that admission is free to all; therefore, we meet with none of these mortification’s which might otherwise ensue. I would recommend to my colored friends to follow our example and they would be spared some very painful realities.

My father bids me tell you that white and colored men have worked with him from his first commencement in business. One man (a white) has been with him nearly thirty seven years. Very few of his hired men have been foreigners—nearly all are natives of this country. The greatest harmony and good feeling exists between them. He has usually 10 or twenty journeymen, one half of whom are white—but I am not aware of any white sail maker who employs colored men. I think it should be reciprocal—do not you?

Yours affectionately,
Sarah L. Forten

[Angelina Grimké]
A brilliant and coldly efficient field commander during the Civil War, William Tecumseh Sherman (1820-91), in private, was a thoughtful and kindly person. The following letter, to a prospective bride, is characteristic of his personal correspondence in his later years. He enjoyed playing the role of senior statesman and opinionated grandfather, hopelessly set in his ways, imparting wisdom with self-deprecating wit and dramatic overstatement to a younger generation he realized was likely to ignore his advice entirely.

912 Garrison Avenue
St. Louis, Mo. Feb. 27 1886

Dear May —

I received a letter from you just as I was starting for Cincinnati and New York. I got back last Saturday, used up from hot cars—and handshaking which disabled my right hand so that for a week I could not write. I am really glad that you are going to marry so good a man as Dr. Beckwith and I am sure you will be a cheery loving wife to whom he will come with joy and gladness.

Don’t bother yourself about diamond jewelry and trousseaus. A man don’t marry these. He wants a woman, and he will provide her raiment and food.

I am a bad hand at wedding presents—when the time comes and you need something write me frankly and I will send you twenty-five dollars. This is a small sum, but you know I have a family of a hundred thousand soldiers every one of whom has a boy named after me and who expects him to educate and provide for him. Were I to give one dollar when a hundred is demanded, I would have to turn my own family out in the streets.

You have had your hard times, and now I hope you will have full amends—you can only be sure of this by making your husband happy in his home however humble....

I am as always,
Yr Friend,
W.T. Sherman

Many of the Clements Library’s collections reflect the maritime and naval history of America. This octant, a navigational device similar to a sextant, was used to determine the angles of celestial bodies above the earth. It once belonged to Isaac Chauncey (1772-1840), the United States naval officer who commanded the Great Lakes fleet during the War of 1812, and was donated to the Library in 1999 by a descendant, Mrs. Lovell Royston of Cincinnati. Good quality navigational instruments of this sort were expensive and highly prized. Chauncey obtained his English-made octant second-hand, for it bears the name of the original owner, George James, and the date 21 September 1768. The instrument was crafted by Joseph Linnell of London.
Navy Department  
Office Assistant Secretary  
Washington  
August 17, 1897  

My dear General Alger:

For what I am about to write you I think I should have the backing of my fellow-Harvard man, your son. I should like very much to revive the football games between Annapolis and West Point. I think the Superintendent of Annapolis, and I dare say Colonel Ernst, the Superintendent of West Point, will feel a little shaky because undoubtedly formerly the academic routine was cast to the winds when it came to these matches, and a good deal of disorganization followed. But it seems to me that if we would let Colonel Ernst and Captain Cooper come to an agreement that the match should be played just as either eleven plays outside teams; that no cadet should be permitted to enter or join the training table if he was unsatisfactory in any study or conduct, and should be removed if during the season he becomes unsatisfactory; if they were marked without regard to their places on the team; if no drills, exercises or recitations were omitted to give opportunities for football practice; and if the authorities of both institutions agreed to take measures to prevent any excesses such as betting and the like, and to prevent any manifestations of an improper character—if as I say all this were done—and it certainly could be done without difficulty—then I don’t see why it would not be a good thing to have a game this year.

If you think favorably of the idea, will you be willing to write Colonel Ernst about it?

Faithfully yours,  
Theodore Roosevelt

Hon. Russell A. Alger  
Secretary of War

Theodore Roosevelt (1858-1919) was not only an energetic and forceful President, but an accomplished author, historian, journalist, and ardent sportsman. The following letter, written while he was Assistant Secretary of the Navy, advocated resumption of the Army-Navy football contests. There had been contests between the two military academies from 1890 to 1893, but the matches had been discontinued because of disciplinary problems. The modern Army-Navy rivalry, which remains a fixture of the football season, if not quite the premier game it was half a century ago, commenced in 1899. Roosevelt may possibly be considered the father of this hallowed tradition.

What makes the letter particularly interesting is the timeless nature of the potential problems with collegiate athletics which Roosevelt identifies—favoritism shown to athletes, relaxation of academic and behavioral standards for star players, disruption of educational routines, and gambling—the same dangers which continue to threaten big-time athletic programs to this day.
When the papers of Benjamin Franklin Brown were presented to the Clements Library in 1998 by his descendants, Margaret Pringle Emery and Andrew Clayton Pringle, they brought a wealth of detail about the early years of the circus in America. Besides the expected letters and documents from the period 1817 to 1844, there were also "things" acquired during the showman's tours and expeditions to obtain exotic animals. These include a sketch of Benjamin Brown done in Cairo by his companion, George R. Gliddon, during an 1839-40 trip to procure giraffes. The "firman" or decree was issued by Mohammed Ali, Turkish Viceroy of Egypt, and was part of Brown's packet of travel and safe-conduct documents, a necessity in what was then, for Americans, a little-known and dangerous part of the world.

The portrait sketch of Benjamin Brown shows that he wore local dress during his travels in Egypt. He saved a cotton burnoose and a pair of shoes from his 1839-40 visit. Other souvenirs include an ostrich egg found in the Nubian desert and several objects removed from an ancient Egyptian tomb in 1839.
Benjamin Brown took his circus on a tour of the eastern Caribbean in 1830-31. The troupe played Martinique, Barbados, and both British and Dutch Guyana. This playbill, printed in the local Dutch of Paramaribo in October 1830, features an equestrian act by an ape named “Captain Dick” who waved American flags as he rode his Shetland pony.

Phra Paramendr Maha Mongkut (1804-68), also known as Rama IV, was still a prince living as a Buddhist monk when the Hemenways resided in Siam. He assumed the throne upon the death of his half-brother in 1851 and was the King of Mrs. Anna Leonowens’ book. King Mongkut’s portrait photograph from the Hemenway collection is full of objects of European manufacture, reflecting his successful strategy of using education, modernization, and limited Westernization to prevent Siam from becoming another Asian colony of the European powers.
CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Exhibit - The Panama Canal. In December 1999, the United States transferred control of the waterway to Panama. To observe that historic event, our current exhibit draws on the Library’s rich collection to illustrate four centuries of attempts to link the Caribbean with the Pacific. The American construction of the Panama Canal, between 1904 and 1915, has special meaning for the Clements Library. The demand for powerful equipment to excavate the “Big Ditch” provided a lucrative market for the cranes and steam shovels designed and manufactured by William L. Clements. Weekdays, 12:00 noon - 4:45 p.m., December 1 through April 14.

February 9 - Michigan Map Society meeting at the Clements Library, 7:30 p.m. Sumathi Ramaswamy, Associate Professor of History at the University of Michigan, will discuss “Maps and Mother Goddesses: Gender and Nationalism in Cartographic Practices in Modern India.” The Society will meet again on March 8 and in early May. Clements Library Associates are welcome to attend and are invited to join the organization. Call Brian Dunnigan, Curator of Maps, for more information: 734-764-2347.

February 18 - “The Panama Canal and Beyond,” an all-day symposium organized by the Latin American and Caribbean Studies Program of the International Institute and hosted by the Clements Library. Scholars from the University of Michigan and the University of Panama will discuss historical aspects of the Panama Canal. Clements Library Associates and the general public are invited to attend.

March 26 - Noted Theodore Roosevelt impersonator Paul Stillman will be “dropping by” the Library, and, in conjunction with students and friends of Ann Arbor’s musical impresario Joan Morris, will present a late afternoon program of turn-of-the-century political commentary and popular song. A special mailing to Associates and general publicity will provide particulars. Admission by ticket, with limited seating.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

May 6-7 - 22nd Annual Ann Arbor Antiquarian Book Fair. A benefit for the Clements Library, held in the Michigan Union Ballroom. The gala opening reception is scheduled for Saturday, May 6, from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. Admission is $10.00. The fair is open to the public Sunday, May 7, from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Admission, $4.00.

May 20 - “Maumee Ramble.” The Clements Library introduces its first annual field trip for Associates. Director John Dann and historical experts will lead a one-day bus trip along the lower Maumee River. The group will visit historical sites, including the newly verified location of the Battle of Fallen Timbers (1794), the ruins of Fort Miami (1794), and reconstructed Fort Meigs (1813). The day will feature lunch at the historic Columbian House Inn in Waterville, Ohio, and a ride on an early nineteenth-century canal boat. Clements Library Associates will receive further information and registration materials by mail.

Culinary Curator Named

Ian Longone of Ann Arbor, widely recognized expert on the history of food and cooking, has been appointed Curator of American Culinary History. For many years an unofficial advisor to the Director, he will assist in collection development and help the Clements Library become a national center of research and scholarship in the field. A future issue of the Quarto will highlight the Library’s culinary history collections and future plans in this exciting area of expanding academic interest.

Duplicate Auction

One of the Clements Library’s periodic mail auction sales of duplicate and out-of-scope materials, scheduled several years ago but much-delayed by unavoidable circumstances, is now in preparation. Those who sent for the catalog (never issued) will receive it automatically. Others wishing to be added to the mailing list should send a written request for Catalog 2000 by regular mail or FAX to the addresses listed in this publication.