By most standards, the War of 1812 was one of our nation’s minor military conflicts. The Civil War and two world wars of the twentieth century established levels of public involvement and battlefield carnage that make the Indian wars, 1812, the Mexican and Spanish-American Wars, Korea, and Vietnam seemingly pale in comparison. Measured only by casualties, this is true.

But wars, even smaller ones if they last for awhile, can have irreversible political, economic, social, and geopolitical effects on a country unanticipated by the nation’s “old men” who commit its “young men” to battlefield service. Generally entered into to restore order or preserve a status quo that seems threatened, lengthy armed conflicts serve instead to hasten change.

On paper, the War of 1812 was a conflict without permanent results. Militarily, it was essentially a draw. The peace treaty resulted in no territorial gains or losses, no political concession by either side. For Britain, it was a minor and quickly forgotten sideshow to the Napoleonic conflict. In sharp contrast, the War of 1812 profoundly changed the course of United States history in many ways.

The war destroyed the Federalist Party. It put an end to any serious American aspirations of taking Canada. The Indians of the Great Lakes lost any ability they previously had to play off American and British interests. Nothing was left for them but to sell their eastern lands and move westward, clearing the way for rapid settlement of the Midwest by easterners and European immigrants. The regular American army and navy gained a degree of professionalism, tradition, and respect they had lacked before the war. We acquired a new crop of American heroes: Thomas Macdonough, Oliver Hazard Perry, Winfield Scott, William Henry Harrison, Andrew Jackson. Most of all, the country gained a sense of permanence and pride.

William Hull’s surrender of Detroit, the River Raisin Massacre, Perry’s victory at the Battle of Lake Erie, two encounters at Mackinac, and the Battle of the Thames—notable military actions in the course of the conflict—all occurred nearby. The War of 1812 was a crucial event in Michigan history. It makes sense that this minor war has a major place in the collections of the Clements Library. The shelves contain the papers of both officers and average soldiers and sailors. They document the actions, the aspirations, the successes, and the failures of both sides. As with all phases of our history, the collections include a particularly rich visual record of the war.

As excited as we, the staff, can get when the Library acquires “new” source materials, the true measure of our effectiveness is the degree to which they are used. University students and classes and academic historians are obvious visitors. Brian Dunnigan’s piece highlights a less obvious but exceptionally important constituency of users—researchers involved in the preservation, restoration, and interpretation of historical sites. It is a very important way in which we reach the public at large and help to remind the country as a whole of our rich historical heritage.

—John C. Dunn
Director
The War of 1812 was fought primarily around the margins of the United States—in the Western states and territories, along the seacoasts, in the northern borderlands with Canada, and on the shores of the Gulf of Mexico. That is where, today, one finds the surviving historical places and structures relating to the conflict of 1812-1814. Historical sites and markers are particularly thick in Ontario, New York, Ohio, and Michigan, where the northern campaigns were fought. The Chesapeake Bay region, Louisiana, and parts of New England also preserve and commemorate the locations where America was directly touched by the War of 1812.

William L. Clements established his library for the purpose of making primary source materials available to advanced scholars of American history. In the eighty years since that time, the Library’s reader base has broadened dramatically to include scholars in other disciplines, younger faculty, students, amateur historians, and family researchers. Staff of the many cultural agencies that preserve and interpret historic sites form another important segment of the Library’s patrons, and inquiries are regularly received from sites and museums around the United States and Canada. Reproductions of visual material from the Clements collections may be seen in many interpretive centers and site publications.

A relatively small number of historical site museums were in operation when the Clements Library opened its doors in 1923. The era of the Great Depression and the post-World War II period, however, witnessed a manifold increase in interest in the preservation of significant places. Historic forts and structures were restored and opened to the public, and, in some cases, long-vanished buildings were reconstructed for their value as memorials and teaching aids. The historical documentation housed in the Clements soon proved as much a treasure trove for historians of places and material culture as it had been for more traditional academic study. Information preserved in manuscripts, printed materials, maps, and graphics provides critical details for restoration and interpretation. The authentic reconstruction of Michigan’s own Fort Michilimackinac, for example, which began in the late 1950s, would have been difficult, if not impossible, were it not for the documents and maps preserved in the Thomas Gage Papers. Michilimackinac is a historic site of the eighteenth century, but the Clements Library is a resource for those from the War of 1812 as well. Among the most graphic documents in the collection are the wonderfully detailed and colorful watercolors drawn by British military surgeon Edward Walsh during his service in Canada prior to the War of 1812. In the course of his travels, primarily in 1804 and 1805, Walsh recorded the appearance of military posts along what would soon be the front line between the United States and Upper Canada. Walsh made views of Toronto, Fort George, Fort Niagara, Chippawa, Detroit, and Fort St. Joseph. He was particularly familiar with Fort George, having been posted there for several years. The fort that Walsh knew was completely destroyed during the first year of the War of 1812, and, by the twentieth century, only its earthworks remained visible within a Canadian Army training camp. Economic hardships in the 1930s provided the impetus to reconstruct buildings and walls, and, although interrupted by World War II, the impressive complex opened to the public in the early 1950s.

Despite careful research and reconstruction, the buildings of Fort George were left with their crude log walls exposed and subject to deterioration. Repairs were necessary by the 1980s, and Parks Canada researchers turned to Edward Walsh and the Clements Library. Walsh clearly showed the log walls covered with painted siding, and this information provided both a maintenance solution and an opportunity to improve the authenticity of the reconstruction. Fort George now sports neatly painted structures and details such as picket fences and ornamental trees, reflecting a desire by British officers for Georgian amenities, even on the isolated Great Lakes frontier.

Two important sites of the war in the West are to be found in northern Lake Huron. Fort St. Joseph was the pre-war British post on the St. Mary’s River. From there, a British and Native-American force descended on the unwary American garrison of Fort Mackinac in July 1812. Operated today by Parks Canada, Fort St. Joseph has been preserved as a ruin and archaeological site. The interpretation of its stark stone foundations has been made far more effective by the use of Edward Walsh’s view of the post—the only such image known to exist from the time before the little fort was burned by U.S. troops in 1814. Fort Mackinac has also benefited from the resources of the Clements Library. The Graphics Division holds a rare colored, copperplate engraving published in Montréal in 1813 to celebrate the capture of the post. Richard Dillon Jr.’s image is a realistic view of

"The Esplanade, Fort George. Upper Canada," painted by Edward Walsh (1756-1832) in June 1805, is one of very few contemporary images showing interior details of a fort. Walsh offers a wealth of information, from the color of buildings to the bears and other wild pets kept by the men of the garrison.
the fort, town, and harbor as they appeared in 1812. The Map Division has a precise topographical map of Mackinac Island by Lieutenant William S. Evelth, which provides many further details of fortifications, roads, and buildings as they were at the end of the war. Of particular importance is its rendering of the site of the battle fought on August 4, 1814, when an American attempt to recapture the island was repulsed. The battle site is little changed from 1814, and the Evelth map provided the base data for an archaeological survey conducted there by Dr. Michael Pratt in the spring of 2002. A letter in the Library's Michigan Collection recorded information on the burial of the American dead, an important detail for the archaeologists. Pratt's investigation has confirmed much of the information in the historical maps and documents.

The War of 1812 is probably best remembered as a naval conflict. The U.S. Navy engaged in salt-water action as far afield as the Pacific, but by 1813-1814 its greatest effort was to be found on fresh water. Both combatants built and sailed powerful squadrons on Lakes Ontario, Erie, and Huron. Many of the sites of this activity have been preserved and interpreted. The Library's documentation is particularly strong here, in its naval collections such as the Oliver Hazard Perry Papers and the letterbooks of Isaac Chauncey. These document the naval war on Lake Ontario and the dramatic American victory on Lake Erie on September 10, 1813. Maps in the collection show the naval and military bases at Sacketts Harbor, New York, where Chauncey built his warships and which served as a military base as well. The army's activity at the post is reflected in manuscript collections such as the Bloomfield-Pike Letter Book. American bases on Lake Erie are represented as well, with delightfully naïve maps of Black Rock, New York (now part of Buffalo) and Erie, Pennsylvania, drawn by a militiaman and accompanied by his descriptive letter.

Nor is the naval war on Lake Champlain forgotten. The Graphics Division has the dramatic Henry S. Tanner view of Thomas Macdonough's September 11, 1813 victory over a British squadron that turned back an invasion of northern New York. A museum commemorating the action is currently under development in Plattsburgh. The victorious American vessels and their prizes were laid up that winter near Whitehall, New York, where a British spy drew maps of them at their moorings in the hope that they might be burned in a wintertime raid. The attack never took place, but the sketches and reports survive in the Brisbane Papers at the Clements. The hulls of some of these vessels, notably the brig Eagle, were eventually abandoned and sunk, leaving the remains to be studied by underwater archaeologists.

The hardest land fighting of the war took place in 1814 along the Niagara Frontier. The sites of the battles at Chippawa and Fort Erie are preserved today by the Province of Ontario's Niagara Parks Commission, while a fragment of Lundy's Lane remains as a local museum and cemetery. The clashes at Chippawa, Lundy's Lane, and Fort Erie are documented in the Jacob Brown Papers, the Thomas Jesup Papers, and the War of 1812 Collection. Nearby, across the river from Fort George, is Fort Niagara, a New York State Historic Site. Its War of 1812 history is represented in the War of 1812 Collection, the Christopher Van Deventer Papers, and among the Edward Walsh watercolors.

The last six months of the war saw fighting spread to Chesapeake Bay and the Gulf of Mexico. Baltimore's Fort McHenry is the best known site relating to this coastal warfare. It has long been a property of the National Park Service. The Pulteney Malcolm Papers and other British naval collections provide information for this and other sites of the amphibious campaign that threatened the American coasts and led to the burning of Washington, and, eventually, Andrew Jackson's famous victory at New Orleans.

Many of the Library's collections provide further details about the material culture and operations of the armies and navies of 1812-14, details that are always of use to historic site researchers. The Clements Library holds many resources to support what is often called "public history," and, through the medium of historic site museums, publications, and films, its collections reach a much broader audience.

— Brian Leigh Dunnigan Curator of Maps and Head of Research & Publications

Michilimackinac, on Lake Huron, drawn by Richard Dillon, Jr., and published in Montréal in 1813 by Richard Dillon. The loss of this post on July 17, 1812 was the first setback in a year of disasters suffered by American arms in the Old Northwest.
Because the poetry of the War of 1812 is so pervasive, appearing in books, newspapers, magazines, broadsides, prints, and manuscripts, it presents a broad range of both positive and negative attitudes towards the conflict. These verses also provide an interesting perspective of local, regional, and national perceptions and reflect changes in both literary styles and political realities. The Clements Library collections contain a wide sampling of such materials, which offer both a scholarly and an entertaining approach to the muse.

Foremost among the Library's holdings is a copy of the first issue of "The Star-Spangled Banner," in music form, printed and sold by Thomas Carr of Baltimore in 1814. First published earlier in the year in newspapers as "The Defence of Fort M'Henry," Francis Scott Key's poem was to become the monument tribute to our "Second War for Independence" and, eventually, our national anthem. A personal interest in the strength of this poem led to a broader undertaking to account for and study the poetry of the period of the war.

After perusing some of the War of 1812 verse in the Library's book, broadside, manuscript, and print collections, and with the encouragement of director John Dunn, a systematic study of newspaper poetry commenced. The Clements Library has the only known copy of The Farmer's Watch-Tower; published in Urbana, Ohio, between 1812 and 1814, so it made an ideal starting point. After reading the Library's extensive newspaper holdings, the pursuit continued in other collections. Besides identifying the number of times a particular poem appeared and tracking the piece through various printings, it was important to collect further information, such as the writer and place of composition, tunes associated with the verses, and performers who either recited or sang them.

Most newspapers published poetry, many in regular columns. Although the poems expressed patriotic sentiment and feelings about impressment, war, and peace, they became increasingly specific to places or events as the conflict wore on. Because the government permitted a free exchange of newspapers, poetry as well as the news found larger audiences than local populations. Indeed, it is not uncommon to find a poem appearing in a dozen to three dozen different papers, although most had more limited circulation. In this process, the widely popular work of Robert Burns, Lord Byron, and other European authors, although emulated, was soon overshadowed by the new voices and sentiments of average Americans, some schooled in the art of verse and others simply enthusiastic amateurs. It is these works that present an interesting mirror of national attitudes of a country at war.
Patriotic sentiment and the encouragement of the tenacity of American land and naval forces facing formidable opponents are reflected in many of the newspaper poems. The same themes appeared in works published in a wide range of printed national song books and collections of martial and naval poems, odes, songs, and other metrical effusions during and after the war. Individual works often appeared in broadside form as well.

A large number of Americans, who, while opposed to the impressment of seamen and the various embargoes, were also against the Non-Intercourse Act and the very idea of war itself. The political and ideological struggle between Federalists and the incumbent Republicans is widely reflected in broadside and newspaper poetry, representing what was then truly, a “political press,” with each side represented by specific publishers. Broadsides were printed on short notice, and provided a popular and often ornamental mode of spreading party opinions and lauding recent events. The news of the American victory on Lake Erie was probably the most popular subject of its time, followed by a continuous broadside of praise for other naval heroes, both officers and enlisted men, as the United States Navy enjoyed a string of exciting successes.

As the subject matter of published periodical poetry expanded from strictly moral admonitions and pastoral odes towards broader frontiers, the popularity of doggerel verse was overtaken by that of original odes, epigrams, acrostics, poems in dialect, and other more sophisticated forms. Among the most interesting of these are the “Carrier’s New Year’s Addresses.” Usually comprising a full page, they appeared in newspapers and were also distributed by their printers and newsboys as broadsides. The sale of these addresses earned the carriers a few small coins or some other reward for distributing the paper, regardless of the weather, throughout the year. These poems provide a chronological perspective of the past year’s tribulations and victories, as well as descriptions of locales and means of getting the news to its customers.

The study has resulted in an organized compilation of 1,600 poems. The poems themselves often contain prefaces, footnotes, and endnotes providing anecdotal material about the circumstances that inspired the work, the reasons for passing it along, and the locations of testimonial dinners, theatrical productions, days of national prayer and thanksgiving, and political rallies where each was introduced or performed. All of this information is intended for publication as an anthology and “Checklist of the Newspaper and Periodical Poetry of the War of 1812.”

In this work, one will be able to follow the publishing history of poems from “O say, can you see,” through “No more of your blathering nonsense,” both widely popular in their day.

— John C. Harriman
Assistant Editor
ADMIRAL SIR PULTENEY MALCOLM

British Admiral Sir Pulteney Malcolm (1768-1838) is remembered today, if at all, for his meetings and friendship with the exiled Napoleon. Malcolm was briefly (1816-1817) in command of the Cape of Good Hope squadron that guarded the defeated emperor on St. Helena Island. But much of his earlier career had been spent in American waters.

Malcolm was typical of many of the individuals who rose to the top levels of command in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. From a family of numerous military and naval officers, he entered the service as a midshipman before the age of ten under the watchful eye of his uncle, Sir Thomas Paseley. He would enjoy a career of more than half a century in the West Indies, the Pacific, and the Mediterranean. As a captain in the Napoleonic Wars, he served under Nelson at Toulon and saw considerable action, capturing a number of enemy ships.

When the United States declared war on Great Britain in 1812, the British military and naval establishment showed little enthusiasm for the contest, but they were confident that they could win and understood that overwhelming naval superiority was their greatest single advantage. Not only could they mount a very effective blockade of the American coasts from Maine to the Gulf of Mexico, but they were able to deliver and re-embark raiding parties for quick, destructive land attacks that were unpredictable and difficult for the Americans to defend against.

Malcolm was assigned, in 1813, as third in command (behind Admirals Sir Alexander Cochrane and Sir George Cockburn) of the fleet sent to North America in 1813. He was placed in charge of troop transports. Malcolm left Portsmouth on June 2, 1813. Arriving in the Potomac on August 17, he was immediately given command of the fleet that was sent up the Patuxent River with the land forces, Marines, and naval volunteers assigned to attack Washington. The Capitol, Navy Yard, and White House were burned in what certainly ranks as the most humiliating (and largely conveniently forgotten) defeat in American military history. Malcolm later participated in the abortive attack on Fort McHenry and Baltimore that inspired our national anthem, and he was responsible for re-embarking the remnants of the British

Pulteney Malcolm enlivened his logbook with maps, sketches, and watercolors. This scene shows the landing of British troops along a bayou near New Orleans on December 23, 1814. Malcolm noted that the “place on which the Troops landed was a Plain covered with strong reeds or canes from 8 to 10 feet high.” The army pushed on toward the city and defeat by Andrew Jackson’s motley army on January 8-9, 1815.
army defeated at New Orleans in 1815.

The Clements Library acquired the personal letters of Admiral Malcolm, written to his wife throughout his War of 1812 service in America, at auction in London in 1962. In 1964, at a New York sale, the Library added his personal logbook for the same period of service. By providing the funds needed to reunite primary sources of this sort, your contributions to the Clements Library Associates literally, then and often since, have saved essential documentation of decisive moments in our nation’s history.

Had none of these personal records survived, historians would still have the basic documentation of the events in which Malcolm participated. At the Public Record Office at Kew and the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich, official logbooks and correspondence exist documenting the daily actions of every ship in the fleet throughout the campaign. But private records of this sort, that rarely survive if they were even created in the first place, provide an invaluable element to understanding historical events. They personalize history.

Malcolm embarked upon his American tour with attitudes quite typical of upper class British officers. He confided to his wife, shortly before sailing, that “if possible I shall hate the Americans more than ever. They are a despicable crew, but reptiles are the most annoying of animals!” Familiarity softened his attitudes so significantly that, after serving some weeks in the Chesapeake, he confided to his wife that he hoped for a short war because, he believed, the longer it went on the more formidable an enemy the Americans would become. As the campaign continued, he increasingly noted and documented weaknesses in the British effort. He very much liked Admiral Cochrane but questioned his abilities. He described Admiral Cockburn as a “despotic officer”—the sort of ambitious, egotistical leader who would always be in the thick of the action—but he did not like him. He was highly critical of the judgment of General Sir Edward Pakenham, who was defeated by Jackson at New Orleans.

But, more interesting than its specific comments and accounts of incidents, Malcolm’s correspondence documents the attitudes of a naval officer that help to explain why the Royal Navy truly ruled the seas of the world for several centuries. It also, perhaps, helps to explain why the British did not pursue the War of 1812 with the emotional commitment needed to win. He was a professional, and service, even deadly combat, was simply his job. You win some; you lose some. You don’t let your attitudes affect your actions. The defeats at Baltimore and New Orleans were the results of poor command decisions, “but everything will be forgot in the bustle Bonaparte has created,” Malcolm noted. The American theatre was a minor action Britain hadn’t wanted to get into in the first place, and there were clearly no serious naval objectives favoring a decisive victory. The record preserved in this collection provides a healthy balance to the politicized and patriotic commentary on the war found in official sources and American propaganda.

Drawing (to make coastal profiles) and chart making were among the skills required of a naval officer in the eighteenth century, and Malcolm was an accomplished penman and watercolorist. A number of hand-drawn charts and sketches make his personal logbook an exceptionally important document. These include marvelous, detailed colored charts of the Chesapeake and the Patuxent, a beautiful map of the defenses of Baltimore, and several coastal views showing landing craft and other details. The illustrations accompanying this piece provide a hint of Admiral Malcolm’s artistic skills. The next time you visit the Library, ask to see the logbook. It is one of our treasured possessions and worth a trip by itself.

— John C. Dann
Director

Baltimore was an important goal of British naval and military forces in the Chesapeake. Malcolm documented the formidable defenses thrown up by the city's civilian and military defenders in 1814.
HIS MAJESTY'S SHIP JAVA IS NO MORE

"It is with deep regret that I write you for the information of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that His Majesty's Ship Java is no more..."
— Lieutenant Henry D. Chads, Royal Navy, to Secretary of the Admiralty John W. Croker, from USS Constitution, December 31, 1812.

The Royal Navy frigate Java was gone, completely destroyed by the American Constitution in one of a series of surprising naval encounters during the War of 1812. As news of these events was carried home and across the new nation, there grew a hungry audience for pictures to go with the stories, verses, and songs about these stunning American naval victories.

The Graphics Division of the Clements Library is rich with images illustrating events of the War of 1812, including over 30 contemporary prints, oil paintings, watercolors, and drawings of naval battles. Many additional woodcuts and engravings may be found in illustrated books. In this collection are premium examples of the extremely popular maritime prints that quickly became icons of American history. These are also great examples of graphic processes at a time of transition from etching and engraving to lithography.

Publishers in the early nineteenth century intended to create prints that would be popular and profitable. Key selling points were artistic quality and a legitimate claim to accurate reporting of events. Although these images were second- or third-hand translations by the time they were committed to a printing plate, a sincere attempt was made to achieve a level of journalistic truth—distilled with an artist’s dramatic flair and a measured dose of partisan opinion. When circulated, these prints played an important role in swinging American popular opinion in favor of the war and of funding a growing navy. The story of the American frigates became legend as it was articulated by newspaper accounts, poems, songs, and in these popular prints.

The Royal Navy, preoccupied with the desperate Napoleonic Wars, was spread thin and running short of resources in 1812, but it could still organize an overwhelming force compared to the minuscule United States Navy. The huge British advantage in numbers led to the obvious American strategy of avoiding fleet actions on the oceans and harassing the Royal Navy through one-on-one encounters between equivalent forces that would, it was hoped, prove the superiority of individual ships and commanders. The frigates of the American navy were perfect for this strategy.

The penultimate stage of sailing man-o’-war design was achieved with the ordering of six new frigates for the fledgling U.S. Navy in 1794. Large, fast, and heavily gunned, these vessels were conceived to outrun anything they couldn’t outgun. Of this group of six, the three 44-gun frigates United States, President, and Constitution were particularly tough combatants. These ships achieved stunning victories against British frigates from 1812 to 1815, the significance of which is indicated by British Admiralty instructions ordering frigates not to engage the 44-gun Americans with less than two Britons of similar force.

The majority of contemporary images of the War of 1812 are of sea battles. Although the land actions were also of significance, the encounters between the new American and the
veteran British men-o'-war were sensational and dramatic stories that served as perfect subject matter for the popular maritime artists of the day. Two who stand out in this genre are Nicholas Pocock and John Christian Schetky. Pocock was a talented amateur; Schetky was Professor of Drawing at the Royal Naval College in Portsmouth. Both rose to the top in the realm of marine art and are considered among the best of their time. The Clements Library has outstanding examples of both men’s work.

Nicholas Pocock (1740-1821) was born in the busy English seaport of Bristol and became a young apprentice on the merchant ships of Richard Champion. By 1766 he was captain of Champion’s Lloyd on route to Charleston, South Carolina. Daily entries from his surviving logbooks contain remarkable India ink illustrations of his ship enduring the prevailing weather conditions.

Pocock retired from Champion’s service about 1776 and took up painting as a serious vocation (a risky career move in any era!). Under the tutelage of Sir Joshua Reynolds, he was accepted to the Royal Academy in 1782. Pocock’s specialty was Bristol harbor and West Indies views, portraits of ships, and, of course, sea battles. Moving to London in 1789 and co-founding the Society of Painters in Watercolour in 1804, he strengthened his reputation as an artist and gained numerous commissions from the Admiralty, a body that appreciated his accurate recording of maritime details.

Pocock’s art is represented at the Clements in four prints and two oil paintings, all of the well-known series showing the action between Constitution and Java. The prints and the paintings are a close match in composition, color, and subject. It is not clear which Pocock created first, but the popular demand for news leads one to the belief that the prints were hurried into production first and the paintings came later. For original art of an 1812 naval action, it doesn’t get any better than this. The two paintings were gifts from Eli Lilly in 1966.

The loss of Java was an embarrassment for the Royal Navy. What would motivate an English publisher and artist to produce a print series showing off this disaster? As we have ourselves discovered in the post-September 11th world, facing the images of tragedy is a component of mourning, and recognizing loss is a part of the process of national bonding. The notes on the Pocock print include some facts of significance to British pride: namely that Java carried fewer guns and men. The British considered it unsporting to classify Constitution and her sister ships as frigates when they clearly overpowered British ships of that class. These images of loss would be poignant memorials for contemporary families of sailors. The very same views, exported to America, would be centerpieces of celebration.

John Christian Schetky (1778-1874) was born in Edinburgh and longed for the sea. Forbidden by his parents to join the navy, his consolation was an exceptional talent for drawing ships. Schetky studied under Alexander Nasmyth, father of the Scottish school of landscape painting, and styled his work after the great Dutch marine artist, Willem Van de Velde. After studying in Paris and Rome, he settled at Oxford and exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1805. By 1811 Schetky was Professor of Drawing at the Royal Naval College at Portsmouth. He was then appointed Marine Painter in Ordinary to King George IV, and, subsequently, to Queen Victoria. His boyhood interest had car-
ried him to the top rank of British maritime artists.

Schatky developed a great feeling for atmosphere, a majestic sense of composition, and the ability to portray great pictorial depth. The illusion of tangible depth and space expands the vividness of the scene. In his depiction of the battle between Chesapeake and Shannon, the accuracy in the drawing of the foreshortened hull and gun ports of the foreground vessel and the effect of looming forward, out from the mass of smoke, are artistic devices that create depth and dramatic staging. The production of the lithostone for this print series was in the hands of the very talented young Belgian lithographer, Louis Haghe (1806-1885). A superb watercolor painter himself, Haghe began working in England about 1823 and was soon producing lithographs of the very highest quality. The smoke effect, handled with a soft blending of tones, demonstrates Haghe's experience and skill. When compared to a typical American print of the same genre, differences in artistic quality become very evident.

By contrast to the Schatky/Haghe artistry, Samuel Seymour's print depicting the action between Constitution and Guerriere appears flat. Although there is a primitive charm that is typical of American prints prior to lithography, compare Seymour's drawing of the foreshortened hull, the flat rendering of the sails, and the crude handling of the smoke to Schatky's. Quality issues like these helped maintain the strong American market for English and European prints and ensured that London would remain a dominant publishing center. Comparisons to the soft effects in the Schatky/Haghe example also demonstrate why the new process of lithography quickly became favored among nineteenth-century artists of atmospheric views.

History textbooks from the time after the War of 1812 to the present have used these prints for illustrations of the significant naval actions of the War of 1812. They continue to be great historic references and exciting graphic images, and they have become very familiar to anyone who grew up with a fascination for maritime history and the sea.

— Clayton Lewis
Curator of Graphic Materials
The manuscript collections of the Clements Library are filled with letters that bear witness to the great moments of American history. Many of these—the correspondence of important political, military, or naval figures—view events from the broader though often more distant perspective of leadership or command. Among the great strengths of the Library’s collections are the letters written by those farther down the chain of responsibility. These people had a far more limited perspective, often shrouded by the smoke, confusion, and carnage of battle, but they were also closer to the actual event. Reports by junior officers, found in the Gage, Clinton, and similar papers, and the wonderful soldiers’ letters in the Schoff Revolutionary War and Schoff Civil War collections provide first-hand accounts of events as they occurred.

Among the numerous personal letters found in the War of 1812 Collection are a pair written by two young officers—one British and one American—during the summer of 1814. They are evocative for many reasons, not the least of which is that they were written on virtually the same spot, four days apart. One was composed two days before the bloodiest land battle of the war and the other two days after. Both give the flavor of an early nineteenth-century campaign and express the importance and difficulty of communicating with friends and relatives. The personal nature of the correspondence also permitted a more graphic and frank description of nineteenth-century warfare than might appear in a more formal report to a military superior.

The letters revolve around the Battle of Lundy’s Lane, fought July 25, 1814 on the Ontario side of the Niagara River, within earshot of the falls. The encounter was the central event of a summer’s campaign in which General Jacob Brown invaded Canada from Buffalo with a small but well-trained army—known as the Left Division. Opposing him were British generals Phineas Riall and, later, Gordon Drummond. Brown clashed with Riall at the Battle of Chippawa on July 5, driving the British from the field and advancing to threaten Forts George and Niagara at the mouth of the Niagara River. There the U.S. general hoped to be joined by Isaac Chauncey’s Lake Ontario squadron with the heavy artillery needed to besiege the British-held forts. But Chauncey failed to appear, and Brown withdrew to Queenston Heights with its splendid prospect of the river and Lake Ontario. From there he continued upriver and turned to fight Drummond’s army on July 25. The confused, close-quarters battle fought at Lundy’s Lane continued well into the hours of darkness, with no clear victor. Casualties were enormous for two small armies—nearly 1,700 killed, wounded, and missing. In the aftermath of the battle the U.S. force dug in at Fort Erie, opposite Buffalo, where they endured a bloody late summer siege before finally withdrawing from Canada in November.

The earlier of the two letters was written from the American camp at Queenston Heights on July 23 by Loring Austin (d. 1827). The young officer had recently been promoted captain in the infantry but was serving on the headquarters staff of General Brown as one of his two aides-de-camp. Austin, a native of Boston, was obviously well educated and possessed some artistic talent as well. He found the vista from Queenston Heights “the most delightful that you can possibly conceive,” and illustrated the head of his letter to Jonathan L. Austin, probably his father, with a watercolor view to prove his point. Austin was also a practical cartographer, and one of the maps he prepared for General Brown is in the Clements Library Map Division.

Loring Austin was clearly in high spirits. His army had had it much its own way since crossing to Canada on July 3. Austin detailed the movements of the troops and expressed a strong desire to bring the British force “to a general action,” which he believed the enemy was avoiding. He described British fire from the forts, including Congreve rockets—devices that we still sing about in our national anthem. Unconcerned, he noted that “we did not deign to answer a single shot of our Artillery.” But he seemed happiest with the state of the Left Division, a far more professional force than that which had endured such fiascoes in 1812 and 1813. The troops were fit and ready to fight. “Our marches here to and fro’ keep the men & the officers also in good health,” he wrote. “I was never better, constant riding &
Exercise keeps me always well."

Austin’s letter closes with a sense of haste within an army that had just sent off its heavy baggage so as to become more mobile. He had only moments to complete his note. "The Express is now in my tent waiting for me to close this letter which only leaves me time to send you my affectionate regards," he wrote. The courier was then off to Buffalo, and Austin’s letter began its long route through Boston to the Clements Library.

Four days later, another officer sat very near the site of the battle. Le Couteur then described the battle in detail—at least that part of it he could see. His account gives a graphic sense of the poor visibility and terrible confusion—British troops firing on their own comrades in the darkness and some, like Captain Loring, accidentally walking into the American lines. Even General Riall was taken prisoner in this way. Le Couteur’s wonderfully detailed diary of the war has been recently published under the title *Merry Hearts Make Light Days*, and many of its entries express his regret for having to fight against English-speaking American cousins.

At Lundy’s Lane much of the confusion resulted “from speaking the same language, once separated, we could not distinguish friend from foe.” He credits the “Yankees” with “behaving nobly” and then states that, late in the battle, his men “poured in a terrible fire on them for an hour, when they began to give way, and finally ran.”

There was little running, for the participants were exhausted. Jacob Brown’s army did indeed withdraw from the hotly contested field, and it was the British troops who remained in the dark among the dead and wounded.

“I assure you, I never passed so awful a night as that of the action,” Le Couteur wrote after listening to “the Groans of the dying and wounded.” He had already endured “36 hours marching, fighting and fasting,” but he was unable to sleep. “I was cold and wretched, what must not have been the misery of those Unfortunates who remained on the field.” His account of the battle ends with the poignant observation, “A soldier’s life is very horrid sometimes.”

Loring Austin had also seen the face of this battle. Late in the fighting, as the wounded Brown’s only surviving aide, he was sent with orders for General Eleazar Ripley to collect his wounded and retire, but to turn and fight if pressed by the British. Austin, too, was a victim of the dark, chaotic battlefield. Unable to find Ripley, he passed Brown’s message to one of Ripley’s staff officers for delivery. Unfortunately, Austin’s own account of the fighting is not available to us.

John Le Couteur and Loring Austin, two intelligent and articulate young men, both survived Lundy’s Lane and the four months of hard campaigning that followed. Their letters, before and after the battle, remain for us to read as documents of the War of 1812 and as records of the impressions the fighting made upon both of them.

— Brian Leigh Dunnigan Curator of Maps and Head of Research & Publications

This representation of Lundy’s Lane, often called the “Battle of Niagara,” appeared in The Portfolio of September 1815. It is a rare contemporary image of a land battle of the War of 1812 and presents a reasonably accurate picture of the close-range fighting and the capture and recapture of the British cannon.
A PHILADELPHIA TEA PARTY

The war fought with Great Britain in 1812-1814 generated its share of controversy, disunity, and hardship within the United States. The young country embarked on its first significant national conflict riddled with deep political and sectional divisions based on differing interests, many of them economic. One reputed cause for the declaration of war was British interference with maritime trade, but seafaring New England harbored much anti-war sentiment. Bellicose Westerners held strong anti-British attitudes because of Canadian support for Native American groups that blocked American expansion in the Old Northwest. There was hearty support among some for adding British Canada to the Union, a missed opportunity of the American Revolution. And yet farmers in northern New York and Vermont spent the war enthusiastically selling livestock and supplies to feed British troops in Canada. Privateers from the middle Atlantic ports found lucrative employment preying on British commerce, but, as the war progressed the Royal Navy’s blockade of the coast created shortages and hardships for merchants and consumers alike.

The Clements Library’s War of 1812 Collection contains a rich miscellany of documentation relating to many aspects of the conflict, from military records, orders, and letters to documents revealing attitudes on the home front. One recently acquired letter provides a snapshot of wartime concerns in Philadelphia and reveals some of the economic and political turmoil in one populous American city.

Philadelphia was far-removed from the fighting that raged along the Canadian border during the summer and fall of 1813, but the bustling commercial port was vulnerable to a British blockade. By December, British naval activity was having an increasing effect on the city, its merchants, and consumers. When William Groves addressed a letter to his country cousin, William Garner, late in December, his news touched only briefly on family affairs before shifting to the skyrocketing prices of tea, coffee, and sugar. Although Groves did not state the cost of tea, coffee had climbed to 40 cents per pound and brown sugar to 32—and these were the prices obtainable at auction. Groves, who apparently supported the war, had his own theories for this. He maintained that the price must soon come down because “there is Tea Coffee & Sugar enough to serve [sic] the U.S. for 7 years.” He attributed the current high costs to “A company of speculators [who wished to] set the People Agane the war” but further maintained that their action had actually
encouraged pro-war partisans.

Some in Philadelphia were willing to protest. On the night of December 20, Groves reported, more than 500 people gathered at a public meeting held in the North Liberties section of town. The precedents and traditions of the American Revolution were on the minds of the aggrieved participants. First, they agreed to a boycott and to do without sugar, tea, and coffee until sugar was available for 20 cents and coffee for 25. Then, according to Groves, “Before we Adjourned one moved that the Tea be thrown over Board with was carried Unanimously.”

A Philadelphia Tea Party?

Unfortunately the newspapers are silent about any further action. Poulsen’s American Daily Advertiser reports a meeting at the Cock and Lion, located at 2nd and Coates Streets in the North Liberties. Daniel Groves (a relative of William?) was called upon to chair the meeting, while Thomas Lippincott was elected secretary. The paper does not mention any threat to dump tea, and the assembly resolved to meet again in a week to consider the enormous price of the three commodities. Similar complaints and threats of a new “Tea Party” were also reported from Boston, with price gouging there also blamed on anti-war merchants.

The Philadelphia meeting thus seems to have been only a protest that recalled a famous prelude to the American Revolution. But the letter written by William Groves illustrates one of the many domestic costs of the War of 1812.

— Brian Leigh Dunnigan
Curator of Maps and Head of Research & Publications

THE

STAR SPANGLED BANNER

A PATRIOTIC SONG.

Baltimore, Printed and Sold at CARRS Music Store 36 Baltimore Street.

AIR, Amen! in Heaven.

Con Spirito

O say can you see by the dawn’s early light, What so

proudly we hail’d at the twilight’s last gleaming, Whose broad stripes and bright stars thro’

perilous fight, O’er the ramparts we watched were so gallantly streaming, And the

Rockets’ red glare, the Bombs bursting in air, Gave proof through the night that our

(Adapted & Arranged by T.C.)

The Star-Spangled Banner” is undoubtedly the best known verse of the War of 1812. This is a copy of the first edition, in music form, identifiable by the absence of a “t” in the word “patriotic.”
ANNOUNCEMENTS

BETTY VAN DEN BOSCH
In September the Library lost a good friend and a remarkable person. Elizabeth van den Bosch—Betty to her many friends—was a member of the Clements Library Associates Board, chair of the 75th Anniversary Celebration banquet, and a dedicated volunteer and docent. All who had the good fortune to become her friend and colleague will remember those humane qualities that touched their lives—her capacity for kindness and generosity, her liberal, inquiring mind, her tough integrity, her wisdom without a trace of pretension, and her sense of humor.

Betty brought a wealth of experience in the University community to her work at the Clements. Joining the UM Alumni Association in 1967, she was Director of Alumnae Activities until her retirement in 1985.

Born in Columbus, Ohio, in 1921, Elizabeth Bonney graduated from Ohio State University in 1943. She joined the Navy and served with the W.A.V.E.S. Betty specialized in code communications and retired as a lieutenant. Stationed in Washington, D.C., during World War II, she met Lieutenant Govert van den Bosch, Royal Netherlands Marines, whom she married in 1946. Betty’s experience as a W.A.V.E. is recorded in a collection of documents she presented to the Clements Manuscript Division.

—Arlene Shy
Emeritus Head of Reader Services

WAR OF 1812
LETTERBOOKS
Even as this issue of the Quarto was being edited, the War of 1812 collections of the Clements Library were unexpectedly enriched by a gift to the Manuscripts Division. Over the past several years, Frank and Theresa Parkins of Marietta, Georgia, have generously donated the papers of James Thomas (1780-1842). Thomas served as an army quartermaster during the War of 1812, but most of his surviving papers focus on later business and legal affairs. Only a thick packet of receipts attests to his military duties at Buffalo, New York, during the winter of 1813.

The Thomas Papers had passed down through the Parkins family, and a few pieces had been overlooked. Mr. Parkins recently discovered two letter books and a memorandum book kept by James Thomas in the course of his duties at Buffalo and on the Lake Champlain frontier from July through December of 1813. They include his retained correspondence, full of detail about keeping U.S. forces fed and equipped in northern New York. These documents have now been reunited with the rest of the Thomas Papers. The Clements Library has been most fortunate in attracting such high-quality gifts that improve its documentation of America’s past.

PRICE VISITING RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS
Applications are once again being accepted for Jacob M. Price Visiting Research Fellowships. The deadline for applications is January 15, 2003 for support that will be granted during that calendar year. Further information on the Price Fellowship application process is available by contacting the Price Fellowship Coordinator at the Library (734-764-2347) or by e-mail at briand@umich.edu.

The amount of Price Fellowship support has been substantially increased for 2003. The former award of $500 per fellow has been doubled to $1,000 to address the increasing costs of travel and lodging in Ann Arbor. Notification of 2003 awards will be made by March 15.

The War of 1812 was also a major Indian conflict. Most Native-American groups allied themselves with the British. Their most famous leader was Tecumseh, whose death on October 5, 1813 was the subject this engraving by Abel Bowen (1790-1850).
CALENDAR OF EVENTS

September 30 — February 21:
Exhibit, Benjamin F. Brown and the Circus in America, Weekdays, 1:00 – 4:45 p.m.

October 1: Clements Library Associates Board of Directors Meeting.

October 1 — January 15, 2003:
Applications accepted for 2003 Price Visiting Research Fellowships. Awards will be announced by March 15, 2003.

November 8: “Richard Potter’s 19th-Century Magic.” Robert Olson brings to life early American Magician Richard Potter and his bag of contemporary tricks. Special performance for Clements Library Associates at the Library, 7:30 p.m.


December 6: “Mr. Charles Dickens Reads A Christmas Carol.” Bert Hornback keeps an Ann Arbor holiday tradition alive. Clements Library, 8:00 p.m. A foursome from the UM School of Music will lead the audience in a sing-along of period carols.


April 24 — 25 — 26: The Police Gazette. An original musical program directed by Joan Morris and performed each of the three nights.

June 8 — September 26: Exhibit, Creatures Great and Small: Americans’ Love Affair with Animals.

Clements Library Associate share an interest in American history and a desire to ensure the continued growth of the Library’s collections. Funds received from Associate memberships are used exclusively to purchase historical materials. Annual Membership Contributions: Student $15-34; Donor $35-99; Associate $50-99; Patron $100-249; Fellow $250-499; Benefactor $500 and above. Contributions are tax deductible in accordance with current Federal and State Law and may be made by check or credit card.

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