The Commodore Reappears

Until seven years ago, American scholars concluded that the papers of Oliver Hazard Perry had been lost or destroyed in the century and a half since the naval hero's death in 1819. One of the major contributions of the Clements Library to historical scholarship in the past decade has been the filling of this apparent void with the acquisition of the Perry Papers. Our collection, the only Oliver Hazard Perry letters to be found in a unified body in any institution, now numbers 912 letters and documents as well as four manuscript diaries, a letter book containing 78 letters, an order book, and account books.

It was an exciting fall in 1966 when several months of negotiation brought us the first known collection of manuscripts. Perry's career spanned the turbulent era of undeclared naval warfare with France in the Caribbean, 1797-98, Tripoli in 1804-05, the War of 1812, the Mediterranean after the War, and a diplomatic mission to Venezuela in 1819. Because the entire Perry family figures so prominently in early American naval history, this collection of 482 letters proved to be a research gold mine. Later, the same owner sent the diary of Perry's last cruise.

To our considerable surprise but unbounded elation, we learned in June of this year that another descendant, possessor of 430 additional letters dated between 1812 and 1819, was willing to part with his collection through a dealer. With the simultaneous successful conclusion of the 50th anniversary fund raising campaign, the timing of this intelligence could not have been better. Exhibiting their characteristic enthusiasm, the Board of Governors unhesitatingly made the purchase with funds of the Clements Library Associates.

Our excitement was therefore predictable when one more small lot of Perry papers, rich in War of 1812 material, surfaced in July at a price sufficiently modest to be purchased from our general funds! The latest accession includes 67 loose letters and document, an order book and a letter book covering the crucial summer and fall campaign on Lake Erie in 1813, and a personal account book exhibiting Perry's finances from July, 1815 to November, 1818. The purchases add immeasurably to the collection's value as a source for historical research.

It is probably safe to say that the Perry collection is now complete. It is exactly this sort of purchase which so fully justifies the existence of our institution. Through a combination of detective work, loyal financial support, close dealer contacts and patience, we were able to reassemble an historically vital body of manuscripts that was unknown and divided among heirs. The Oliver Hazard Perry papers, in quantity much as Perry must have left them at his death, protected, shelved, and catalogued in accord with the highest archival standards, are available for future generations of historical scholars.

Botany in America

One of the prime items in the summer's exhibition, "Botany in America," was the newly acquired set of American Medical Botany by Jacob Bigelow, botanist and professor of materia medica at Harvard. Lavishly illustrated with full page drawings, it was issued in Boston in three volumes, 1817-1821 under the author's supervision. It is generally considered to be the earliest example in the United States of a book with plates printed in color. In the first part, the engravings were colored in the usual fashion by hand, but continuation of that slow method seemed impossible to Bigelow. Therefore, in the remaining parts, he successfully experimented with adding the colors directly to the copper-
Or ganic Farming

JOHN TAYLOR (1753–1824) known as “Taylor of Caroline Country” would also be called a Jeffersonian Democrat today. Consistently, he espoused states’ rights and agrarianism while in the Virginia House of Delegates and in the U.S. Senate. His writings also championed these causes against the enlargement of the national government.

Like Thomas Jefferson, he too was deeply grossed in the management of a country estate. In particular, Taylor was alarmed by the rate at which the fertility of the land was being exhausted, a condition which necessitated the spread of large plantations to ever fresher territory. On his own land he experimented with principles of scientific management which he felt would be helpful to others, particularly small landholders. As early as 1803 he wrote a series of agricultural essays published in a Georgetown newspaper. Ten years later these 61 essays were collected and published under the title of Arator by a “Citizen of Virginia.” It is this first edition published in Georgetown, D.C., which the Library has now acquired.

In the preface the publishers predict this book of American practices will supplant European texts which are totally unsuitable for the American situation. The essays by Taylor which followed the glowing optimism deal with the specifics of crop rotation, fallow land, manuring, plowing under of crops, orchards and livestock. Not that he neglects the underlying philosophies. There are chapters on the economy of agriculture, the pleasures of agriculture, and the rights of agriculture. Two are on the ever present question of slavery. Though deploiring it, he expresses more concern at this point about the problem of idle groups of freed slaves for which there is no provision, and recommends their placement in the North or in Africa. He devotes several pages to refuting views on emancipation in Jefferson’s Notes on the State of Virginia. But above all, he abhors the overseer left in charge by an absentee landlord. Such a manager has little interest in good agricultural practices and leaves after impoverishing the land.

plates before printing, never before done on so large a scale here.

This treatise also signified the widespread interest in medical uses of plants. An earlier example in the exhibition arranged by Mrs. Haugh was the first book on plants published in the New World, in Mexico City in 1615. The author, Dr. Francisco Hernandez, had been sent over from Spain in 1570 to investigate curative plants. A more recent example, remarkable for its appearance during the time of early settlements in Michigan, was the Botanic Luminary, a periodical published in Saline in 1835–36.

Other prize books shown from our collections included the first Canadian flora, Jacques Curnut’s Canadensisium Plantarum, 1635; the great English Herball by John Gerard, 1597; the monumental Natural History by Mark Catesby, 1731–48, with its vivid examples from south-
The Movers and Shakers

A Score of the country's leading rare book librarians met at the Clements Library on May 17. The group is not organized formally, but has been meeting annually for several years to discuss common problems. This time the all-day program concerned what appeals, if any, rare book libraries can make to foundations. Since the latter do not want to promote competition by granting funds for acquisitions, what types of programs would they support? The whole topic was explored with several foundation executives, including the director of The Foundation Center in New York, which is maintained by the major foundations as an information center.

We all learned something about the problems of donors as well as of recipients. Libraries not supported by tax monies, even in part, make a stronger case for private support, but that is not the sole consideration. It was appropriate to entertain this group of distinguished visitors as part of our 50th anniversary observance.

Hold the evening of October 11 for the annual Assembly of the Associates. You will receive an invitation shortly. This year the gathering will be different. The Associates will meet at the University's Museum of Art nearby, joining with the Friends of the Museum to open an exhibition of illustrated sheet music of the 19th century from our Corning Music Collection. Mr. and Mrs. Bly Corning of Flint, the donors, will be honored guests. There will be a short talk, a descriptive bulletin, and a performance of some of the music, as well as refreshments.

The Board of Governors will be at the Library in the afternoon.

Of Computers and Corpses

The Library's American Revolution Bicentennial project hasn't opened any graves yet, but it certainly has been busy counting bodies. In the first decade of this century the Revolutionary heroes Gen. Nathanael Greene and Gov. George Clinton were exhumed and reburied; our modern undertaking is instead conveying the Revolution-ary remains to the computer. In the near future the final results of this summer's sampling project for a complete roster of the soldiers and sailors of the Revolutionary War will be tabulated at the University's computing center. (This is one of three investigations being pursued at the Library.)

Finding out the number of men who served during the war might seem a simple question, but the more work we do, the more complicated it becomes. Many men, of course, served several enlistments in a number of different regiments. The huge bulk of various muster and pay rolls, financial and pension records, compilations by various states and by such organizations as the D. A. R., and various other sources contain a vast amount of overlap and duplication. Well over a million names with data must be reduced by linking together all the items that pertain to one particular soldier. Ideally, a data bank of biographical information on most of the soldiers would result.

Small samples from several states have been selected as a trial run this summer. For example, our New Hampshire sample consisted of 3,363 computer-coded data sheets for last names beginning with the letter L (L is relatively ethnically neutral). By linking together those names which most probably represented the same soldier we reduced these to 1,519 and a further reduction by linking those that possibly represented the same soldier brought a total of 1,244. Other considerations, however, lead us to believe that there is still a large number of these data sheets that indeed represent one soldier but which, at this point, we have been unable to link together.

Among other things, the samples have clearly shown that a necessary preliminary step to any biographical file for Revolutionary veterans is a major reference work outlining the organizational histories of the companies and regiments of the Revolution.

Old Southwest

Timothy Flint, a New Englander by birth and education, became a western traveler by virtue of his religious calling. Initially, he served under the auspices of the Missionary Society of Connecticut in 1815 with headquarters in Cincinnati and later at St. Charles, Mo., and in Arkansas. As time went on he turned to other pursuits, espe-
cially writing and editing. Before his death in 1840 his literary ventures included a memoir of Daniel Boone, a history of the Mississippi Valley, and several romantic stories with locales in the Old Southwest, and points farther west.

Recently we added to our growing collection of his works *Journal of the Rev. Timothy Flint, from the Red River, to the Ouachita or Washita, in Louisiana* in 1835. He writes to the owner a report of the survey of the Maison Rouge Grant made by him and his son. Its 31 pages describe the country and general conditions found. Ours is the version from “Waldie’s Select Circulating Library” possibly printed in Cincinnati in 1836. Separates of the *Journal* were also printed at Alexandria, La. and Philadelphia.

**Maps and Their Issue**

Most of the fun of bibliography is in finding unknown variations in printed maps or books that appear identical. In this quest, the scholar and librarian share a common goal. If minute changes of lettering, dates, or names can be identified, we are in a much better position to determine the publishing history of the item.

Recently, we acquired two maps which illustrate this point. Capt. John Montresor, the intrepid British engineer who served 22 years in America, returned to London at one point and successfully negotiated for the publication of the *Map of Nova Scotia or Acadia*, in 1768. The map was a large scale effort, printed on four sheets, and included most of what we now call the Canadian Maritime provinces. Meanwhile, Montresor’s rival, Capt. Samuel Holland, completed a survey on Prince Edward Island. His map was not printed until 1775, but the publisher of the Montresor map must have seen a manuscript copy of it because he redrew that island on the Nova Scotia map based on Holland’s survey. The publisher then brought out a second edition without any other indication of the change—such as in the title, which might have noted the alteration. To our knowledge, we are the first to determine the difference between the two editions, and we now own copies of each.

In the early map trade it was also a common practice to sell the copper engraving plate to another firm. This meant that the same map could be printed by different owners, who sometimes erased the name of the previous owner and substituted their own. Ship’s captain John Gascoigne completed a hydrographic survey of Port Royal harbor, South Carolina, in 1729. Curiously the chart was not published until over 40 years later. Soon thereafter, the publishers sold the copper plate to another firm which changed the imprint and later still, added additional to the map area. Thus, the map went through three issues before 1777, and we are the firm to unravel the correct order of succession. As a result of a purchase made this year, we now own a copy of each of the first three issues.

**National Exhibition**

As part of its Bicentennial celebration, the National Portrait Gallery at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C. has put together a very exciting exhibition on “The Afro-American in the Age of the Revolution, 1770–1800.”

Manuscript documentation of black participation in the War is exceedingly scarce, and our own small body of such material is of great historical interest to scholars concerned with the history of “minority groups.” In a rare move the Library has loaned five important documents from the papers of Sir Henry Clinton and Nathanael Greene. We would encourage anyone visiting the Nation’s capitol up until the closing December date to pay a visit to the Smithsonian for this timely display. A handsome catalogue of the exhibition has been published.

**Rare Books Gathering**

The Library was represented by Mrs. Georgia Haugh, Curator of Rare Books, at the national conference of the Rare Books Section of the Association of College and Research Libraries held in Los Angeles June 21–23. About 180 book lovers were treated to a dazzling display of libraries and antiquarian bookshops in the area. Excursions were made to notable collections in the Huntington Library, the Southwest Museum, the William Andrews Clark Library, University of Southern California, and University of California. Talks were given about special collections in seven other institutions. Mrs. Haugh reports that the Californians could rank with the legendary joie de vivre and generosity of Texas in hospitality, too.

A sober note was introduced in one topic new to these conferences, “The Security of Rare Books and Manuscripts.” Warnings and advice were given by professionals in security work.