Founders Day

Guests at Founder’s Day, April 13, heard a stimulating talk by Prof. Shaw Livermore on the effects of the Revolution and independence on the postwar generation that grew up in the early nineteenth century. His insights were perceptive and thought provoking.

The Board of Governors met at luncheon to consider a financial report and a membership campaign in the fall. They also selected for purchase four books and a small manuscript collection amounting to $5875. The items purchased are described in other columns. The Board also allowed the Library an additional $2000 for use at an auction the following week; the results are also described in another column.

The next gathering of Associates will occur in the fall, probably October, when they will hear a French historian visiting this country speaking on French aid to the American Revolution.

First Flora

The First Complete flora of America north of Mexico was published in two volumes in 1814. It included certain new species brought back from the far Northwest by Lewis and Clark. The compiler was a German botanist named Frederick Pursh, who migrated to the United States in 1799. He worked as a superintendent of gardens in Philadelphia and New York, but he had to go to England to find sponsorship for the book he envisioned; his patron was a wealthy amateur botanist. The work contains 24 hand-colored plates, which make it quite rare. It carries the title of Flora Americae Septentrionale (London 1814), and was a gift from Associate Robert P. Briggs in honor of Mrs. Briggs for her interest in gardening.

John Cotton Exhorts

When the Puritans departed from Southampton in 1630 to found a settlement (Boston) where their religious beliefs and practices would not be prohibited or even criticized, they listened to a farewell sermon by one of their ministers, the Rev. John Cotton. He was optimistic about their adventure in planting a true Christian settlement in the wilderness. His inspirational sermon, God’s Promise to His Plantation, was immediately printed in London, 1630. Cotton joined his flock three years later. The sermon is one of those basic books we should have had long ago. Now that one showed up at a reasonable price, the Board made sure we obtained it. Eleven other copies are known.

Col. Kemble of Jamaica

From our friends at the American Antiquarian Society, we were able to obtain a small orphan collection of manuscripts which fit in well with our holdings. It numbers about 145 letters and
documents, most of them dated in 1780, when Col. Stephen Kemble was commanding in Jamaica. They relate to a British expedition to Nicaragua against Spain and the native Indians which failed. Kemble was a brother-in-law of Gen. Thomas Gage and afterward he was sent to Canada and then to England. The story in his papers is part of the Revolution, as it was enacted in the West Indies. The purchase was made by the Associates.

A Pain in the Pocket

The Above Heading sounds as though we would speak about inflation, but actually it is a bad pun. William Pain was an English architect who was adept at writing manuals for carpenters to help them in building houses and finishing interiors in the eighteenth century. We are collecting architecture books used in America before 1800, and Pain’s The Builder’s Pocket-Treasure was so popular that it was reprinted in Boston in 1794. Published by William Norman, the 55 plates were re-engraved here probably by John Norman. Pain was principally concerned in explaining how to reproduce the designs of Palladio, which are seen in many eastern houses. Only four other copies of this edition are known, and the Associates added it to our impressive holdings.

Dear Abby in 1719

The Only Person that unhappy wives or husbands, or anguished parents, could turn to for counsel in colonial America was their clergyman. The Mather family of ministers, who never lacked for self-assurance, was always ready with advice. Indeed, father and son once teamed up with a manual for family life. The Rev. Increase Mather once preached a sermon on The Duty of Parents to Pray for Their Children. A few years later his son, the Rev. Cotton Mather, added The Duty of Children Whose Parents have Prayed for Them. They, or some enterprising printer in Boston, published the two sermons together in 1719.

Increase’s advice was fairly mild; he urged parents to take pride in rearing pious children rather than successful ones in a worldly sense. Although he believed everyone was afflicted with original sin, he felt that damnation was not inevitable; regeneration could give saving grace. There was hope for the pious. Cotton was more frightening and more rigid. He warned that children of pious parents had a special duty to become God-fearing and to do so quickly, else they would not escape eternal fire. The rack of self-torture was ready for all; no one asked what had become of sin. It prevailed and dominated.

This cheery little volume is scarce today; half a dozen copies are known. The Board of Governors thought the Library needed it. Could they be telling us something?

Liberalism in New Orleans

Academic Protest against misinterpretation of the law is nothing new. Back in 1810 one H. P. Nugent, a language teacher in New Orleans, charged corruption against three judges, the district attorney, and the sheriff over recent court cases and judicial decisions related to free-
dom of the press. As a result Nugent himself was arrested for contempt. He was bursting with indignation, but could find no printer in Louisiana who would publicize his case. Therefore he looked outside the area and had published *An Account of the Proceedings Had in the Superior Court of the Territory of Orleans* in Philadelphia in 1810.

When we think of freedom of the press, we are likely to remember John Peter Zenger (1735) and nothing more. There was a succession of legal cases, however, and Nugent's is one of them. Only four other copies of this *Account* are known. The Streeter copy, sold in 1967, brought $2500. Consequently the Board of Governors moved to pick up the copy offered us for $1500.

**The Book**

The Book is hard to improve on. It could just be the most nearly perfect learning machine that mankind will ever know... We like to browse, nibble, pick up, put down, race ahead, refer back, ponder, skip, etc., and now they tell us that this is infinitely more in tune with how the brain actually works than any externally programmed learning or lecturing.

—Daniel Melcher

**Manuscript Map of Fort Mifflin Attack**

Maj. John André was one of the most gifted British officers to serve in America. He was fluent in several languages, well-known in London literary circles and an expert in military affairs. He served as an aide-de-camp to Generals Grey and Clinton before appointment as Adjutant General. When André was executed in October 1780 for his collaboration with Benedict Arnold, his death at the age of 29 was lamented by both sides.

André's mapmaking talents are less well-known, but in our Clinton collection are ten maps attributable to this officer. To these, we have added a manuscript map by André of the attack on Fort Mifflin. The map shows the successful British assault of November 15, 1777, after two earlier efforts against the American position had failed. It was necessary for the British to take the fort in order to open the Delaware River for supplies to reach Philadelphia—which they had taken six weeks before. André was present at the engagement and gave an account of the attack in his diary. A some what different version of our new map is owned by the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

**Familiar Complaint**

MRS. LYDIA MUNCY, our tireless Associate volunteer, came up with a story about a raw material shortage in the last century. It appeared in the *Daily Missouri Republican*, dated November 29, 1862.

"There is a tremendous excitement just now among printers, editors and publishers, about the increase in the price of paper. There is good cause for it. One half the newspapers in the country must stop if the present high price continue. The whole difficulty might be avoided if more care was taken to save and collect cotton rags. More rags are wasted annually than are sold to the paper makers. It now becomes a patriotic duty upon the part of every housekeeper to economize in this matter—to save and sell everything about the house out of which printing paper can be manufactured."

What may have kept the presses rolling was the introduction of a new technology—pulp paper from wood chips. But the above solution strikes an interesting comparison with the situation today. Despite doubling cost of newsprint, no commentator has suggested silence.

**The Grave Diggers**

THE CLEMENTS LIBRARY now has skeletons in the closet! To be more exact, we recently purchased, with the Schoff Fund, documentary evidence concerning the mortal remains of thousands upon thousands of Union soldiers who died on battlefields and in camp hospitals. The dead were interred in hastily prepared graves during active combat. Wooden head markers, even the locations, were being rapidly lost and destroyed before the war had even ended.

In the fall of 1865, Edmund B. Whitman, Chief Quartermaster General of the District of Tennessee, was put in command of a special detail to oversee reburial. With a small staff he systematically surveyed the battlefields of Kentucky, Tennessee, Georgia, and Alabama. Questioning Blacks and the few whites who would cooperate, checking army records, they attempted to locate and identify every grave. Whitman then negotiated the purchase of land and oversaw the
removal of bodies to the many national cemeteries which, beautifully maintained, still dot the Southern rural landscape. The collection, five massive letter books and six folio account books, provides a comprehensive and apparently unique record of this service from 1865 to 1869.

Whitman’s initial surveys shed light on battle casualties. In recording dealings with the Southern population, the letter books document growing hostility to President Johnson’s and President Grant’s Reconstruction policies. As sad, even ghoulish, as is their subject, the letter books illustrate, as no other source could, the terrible cost of the Civil War in terms of human life.

Music and More Music

In a typically generous gesture, the Board of Governors allowed the Director $2000 for his use in a forthcoming auction sale of early American music. There were nine books of music we hoped to procure, all dating before 1810, and a sheaf of 100 pieces of American sheet music printed before 1800. We wanted to move in with all the resources we could muster.

We put the Associates’ money on the sheet music and got them for exactly that figure. From other monies we were also able to carry off the books of music. These were great prizes which added considerable strength to the Library’s collection of early music. For instance, we had only 131 pieces of American sheet music before 1800. We expected there might be some duplicates in the lot we bought, but there were only sixteen. Now we have 215 pieces.

As for the books, one of them is unique, known only from newspaper advertisements. Another exists in two other copies, both incomplete. Two others are books of manuscript music which probably can be identified. The others are all very scarce. The bibliographer of American music in our School of Music is tremendously excited about these acquisitions. There is no doubt that early American music is one of the new fields of collecting, and what America was singing and composing is just now becoming known. As a research area, it again demonstrates that the formation of collections must precede scholarly investigation.

Christian Unity

Count von Zinzendorf of Saxony arrived in Pennsylvania late in 1741 to try to unite the various German sects into one church. He himself was a bishop of the Moravian sect and a wealthy patron of the membership. He had encouraged their migration to America. Half a dozen conferences of the German Protestants were held, but unity could not be achieved. The Lutherans were especially obstinate, and with others accused Bishop Zinzendorf of more evils than he could think of.

He sought to get reports of each conference published. To his surprise the printer in Germantown, Christopher Sower, refused. The count then went to Benjamin Franklin, who readily agreed to issue the pamphlets in the German language. Seven were printed, all in 1742, and are prized today for their illumination of church history as well as because they are Franklin imprints.

We have never owned any of them, but on the other hand the Library Company of Philadelphia added them only in recent years. We are glad to report that we have now acquired five of them from the Harper fund. We lack numbers three and five. Anybody have them?

Cure for Gossip

Mrs. Muncy also discovered this gem in the Essex Register (Salem, Mass.) for Oct. 9, 1826. It is headed “Cure for a terrible disorder of the mouth commonly called Scandal.”

“Take of good nature an ounce; of an herb commonly called by the Indians ‘mind your own business’ one ounce; mix this with a little ‘charity for failings’ and two or three sprigs of ‘keep your teeth.’ Simmer them together in a vessel called ‘circumpection’ for a short time, and it will be ready for use.

“Application: the symptoms are a violent itching in the tongue and roof of the mouth, which invariably takes place when you are with a kind of animals called gossips. When you feel a turn of it coming on, take a teaspoonful of the above, hold it in your mouth, which you will keep closely shut until you get home, and you will find a complete cure.”