New Funds

It is with great pleasure that we announce two major capital gifts to the library. In honor of the long and close friendship of Eli Lilly and Howard Peckham, the Lilly Foundation, following Mr. Lilly’s death, granted the Clements $100,000. This fund, to be used exclusively for acquisitions, is the second largest gift in the institution’s history. Our deep appreciation is extended to the foundation, to Mr. Peckham, and in absentia, to Mr. Lilly, a man whose ability and success were matched by his exceptional kindness and generosity. We are indebted to President Fleming and former Vice President Wilbur F. Pierpont whose personal efforts made the grant possible.

In mid-July we received word that Associate Board member Duane Diedrich has established a fund for the purchase and occasional publication of manuscripts “in the categories of religion, education, government, literature, art, music, business, science, and philanthropy.” Dr. Diedrich, now at Ball State University, is a graduate of the University of Michigan and himself a collector of manuscripts. This is the first library fund created for the purchase of manuscripts, and it will enable us to add letters in an area and of a quality which we have rarely been able to afford. The summer of 1977 has, indeed, been a memorable one for the Clements Library!

Whisker’d Vermin

English literature is not the primary collecting field of the Clements Library, but many historical works have literary importance and vice versa. James Grainger’s The Sugar Cane: A Poem in Four Books, London, 1764, is hardly a classic, but it is an important work on West Indies sugar production and it has an interesting connection with the irascible dean of eighteenth-century letters, Samuel Johnson.

Grainger was an impecunious physician who fell in with the literary circle of London in the 1750’s—Johnson, Goldsmith, Smollett, and such. He complemented his meager professional income by writing for magazines and translating classical works. He set off for the West Indies to improve his fortune in 1759 and composed The Sugar Cane while traveling from plantation to plantation on St. Christopher as physician to planters and slaves alike.

He sent the manuscript back to the literati of London in 1762. According to Boswell, a description of plantation life in heroic verse provided no little amusement when it was read at Sir Joshua Reynolds’ drawing room. His description of rats, which in the final version were “the whisker’d vermin-race, a countless clan” seemed particularly absurd to Johnson and his friends. But they liked Grainger, and they gave a very mediocre piece of poetry, which to modern eyes appears ridiculous, good reviews. For the historian, it is the copious notes which give the work lasting importance, because they provide great detail on the plantation system as it then existed. We were fortunate to obtain a pristine copy in full leather. The purchase was made possible by the James Shearer Memorial Fund.

Howe Biography

Associate Peter B. Frantz has given the library a handsome copy of Sir John Barrow’s The Life of Richard Earl Howe, London, 1838. The volume’s red morocco binding bears the crest of the Marquis of Sligo, attesting to its provenance in the library of one of Ireland’s great noble families. A direct descendant of Admiral Howe, Mr. Frantz traces his ancestry through the families of George Charles Mahon (1816–94) and Louis C. Stanley (1835–1935), men closely associated with Ann Arbor and The University of Michigan. The book is scarce, and it is an important and worthy addition to our fine collection of naval histories, many of them the gift of Mr. and Mrs. Hubert S. Smith of Bay City, the parents of Mrs. Frantz.
Dexter to California or Bust

Young Amos B. Phelps left his father's farm in Washtenaw County, Michigan in 1851. Like the thousands of men drawn west by gold fever, he was confident about his prospects: "So far I have minded nobodys business but my one. Neither do I intend to and I think that I am enough for anybody or anything between Dexter and California." And he was! Amos survived a fire at sea, a mechanical breakdown that crippled the steamboat he was passenger on for twelve days, intermittent fever, and deceitful companions who abandoned him in Panama City. Arriving in California in February 1852, he settled first at Placerville. In a letter to his girl back home, he described his surroundings: "As for this place it is one of the most degraded places there is, gambling, drinking, fighting and shooting and dirking each other. Why it is a perfect hell on earth and I will leave as soon as possible lest I will be consumed like Sodom and Gomorrah and with it I perish." By May Amos had moved to Weaverville, Trinity County, one of the wildest and most inaccessible regions of California. Shortly after he arrived a bloody massacre took place in nearby Bridge Gulch. A group of 70 miners from Weaverville had avenged the death of a prospector named Anderson by slaughtering 153 Indians. Amos described the affair: "I have not seen but three or four Indians since I came to this place as they are hostile, and the miners have been in pursuit of them and have killed one hundred and fifty of them. The California Indians have not the courage to fight unless they number ten to one white man." He had come to the Sacramento Valley to make money, and although he thought it was "a nice looking place," he wasn't interested in travel, only the "place where I can get the yellow rocks and that place I think is hard to find." In the fall of 1853 he paid his debts, sold his claim, and booked passage home. Some quarrelsome letters had passed between Amos and his girl. He was unsure about his plans: "There is no certain time set how long I shall remain in Michigan. If everything is satisfactory to all parties, I may spend the remainder of my days there."

Descendants of Amos B. Phelps, Mr. and Mrs. Norman Schairer of Ann Arbor, have given his letters to the Clements Library. Gold Rush material is scarce and we are pleased to add this fine collection to our holdings.

Apologies to the Iroquois

Nineteen Items Belonging to Congressman David A. Ogden (1770-1829) record a single episode, 1818-1819, in the long efforts of the Ogden Land Company to push the Seneca Indians off their reservation lands in western New York. Ogden had paid almost $100,000 for rights to about 200,000 acres of this land. One of four letters from Lewis Cass suggests that "four or five thousand dollars in specie to be distributed among the western Indians would greatly aid the operations," and two letters from Ogden to Secretary of War John C. Calhoun discuss moving the New York Indians to Ohio or Wisconsin, but the Seneca were reluctant to budge. Ogden failed in 1819, but by the 1820's his company had begun to take over the reservation lands.
Our rapidly growing collection of early American tune-books has been augmented substantially by an exciting purchase of sixteen titles. This fortunate stroke brings our grand total of these scarce singing books up to around 200 in number.

It is not often we receive a windfall of these compilations of music pieces for group singing. Introductory texts of music theory and instruction indicate their purpose of giving “the rudiments of music for vocal singing.” So popular and useful were these oblong manuals in singing schools and churches that, like children’s books, they were often worn out and the few still existing are eagerly sought rarities. This kind of Americana is receiving increasing attention from music scholars.

One of the most valuable is Andrew Law’s *The Art of Singing* in three parts printed in Cambridge, Mass. in 1803-5. It is remarkable to find all of the parts together in the original leather binding still intact. For good measure, Law bound up with them twelve additional pages from his *Harmonic Companion*, 1807, giving us an unknown variant. Occasionally, tune-books were re-issued in various combinations to fill continuing demand over the years.

A notable feature of this fourth edition lies in the first appearance of his own system of shape-notes which he advertised as “A new plan of printing music, and a new method of teaching the art of singing.” During this period musicians were trying to outdo each other in devising new methods of representing music sounds by the shape of notes in an endeavor to facilitate sight-singing by the novice.

We are constantly seeking primary editions of rarities. Consequently, the first edition of No. 1 of Daniel Read’s *The Columbian Harmonist*, New Haven, 1793, in contemporary marbled covers with 5 pages of manuscript music at the end, is worthy of note. It is devoted to new psalm tunes by American composers. Later editions, of which we have the 1797, formed by a combination of number one with numbers two and three were modified somewhat. However, this is the desirable “first.”

Another scarce item is *The Norfolk Collection of Sacred Harmony*, Dedham, Mass., 1805, first edition of Amos Albee’s first book. In it nineteen American tunes were published for the first time and only one other copy is known.

The eminent publisher and patriot Isaiah Thomas in Boston took pride in issuing works of typographical excellence in a wide range of subjects, many of which were aimed at the educational market. He did not overlook the lucrative outlet of music books, though he was not a musician. One of his tune-books was Daniel Belknap’s *The Evangelical Harmony*, 1800. The music portion contains “airs, suitable for divine worship; besides a number of favorite pieces of music.” Only one other copy has been located of Belknap’s *Village Compilation of Sacred Music*, Boston, 1806. This volume includes many hitherto unpublished tunes. Both of these bear the owner’s inscription of Joseph Stone, another compiler.

Finally, German-American books comprise three of the acquisitions. To our 1810 edition of Joseph Doll’s *Leichter Unterricht* we were now enabled to add the third edition of 1821, printed not surprisingly in that stronghold of German settlement, Harrisburg, by John Wyeth. This copy, and one other, are the only ones known.

The other two also came from the press of that same enterprising publisher. The first edition, 1818, of *Choral Harmonie*, by Isaac Gerhart and Johann Eyer, is in German, but by the second edition of 1822 an English text was added as well as many additional American psalm tunes. The notation in all of these imprints from Harrisburg is that of shape-notes.

Much to our delight, the tune-books appear to be in their original condition, some unbound in faded decorative paper covers; some with board sides covered with contemporary blue-gray paper or marbled paper and with sheep spines. Many are still in excellent shape, almost unheard of with these much handled volumes.

**Fall Meeting**

The annual fall meeting of the Clements Library Associates is scheduled for 8:30 p.m., Tuesday, October 25 at the library. Our speaker, the third in the new series of Randolph Adams lecturers, is Prof. Ira D. Gruber of Rice University, a noted scholar of the American Revolution. He will talk on the Burgoyne Expedition and the Battle of Saratoga. A special exhibit marking the two hundredth anniversary of the crucial American victory will be mounted by John Dann. The talk will be followed by a refreshment hour. We hope you can join us for what should be a very fine talk and enjoyable evening.
The Siege of Savannah in 1779 was a bungled Franco-American attempt to wrest the Georgia base from British grasp, in which it remained throughout the war. A British brigade-major, Francis Skelly, wrote a stirring account of the battle, complete with exaggerated casualty figures. (Mr. Peckham’s most recent book, The Toll of Independence, lists 637 French killed and wounded, compared to Skelly’s 1263!) Here-with Skelly’s report, recently purchased at auction in London:

“The French fleet consisting of 27 ships of the line anchored off Savannah River about the middle of September, landed a corps of about 4000 men (besides sailors), marched immediately up to our out sentinels and sent a flag of truce to General Prevost to demand a surrender of the town, troops, shipping, &c., in twenty four hours. General Prevost’s answer was that he would acquaint Monsieur d’Estaing (who commanded this expedition) with the result of a council he had called in that time. At this period there would not be above 1100 men in the place, including natives, merchants, &c., as Colonel Maitland (with whom I then acted as major of brigade) commanded a detachment of 600 men on Port Royal Island, between which place and Savannah the French had blocked up all seeming communication. However, by a very extraordinary exertion we effected a junction before the truce was expired, and joined at a time when I believe all was on the point of being given up.

“General Prevost, soon after our arrival, sent me with a letter to Monsieur d’Estaing, acquainting him that the resolution taken was to defend the place to the last. We were much surprised at d’Estaing’s not attacking us immediately, as we had scarce any guns mounted, and the few miserable redoubts which remained had no connection with each other and the abatis in most places taken away or destroyed. In the night a deserter informed us that General Lincoln had joined the French with 7000 American troops and in the morning we found ourselves completely invested. By the assiduity of Colonel Moncrieff, in a few days we found ourselves in some degree of security, for notwithstanding the French had broke ground within 80 yards of us, we contrived to raise several small redoubts, and batteries; and the second day after their breaking ground we made a sally in which the French by their own account lost 150 men and 24 officers. On or about the 1st October they opened their batteries, mounting 43 heavy guns and 6 or 8 very large mortars, and kept up a continued fire upon us till the 9th, when with their joint forces they made an attack upon our right, where Maitland commanded, and after a severe action during which many of them were killed in and upon our works, we completely routed them.

“Their loss this day was about 600 killed. Many of their wounded got off, so that the number of those could not be ascertained. D’Estaing himself was wounded in two places, and many of their best officers killed and some taken...

“The French never after attempted us. The Americans quitted the next day, and Monsieur d’Estaing, after drawing off his troops and guns by degrees, embarked and sailed the beginning of November. Monsieur le Comte de Noailles (who I formerly knew in France) came into the town with a flag a day or two before they embarked. He assured me that the French had lost in dead and killed upwards of 1200 men and 63 of their best officers.”

New Staff

As Much as we like the regulars of the library staff, we are delighted to add several new faces to the crowd this summer and fall. John McDonal-d, our assistant in the Book Division this past year, took a leave for the summer and was ably replaced through August by Brian Etter, a first year student at the School of Music. Judy Duling, a former library science student and dedicated volunteer in the Manuscript Division last year, will be with us on a half-time basis until July, helping to catalogue the hundreds of fine early American religious pamphlets which we have purchased with the generous support of Dr. and Mrs. Harry Towsley. June Harris, former head of the map division at the University of Georgia and a graduate of our library school, is our new Assistant Curator of Maps. Barbara Mitchell, who has served the library exceptionally well in various temporary capacities for three years, has been named Assistant Curator of Manuscripts. Janet Mueller, who manned the front desk while Agnes Pope was on leave, will now sit in for Margery Brunner who will be in Washington, D.C. until next August.