The Quarto

Issued Quarterly for the Clements Library Associates

NUMBER 127, March, 1980

Spring Meeting

Mark On Your calendar April 22 at 4 p.m. Prof. Richard Crawford of our School of Music, one of the leading authorities on early American music, will present a program on "Musical Classicism and the Folk."

Prof. Crawford is a dynamic speaker, and he has hinted that the lecture will include some musical performance. He will be assisted by his talented wife, Penny Crawford, who is known around the country for her authentic performances of eighteenth-century music with Ars Musica.

After a hiatus of two years, we return to an afternoon Spring meeting. We can guarantee it will be a program worth leaving work early to attend! The presentation will be followed by refreshments.

Visiting Faculty

We Are Delighted to have W. Graham Randles here for the winter term as a fellow of our Program in the History of Discovery and Visiting Associate Professor of History. Graham's home base is Paris where he teaches history at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes, one of the world's leading centers for the study of history. He was born in South Africa, graduated from Cambridge University, and taught at the University of Lisbon for ten years before going to Paris in 1962. He is presently teaching a lecture course in the Medieval and Renaissance Collegium and a graduate seminar cross-listed between geography and history. He is now at work on a book detailing the arguments for why people before Columbus thought the earth was flat.

Boston to Calcutta

It is Rare when a manuscript collection arrives at the Clements Library with its original container, but several months ago a brass-inlaid mahogany writing box appeared in the manuscript division. Discovered in a secret drawer set in the side of the box were the complete records of a Boston merchant ship's voyage to India in 1852.

About thirty years ago Mr. and Mrs. Fenton Davison of Flint bought a heavy, green-painted box for one dollar from a junk dealer in Massachusetts. Once the paint was removed and the box opened, they found a felt-lined writing surface and numerous drawers and spaces beneath, one of which revealed over one hundred carefully bundled letters and documents of Capt. John S. Stickney.

In 1851 Capt. Stickney was hired by Theodore Chase, a wealthy Boston merchant, to sail a two-masted ship, the Bowditch, to Calcutta and back. The captain arranged to board his young wife, Emma, with his father, instructing her to "make yourself happy, and may God protect thee, and may we be spared to meet again." Before he departed Capt. Stickney also wrote to the ladies of the Dorchester Seamen's Friend Society, thanking them for "the little library" which they had presented to the Bowditch's officers and crew.

American trade with India reached its height in the 1850's, when an average voyage lasted about nine months. The Bowditch left Boston in January and reached Calcutta, after heavy sailing through gales and a hurricane, 128 days later. Capt. Stickney had loaded the ship with ice, a common cargo of the period, and while it was being discharged in Calcutta, the captain took up lodgings at a hotel fittingly called the "Ice House."

As the Bowditch's bottom required recooping and caulkng, Capt. Stickney had a good deal of time to purchase his return cargo: gunny sacks, goatskins, indigo, seersucker, Madras handkerchiefs, saltpeter, safflower, linseed, shellac, castor oil, and ginger. The work proceeded smoothly enough until July 18, the day before Capt. Stickney was to sail back to Boston. While the Bowditch lay moored "off Cooly Bazar," she was badly battered by a sudden flooding of the Hooghly River.
The many accounts, receipts and bills—for yet more copper, caulking and sheathing, unloading and reloading, coolie hire, dock hire—attest to the vast expense of this delay. Capt. Stickney alerted Mr. Chase that the whole business would cost some 18,000 rupees, or nearly $10,000. Then, as the refitted Bowditch was finally headed to sea, the tug pilot ran the ship afoul of a French bark, “one of the many sorry occurrences on this most unfortunate voyage,” as Capt. Stickney lamented. After a costly settlement of legal problems arising from the latest mishap, Capt. Stickney sailed for Boston in late September.

The library is delighted to have this excellent record from the age of the clipper ship. We are grateful to Mr. and Mrs. Davison for presenting us with Capt. Stickney’s papers, as well as the beautiful box upon which he wrote. Mrs. Davison, in tracing the Bowditch and its owner through Mr. Chase’s descendants, provided us with one of the best documented collections we have ever received.

New CLA Board Member

By UNANIMOUS VOTE at their fall meeting, the Board of Governors extended an invitation to a staunch friend of the library, Mrs. John Alexander, to join its ranks. We are delighted to announce her acceptance, and the formal approval by the University’s Board of Regents.

Mrs. Alexander, wife of the late Dr. John Alexander, chief of the Thoracic Surgery Section at University Hospital, is a resident of Ann Arbor. She has a long-standing interest in history and art and is presently completing a graduate degree in fine arts at the university. She is an authority on military uniforms, and visitors to the library are likely to recall her wonderfully accurate papier mâché figures dressed in authentic uniforms of the Revolutionary War which have graced our main and rare book rooms.

18th-Century Semester

The Clements Library is the setting for a variety of activities in an exciting inter-departmental program on the eighteenth century presented in the winter semester at the University and organized by Steven Lavine of the English Department. The departments of English, Music, Fine Arts, and History have offered a tantalizing pot pourri of courses relating to all phases of the Enlightenment. The Rare Book Room of the Hatcher Library, the Museum of Art, and the Clements have put on displays. Our exhibit, “Trends in Eighteenth Century Architecture,” shown in January and February, was put together by Kenneth A. Breisch, drawing largely upon our fine collection of architectural works printed in or available in America.

The library is also playing host to six public afternoon lectures: “Beaumarchais and the American Revolution” by Brian Morton (Feb. 6); “Gibbon as Historian and Autobiographer” by Martine Brownley (Feb. 18); “Education for Revolutionaries: France in the Eighteenth Century” by R. R. Palmer (Feb. 20); “Making
Heat of Battle

In Two Previous issues of the Quarto, we have noted the gift of the James and William Miller Civil War letters from Mrs. Norman Hartweg of Ann Arbor.

Galen Wilson of our Manuscript Division was recently putting finishing touches on cataloging the collection, and he brought one remarkable letter by James T. Miller, dated June 1863, to our attention. Written long before the creation of the psychiatric profession, it gives as fine a description of the mentality of battle as one could find anywhere. Miller died in battle less than a year later in Georgia.

“...In regard to the danger I have passed through, that part is very pleasant. It is not the danger that a soldier has passed that bothers him; it is the danger that is still to be met that he fears and if you could only be with us around our camp fires after a fight and listen to the accounts of the hair breadth escapes that are told of and hear the loud laughs that greet each one’s experience and see the gay reckless careless way in which they are told, you would be very apt to think that we were the happiest set of men you ever saw. But if you should go with us to the battle field and see those that are so gay, their faces pale and their nerves trembling, and see anxiety on every countenance almost bordering on fear, you would be very apt to think that we were all a set of cowardly poltroons—this picture to be taken just before the fight begins, and the enemy is in sight and the dull ominous silence that generally takes place before the battle begins. And then as the skirmishers are deployed to the front, and you begin to hear the sharp irregular crack of their rifles, and to see the puffs of white smoke that tell where the foe are, and anon to hear the deep sharp sound of the canon and listen to the screaming whistling of the bursting shells, and then to see the solid columns of the foe advance in plain sight, every man seeming to step as proudly and steadily as if on parade, and even while the artillery tears large gaps in their line, still on they come, hardly faltering for a moment. Now look at our line and you will see those men that one half hour ago were pale and trembling, and now just as the musketry begins, to see the same men pale still but no trembling now, but see the firm compressed lips, the eye fixed and precise and blood shot, and the muscles rigid and the veins corrugated and knotted—and looking more like fiends than men. And then after the battle has raged for some time, and comrades are lying thick around, then as the soul-stirring order comes to charge, then away we go into the very jaws of death and never for one moment faltering but yelling like devils up to the mouths of the canon, and then to hear the wild triumphant cheer and within a few hours to see the same men passing over the battle field with the kindness and tenderness of a woman, helping friends or foes as the case may be. And by the time you have seen this, you will begin to think that a soldier has as many characters as a cat is said to have lives, but still I hope it will not be your luck to tread the rough life of a soldier.”

Michigan Map Society

The Clements Library was host to the January meeting of the Michigan Map Society. The thirty five persons who attended heard Visiting Professor W. Graham Randles speak on “Explorer’s Maps of Africa” and were able to view the Hack Atlas on display in the rare book room.

The map society was formed in the fall of 1977, with similar societies already in existence in Chicago and in Madison, Wisconsin. The purpose of all map societies is to encourage the study and preservation of maps. Monthly meetings of the Michigan society bring members together to hear guest speakers on topics as wide ranging as “Portolan charts of the Renaissance” and “the technology of satellite mapping.”

Many of the most devoted members came from map classes held at the Clements Library and sponsored by the University of Michigan Extension Service. The first president of this organization was Thomas N. Cross, a member of the library’s Associates board.

Dues-paying members number seventy. The most ambitious project accomplished was a weekend visit to the Newberry Library in Chicago.
last spring and a symposium on printed maps of the Italian Renaissance and current trends in conservation. Twenty-six members made the trip and were joined by members of the Chicago Map Society. The society also sponsored a map auction and a session on the history of cartography at the annual meeting of the Association of American Geographers/East Lakes region.

Rare Gifts

The largest percentage of our acquisitions come by way of purchase. At the same time, a year does not go by in which we are not given a number of rare and significant items. Examples from the past year illustrate the importance of these much-valued donations.

In the realm of books, Jonathan Daniels of North Carolina, through the good offices of Joel Patrick of Beaufort, S.C., gave us Don Pablo Antonio Peñuelas’ Breve noticia de la prodigiosa imagen de nuestra señora de los angeles (Mexico City, 1781). George S. MacManus & Co. of Philadelphia added the 1858 issue to our extensive collection of Philadelphia directories. Rev. George A. Miller of Ann Arbor gave a Gaelic prayer book published in 1827; Professor George Kish, the five-volume New American World edited by David B. Quinn, an invaluable collection of source material on the earliest voyages of discovery; John E. Jacobs of Ann Arbor, two early nineteenth-century military drill manuals; Prof. Bradford Perkins, a War of 1812 pamphlet justifying the military action on scriptural grounds.

Mrs. Arthur R. Kooker, whose late husband was a graduate student of Prof. Dwight Dumond and a noted historian at U.C.L.A., gave us six very scarce, early issues of Benjamin Lundy’s Genius of Universal Emancipation. Ken Leach of Vermont, Sam Morrill of Boston, and Charles Lesser of South Carolina all added items to our growing collection of early Christmas books. Thomas H. Adams of Birmingham donated a very scarce 1812 Walpole, N.H., edition of Amelia Simmons’ American Cookery. Herbert Bartlett of Saline gave us three titles: a 1779 collection of Jonathan Parsons’ sermons, Daniel Wise’s Bridal Greetings (1852), and Popular Technology (1844), a charming little book with woodcuts from all the trades.

The library was the benefactor of two large gifts of books. Mr. and Mrs. Herbert ("Fritz") Crisler gave us several dozen Civil War histories as well as a number of early nineteenth-century titles and a beautiful 1843 edition of Dickens’ A Christmas Carol. Theodore R. Crane presented forty-seven Benjamin Franklin titles which we lacked in honor of his father, Prof. Vernor Crane, a distinguished scholar and member of our Committee of Management for three decades.

Our manuscript holdings on the Civil War were augmented by three outstanding gifts. Duane Diedrich of Muncie, Ind., presented a fine four-page letter from Admiral Farragut to Ben Butler, Aug. 31, 1862; Dr. James R. Robinson of Abaco, Bahamas, gave us the pocket diaries of his grandfather, Nathan D. Robinson, of the 104th Ohio Regiment; Mrs. Evelyn S. Hosack of Kirkwood, Mo., presented a series of particularly good diaries of Thomas B. Byron, 70th Ohio Regiment, covering four full years of military service. Prof. William Randolph Taylor donated a memorandum book, 1803–1805, kept by Jonathan Murdock, apparently a surgeon on a trading vessel, describing commercial prospects for America in the West Indies and China.

The Map Division received several eighteenth-century American maps from Mrs. Joan Wilce of Amherst, Mass., and a pocket map of Wisconsin in the 1850’s from Mrs. George Cameron of Ann Arbor. The sheet music collection was strengthened by several hundred pieces donated by Mr. Edward G. Williams of Pittsburgh, Mr. and Mrs. John D. Wheeler of Essexville, Mr. and Mrs. Loren D. Wicks of Kendall, Fla., Col. and Mrs. Thomas R. Ostrom of Bel Air, Md., and George S. MacManus & Co.

These gifts are deeply appreciated.

Library Publications

Beginning with the current year, the Quarto will be regularly published three, rather than four times a year, in March, June, and September. Special supplementary issues will appear on occasion, such as the Hack atlas number being mailed with the March Quarto.

This decision was made for two reasons: to save money in our severely taxed Current Account, and to avoid duplication of information presented in the Quarto and the Annual Reports. Because of the budgetary constraints, the Annual Report for 1977/1978 was not printed on schedule. It will be issued and mailed with the report for 1978/1979 this spring. In the future, the annual report will be mailed in December, in lieu of the Quarto issue being dropped.