The John W. Watling Funds

No one could work for long with the late John W. Watling without realizing that few institutions were as close to his heart as the Clements Library. A further evidence of this love and affection came to light when Mr. Watling’s will was read. He had very kindly provided a bequest of $5,000 to the Clements Library Associates, of which he had been chairman of the Executive Committee from the founding of the organization. Furthermore, Mr. Watling placed no restrictions on the bequest, allowing it to be dispersed as the Executive Committee determined. At its meeting on June 20, the Executive Committee of the Clements Library Associates adopted the following resolution:

The John W. Watling Trust Fund

The $5,000 bequest, gratefully received by the Clements Library Associates under the will of the late John W. Watling, former Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Associates and an enthusiastic friend of the Library and of book collectors, shall be paid over to the Vice-President in charge of business and finance of the University to be held and invested as the John W. Watling Trust Fund for the Clements Library Associates and as part of the University’s trust funds, and to pay to the Associates the income from the Trust Fund regularly and such part of the principal thereof as the Executive Committee may at any time request.

No request shall be made for any part of the principal of the Trust Fund except for the purchase of book or manuscript materials for the William L. Clements Library, which the Executive Committee considers are otherwise not obtainable, and the Committee may accumulate income from the Trust Fund and restore any part of the principal thereof which it may have so used.

The Associates will at any time accept any sums from other persons which may be designated for this Trust Fund and will transmit them to the Vice-President of the University to be held and used in the same manner.

The income from the Trust Fund and any part of the principal thereof that may be paid to the Executive Committee pursuant to its request shall be designated on the accounts of the Associates as the John W. Watling Memorial Fund and shall be expended only for the purchase of book or manuscript materials for the Library. The Associates will at any time accept any sums from other persons for the Memorial Fund and any sums which may be received in memory of John W. Watling shall become part of the Memorial Fund unless specially designated for the Trust Fund.

All book and manuscript materials purchased through the Memorial Fund shall be so designated on the Library records and an appropriate special book plate shall be designed and shall be suitably affixed to the material.

No part of the Trust Fund or the Memorial Fund shall be used for any other purpose than the purchase of book or manuscript materials for the William L. Clements Library.

The Associates hope that friends of the late Chairman of the Executive Committee will join to enlarge the John W. Watling Trust Fund and the John W. Watling Memorial Fund. Checks may be sent to the Library, made out in favor of the University of Michigan or the Clements Library.

Charge and Countercharge

Each year junior high school students from Ann Arbor and other Michigan towns visit the Clements Library to see some of our great American treasures. We try to explain our enthusiasm for history by telling them about some of the more fascinating episodes of American history which are not found in their textbooks. We have built up a little fund of stories from which we draw as we display the books for their eager eyes. One of the tidbits we like is the absorbing absurdities of André Thevet, the Franciscan friar who accompanied Nicholas Durand de Villelagnon to Brazil in 1555.

Thevet’s Les Singularitez de la France Antarctique was published in Paris in 1557 and again in the following year. It contains a brief account of Villelagnon’s colony at Rio de Janeiro, a great deal about the customs of the Indians of South America, and a report of a fantastic trip to the west coast of South America. Enchanting small woodcuts scattered through the book contain some of the earliest pictorial records of bananas, toucans, flying fish, anteaters, armadillos, sweet potatoes, cigars, etc. Justin Winsor politely called Thevet “mendacious,” but we have more boldly called him a liar. We hasten to add that there are provable facts which Thevet records accurately, particularly when he is writing about the area around the rocky island on which Fort de Coligny was established.

The story of the French colony in Brazil is fantastic and the more we have dug into it, the less certain we are that anyone involved in the events knew how to tell the whole truth. Quite recently, we acquired the first edition of a little book by one of Thevet’s detractors, Jean de Léry. It carries the title Histoire d’un Voyage fait en la Terre du Brasil, autrement dite Amerique and was published at La Rochelle in 1578. De Léry was a young Huguenot who accompanied two protestant ministers to the Villelagnon colony. He arrived after Thevet had left for France and he, in turn, made tracks for home before very long. His book contains a miniature history of the colony, long and important descriptions of the Indians and their customs, and a violent attack on Villelagnon and Thevet.

De Léry lived in that bloody century of Henri II, the Edict of
Nantes, the St. Bartholomew’s Day Massacre, Admiral de Coligny, the Cardinal de Guise, and the Siege of Sancerre. It was a period when an individual life was held cheap and the cruelty of the men of one nation toward their brothers of another was a matter of pride. But international strife could not match civil wars for brutality. The struggles of the Huguenots, backed as they were by strong political and military forces, brought religion into almost every aspect of living in France. The religious beliefs of the French were a bloody thread woven into the fabric of their existence. De Léry was in opposition to Villegagnon and Thevet. Although his Histoire is fairly moderate in tone, his convictions in religion inclined him to censure instead of praise. He could see nothing good in Villegagnon, even though, in managing a quarrelsome colony, the leader displayed skill in holding the group together against their common enemies.

Villegagnon had already made one voyage to Brazil before he attempted to colonize the place he had chosen at Rio de Janeiro. When preparing his enterprise in the New World, he offered the colony to his countrymen as an opportunity to annoy their enemy Spain. The fact that the area belonged to Portugal (with which country France was at peace) seems not to have disturbed Villegagnon. Secretly, he offered the colony to Admiral de Coligny, one of the great Huguenot leaders, as a refuge for his coreligionists. The first year in sturdy Fort de Coligny was successful, although more colonists were badly needed. Villegagnon wrote honeyed letters to John Calvin and other leaders of the reform movement urging them to send ministers skilled in converting the Indians and colonists. The two Genevan ministers whom de Léry accompanied had been thus encouraged, and had set out at Calvin’s bidding. Nearly three hundred men, six boys, and five women formed the party. The New World met them with troubles which they had hoped never to experience again. Villegagnon, now that he had colonists, did not trouble to conceal his zeal for the Roman Catholic faith. He persecuted the Huguenots in numerous ways, drove them from the fort to the mainland, where they were attacked by the natives and the Portuguese, and eventually, it is said, threw a number of them from a cliff into the sea.

The majority of the Huguenot colonists petitioned Villegagnon to allow them to return to France; de Léry was among them. They were given a most unworthy ship which, although they feared it would never reach France, they preferred to risk rather than stay at Rio de Janeiro. The last few chapters of de Léry’s book tell of the extraordinary voyage home, of the thirst and hunger they experienced, and of the appalling fate which almost swallowed them when they reached France. Villegagnon had sent a sealed package with the captain of the vessel to be delivered to the magistrate of the first French port off which the ship might anchor. The packet contained lettres-de-cachet accusing the colonists on board the ship of being heretics worthy of burning at the stake. Fortunately the ship reached the port of Hennebonne which was controlled by Huguenots rather than by supporters of the Cardinal de Guise. Otherwise the charges against Thevet might never have been made by de Léry.

The Missing Six Feet

For a reason, which could be determined without too much difficulty if we wanted to take the trouble, we seem to be abnormally attracted to the rare and the unusual. For instance, we would prefer that great rarity a short presidential convention. It was not realized in this year, 1952. We are also attracted strongly to a large number of exceedingly rare books, many of which are to be found on the shelves of the Clements Library.
luctant, incidentally, to take dinner with Cass because he felt that his travelling costume—the only one he carried—was inappropriate. Earlier in the book, he had described his dress as follows: "Mine was a close dress, consisting of buffalo skins. Over my shoulders and under one arm was strapped a double leather case, with brass chargers, for shot and ball; and under the other arm a case for powder strapped in the same way. Around the waist was a belt, with a brace of pistols, a dirk, two side cases for pistol balls, and a case for moulds and screw. Also around the waist was buckled an Indian apron, which fell behind; it was about eighteen inches square, covered with fine bear skin, trimmed with its fur, and having over the lower part of it a net for game. This apron contained a pocket-compass, maps, journal, shaving material, a small hatchet, patent fire works, &c. My cap and gloves were of fur, my moccasins of deer-skin, and on my shoulder I carried a rifle."

Owners of copies of the Pedestrian Tour will find by comparison that the version above does not agree with their copies. Ours is a unique copy extensively corrected and revised in manuscript by the author (about 1830) for a new edition which was not published. For instance, after the first sentence quoted above, the original version read, "On my shoulders were epaulettes made of the long hair of the animal; and they were for the purpose of shielding the shoulders from rain." Perhaps they dropped off during the long trek—or they may have leaked. In the earlier version, Evans carried "a six-feet rifle;" in the corrected copy it became simply "a rifle."

It might be fun someday, perhaps in 1969, to publish the second edition "as revised by the author."

Q. & A.

Q. What is the book? A. Petit Catechisme Historique . . . Par M. Fleury . . . Detroit: Theophilus Mettez, 1812. Q. Is it a rare book? A. Yes. Five copies only are listed in Michigan Imprints Inventory. Q. Why did you want the book? A. Collectors set impossible goals and hope, with luck and perseverance, to come very close to them. We hope to have a copy of each of the so-called Richard Press imprints. Q. Why do you want them? A. They are part of the heritage of Michigan and the University. Q. Why? A. A Short Historical Catechism (the alternate pages are in French and English) was printed under the direction of Father Gabriel Richard. Q. Who was Father Richard? A. One of Michigan's great citizens, a priest, an educator, a congressman, and a co-founder of the University of Michigan. Q. Why was the book published? A. As a textbook, in the form of questions and answers, for use in one of Father Richard's schools. Q. Where was the book published? A. In Detroit. Father Richard hired a printer to run the small press he owned—the second Detroit press—for the benefit of his fellow-citizens.

Q. How did you get the book? A. We were offered a copy by a New York dealer at a very high price. Q. Did you buy the copy? A. No. While it was in the Library and about to be returned reluctantly, another copy was offered from California at a much better price. Q. Did you buy this second copy? A. No. The Clements Library Associates bought the book for the Library.

Merrily to Breakfast

A touch of humor in a time of strain can be a wonderful relief, as those of us who observed the Republican National Convention can testify. The demand of Delegate Romany of Puerto Rico for a poll of his delegation blew away the tension that had troubled the Convention for many hours. Humor is found in the strangest places! The Associates secured for the Library recently a copy of Massachusetts, or The First Planters of New-England . . . Boston, 1696, the first New England book with an antiquarian flavor. There is humor even in that solemn volume although it is only a collection, probably suggested by Joshua Scottow, of contemporary accounts of the early, difficult years of the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

Among the manuscripts printed is the letter of Thomas Dudley to the Countess of Lincoln in which he summarizes the events of his first year in the New World. The account has been called "the most interesting, as well as the most authentic document in our early annals." It is a tale of disasters, courage, hard work, and great faith "in the power of God," yet there is found on the last two pages the following bit of sly humor.

"Upon the Twenty-fifth of this March," wrote Thomas Dudley, "one of Watertown having lost a Calf, and about ten of the Clock at night, hearing the Howling of some Wolves not far off, raised many of his Neighbours out of their Beds, that by Discharging their Muskets, near about the place where he heard the Wolves, he might so put the Wolves to flight, and save his Calf: The Wind serving fit to carry the Report of the Muskets to Roxbury, three miles off, at such a time; the Inhabitants there took an Alarm, Beat up their Drum, Armed themselves, and sent in Post to us to Boston, to Raise us also: So in the morning, the Calf being found safe, the Wolves affrighted, and our danger past, we went merrily to Breakfast."

"Cultural Tidbits"

The heading above is used in a new inter-American literary news journal which came to us the other day from Mexico City. We thought it worth using (at least once) because it seems to express the character of the letters transcribed below. The discoverer of the first choice specimen from the Papers of Nathanael Greene was our good friend and Associate, Father Charles Metzger, S.J. The day was rather
warm and the sound of leaves being turned in the Manuscript Rooms was just about all that disturbed the quiet when, suddenly, there was a roar of laughter which quite startled the dust from the tops of the book cases. We tracked the laughter to its source and insisted on a copy of the cause for readers of The Quarto.

"On publiick Sarvis Onrebell Generall Green

"Camp at Mecords ferrey September 18, 1781

"Onred Sir

"this Day I Came to Camp and Spoke to Colo molbeday and he got in a grate passan and Said he wood not give oup the Command till he had Express Orders from your Oner I told him that I had orders by word of mouth But he wood not know now man without Express Orders from your oners hand which I Hope you will Send by the Berer What part of the millishta is to be garde and if aney parte of the millishta that is here on Command is to be Sent you will please to Let me know I shall wate your order all from your

"Humbl Servant
"Francis Lock"

The second tidbit is a printed letter from the Azores written in 1884 by Antonio Ramos da Silveira Coutinho. Perhaps it belongs in the University's fine Transportation Library, although we probably like it too well to let it go. The letter, addressed to Lt. B. M. Mason, reads in part as follows:

"I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 4th ultimo, fulfilling an order of the Honorable Secretary of the Navy Department, relative to my communication of May 15th, referred to the subject, of setting locomotive Engines IN SAIL VESSELS. Therefore, I am greatly pleased for this opportunity, to inform the same Honorable Secretary, that the business in question now, is so easy to be conceived, that any one needs not too much doing, to understand it, by the way I am going to de-

scribe; subduing myself to your request.

"Do place with firmness, to the deck of any vessel, a locomotive Engine, without wheels on, and then make it work as usually; this is all what men have to do, for the purpose of seeing a ship go over the sea, as the STEAM VESSELS do now at our sight. This may also be used by the steam vessels, for thier greater speed on sea.

"The locomotive Engines may be perfixed on an axis, in the center of the frame; in order as to make the Engine move, to any side wanted; to approach the vessel to any object intended necessary--as to an other vessel, wharf, and so on.

"So, I am sure the great pressure of the locomotive, will force the vessel to go with speed even yet more, than the Engines do IN STEAM VESSELS.

"This description is only a summary one; and needs not any drawings or sketches to be produced, in order as to be well understood; and is of a nature so simple, that being subdued to the judgment of the Navy Department, Gentlemen, of course will do me justice."

---

**Our Friend Washington**

A recent gift of The Associates has irritated us to the point where most of the staff would like to scream with rage and frustration. It is an especially important book, but we can't seem to decide just where it fits in. The title is *Memoire Contenant le Précis des Faits ...* [Paris] Sur l’Imprimé. De l’Imprimerie Royale. 1756. It is a kind of White Paper from the French Court complaining of the military actions of the British in North America. Our particular interest (textually) is in the appearance of the "Journal du Major Washington," which is the first appearance in print of the captured journal Washington had written during his famous expedition to western Pennsylvania.

Our irritation over the Memoire is purely bibliographical. You see, Louis XV was somewhat annoyed at the antics of the British along the Ohio River and, since he was not certain that his own claim to the country was entirely justified, he made a display of his displeasure by circulating the "facts in the case." This he did by distributing a manuscript memorandum to European chancellories. The British thereupon published a semi-official set of *Observations* which gave the French a fine opportunity to break into print with their charges and a set of justifications. Using the Royal Printing House, Louis XV printed and reprinted the *Memoire* many times. We have long had nine variant printings of the piece and we have known for many years that there was one other on record. About fifteen years ago, one of our Curators of Books spent many hours tracking down these variant printings and putting them in a logical order. Everything seemed settled. Then the James C. McCoy Library was placed on the market this last spring and much to our consternation the McCoy copy of the *Memoire* was found to match none of the known variants. Well, consternation and delight, for it is always pleasurable to secure something no one else seems to have. Our irritation stems from the fact that we have not been able yet to fit this new copy into the sequence of printings. When we have solved the problem (as we shall eventually) we may, in the words of Thomas Dudley, go "merrily to Breakfast."