New Manuscript Collection

Last spring we went “fishing.” Our pole extended across the Atlantic, and our “hook” (a question mark, upside down) dropped into the county seat of an English nobleman—the Viscount Cobham of Hagley Hall, Stourbridge. We learned that he was willing to part with the correspondence of one of his ancestors to a Library that already contained the papers of several British officials active in American affairs. The ancestor in question was William Henry Lyttelton, governor of Georgia, superintendent in the South, the governors in America, the Indian War was fought in the North and Indian War. We have seen various minor officials. We have seen the corresponding official, active in American affairs.

The collection arrived in October. It consists of about 1200 letters received by Gov. Lyttelton in the period 1755 to 1760. The writers were cabinet ministers in England, other governors in America, the Indian superintendents in the South, the commanders-in-chief (Lord Loudoun and Sir Jeffery Amherst), and various minor officials. We have seen enough to feel convinced that we have a collection significant for historians. So much of the French and Indian War was fought in the North that we tend to ignore what went on in the southern colonies at the time. Much of the correspondence deals with the Indian problem: enlisting the aid of the southern tribes to combat the northern tribes that sided with the French and were raiding the frontier. The Southern Indians were smart enough to obtain all the gifts and promises they could before providing more than token assistance.

Letters from the collection are on exhibition in the Library now.

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Associate Cum Laude

James Shearer II of Chicago has done it again! In conjunction with his cousins awhile ago he established a James Shearer Memorial Fund in honor of their grandfather, an acquaintance of Mr. Clements in Bay City. Income from the fund may be spent by the Library on rare Americana. Now Associate Jim is establishing a second fund for the Library, and the income eventually will be used for acquisitions closer to home: early Michigan exploration and the Old Northwest.

We are glad to announce that Jim’s talk at the Library on Founder’s Day was published in the September issue of Michigan History. Reprints of it, “Bay City and the Clements Library,” were ordered and mailed to Associates.

As if that weren’t enough, Jim has been lassoing members for the Clements Library Associates.

Thanksgiving

Rejoicing in GOD, and Thanksgiving to Him, is a Duty and Tribute, all Christian People continually owe Him. Although it hath pleased a just and holy GOD, in some Instances, to frown upon this Land and Colony in the Year past; yet his Grace and undeserved Beneficence, demand our most sincere and hearty Praise... shed forth the efficacious Influences of the Spirit of Grace and Peace upon our Nation, Land and Government: make us a People of his Praise, and fill the whole Earth with his Glory.

Proclamation appointing November 14, 1771 as a day of Thanksgiving, by Jonathan Trumbull, Governor of Connecticut

Manuscript Map

When the British forces under Sir William Howe marched into Philadelphia on September 25, 1777, they had won a seaport, but one without access to the sea. The Americans still held the Delaware River. One of the most recent additions to our collection of manuscript maps of the American Revolution is a plan showing the British assault on Fort Mifflin, situated on Mud Island just below the mouth of the Schuylkill River and south of Philadelphia. The colored drawing was made by Captain (later Lieutenant General) Samuel Fraser, of the 71st Regiment.

Captain Fraser served in America from 1777 to 1781 under Howe and Clinton. He had earlier seen action in Canada as a subaltern in the 78th or Fraser Highlanders commanded by Simon Fraser, Master of Lovat, in 1759–60. (No relation.)

This important map was purchased from a fund provided by the Philadelphia University of Michigan Club. It gives in detail the placement of the batteries, ships, and units of the British Army which had to be used to reduce the undermanned and uncompleted fortification. The post was finally abandoned by the Americans on November 16, 1777. Fort Mercer, at Red Bank, just across on the New Jersey shore, was captured a few days later, thus opening the river after two months for the much needed reinforcements and supplies on which the British had been waiting.

The Library already owned one printed map of the area published by William Faden in London. They show the fortifications along the river, including underwater “cheveaux de frise,” or posts designed to tear out the bottom of any vessels trying to pass over them.
Ces Americaines

General Washington’s great problem after the French alliance in 1778 was to arrange a time when the military forces of the two countries could act together effectively against a substantial part of the British army. The failure of one hope after another would have ground away the patience of any man but Washington. It was not until 1781 that circumstances favored him, and suddenly the wheels began to turn in unison. The French troops in Rhode Island joined him on the Hudson, and together they swept down into Virginia to bottle up Lord Cornwallis on the York peninsula. On the way Washington got word that the French fleet in the West Indies was sweeping up the Carolina coast. The ships came up behind Cornwallis and prevented a British fleet from rescuing him. Hence, the victorious campaign at Yorktown that prompted the British to give up the war.

Such a climactic campaign in the Revolution is of considerable interest to this Library. We are happy to be able to announce the acquisition of a manuscript journal by a French naval officer (name unknown) serving under Admiral De Grasse from March 22, 1781 to May 31, 1782. The West Indies campaign of the French against the British, before and after Yorktown, is recounted, along with the maneuvers and actions that squeezed Cornwallis in a fatal grip. The author was in a position to know what went on at high levels. The manuscript, in French, covers 82 pages of a folio notebook in marbled boards.

Perhaps the best part of this story is the means of obtaining it. It was expensive, of course, but Mrs. Hubert S. Smith of Bay City permitted us to sell an atlas she gave us of which we already owned a copy. The income received then went for the French manuscript, and the item is now considered a part of the Hubert S. Smith Collection on Naval Affairs. You can’t beat a “triple play” like that.

Julian Boyd Speaks

The third annual Randolph G. Adams Memorial Lecture, delivered by Julian P. Boyd, equalled our high anticipation. Dr. Boyd, historian and librarian, is at work editing The Papers of Thomas Jefferson at Princeton University, and he brought the audience a distillation of Jefferson’s answer to the problem of how the new American republic would develop leaders in the absence of an old world privileged class.

A closed corporation of titled persons, whose titles and privileges of governing descended to eldest sons, was inconsistent with the American idea of self-government. Even European friends of the new nation could not see how it could survive without an aristocracy that would give stability and duration to our system of government. But the American idea, Dr. Boyd pointed out, was that “status and responsibility were to be earned, not granted by a benevolent sovereign or acquired by the accident of birth.” It remained for Jefferson to explain how “an aristocracy for a republic” could be developed.

His method was education, both to enable the people to understand their rights and responsibilities and to draw out the superior minds that could lead. His proposals for free public education were a “proposition that men everywhere could, if they chose, bear themselves as sovereigns,” Dr. Boyd said, and it “produced the oldest and most powerful democracy on earth. It stands forever as a warning that those who legislate their fears of the people command no such resources of power and draw forth no such natural aristocracy as those who legislate their faith in what the people can achieve.”

Highlighting the lecture was the presence not only of Mrs. Randolph G. Adams but of her son and daughter-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas R. Adams, and of the late Dr. Adams’ brother, Prof. John S. Adams, all of the University of Pennsylvania.
Pennsylvania Real Estate

When the Library, through the Philadelphia University of Michigan Club Fund, secured the rare pamphlet Beschreibung der in America neuerfundenen Provinz Pensylvania (Hamburg, 1684), our primary interest lay in its value as an addition to our “land promotion literature,” especially because of the German translation of a William Penn letter in it. Further study of the background of this pamphlet led to an appreciation not only of Penn’s promoting activities, but also to those of the publisher, Benjamin Furly of Rotterdam, one of Penn’s greatest agents.

Furly, a distinguished Quaker, prosperous merchant, skilled lin-

guist, ardent advocate of religious liberty, friend of eminent philosophers, and author of over sixty books, served well the Quaker cause, and particularly, Penn. When Penn and other Quaker notables visited the continent, Furly was both host and interpreter. He translated and published numerous writings of the Friends at a time when to do so was dangerous, and advocated the Quaker cause before several courts. Several of his publications, such as this German work, and another edition in French, were aimed at spreading the word of Penn’s colony in the New World.

This tract contains Furly’s own explanations of colonists’ rights and obligations in the Pennsylvania colony; translations of three items which had previously appeared in English—Penn’s letter to the Free Society of Traders, Holme’s description of Philadelphia, and a letter from another Quaker, Thomas Paskell, describing his colonial experi-

ences. No prospective emigrant could have failed to be reassured by the glowing and concise information.

Furly, an Englishman, did not migrate to America himself, but remained in his adopted city until his death in 1714. His contacts made him useful to Penn as an agent.

Acadian Subdivisions

A decade before Penn and Furly, Inc. issued their advertising brochures for the Quaker colony, a Frenchman, Nicolas Denys, sought to lure emigrants to his grant in Acadia with a work entitled Description Geographique et Historique des Costes de l’Amerique Septentrionale (Paris, 1672). From personal experiences as a trader beginning in 1639, he wrote knowingly, if narrowly, of the area now comprising Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. His business interests made him a better geographer than historian, and rivalry for control of land grants dominates the historical portion of the account. Nevertheless, a vivid, first-hand description of the forests, waters, Indians, and events of the territory resulted. It appeared at a time when less was being written about French Canada than earlier or later.

In 1908, William F. Ganong in the introduction to his English translation of Denys’ book, relayed a suggestion that in 1954 on the three hundredth anniversary of Denys’ appointment as Governor of the North Shore, a statue should be erected commemorating the event. In 1954, appropriately the Clemens Library marked the event by purchasing a splendid copy of Denys’ historical book.

This slim, two-volume set with its fine typography, complete with the rare plates and map, bound in brown morocco by R. Petit, came from the library of J. C. McCoy, the famous collector of French Canadia. Now it stands on the shelves of another great collection along with other primary narratives of exploration and colonization, some of which borrowed heavily from Denys.

Mississippi Bubble

James Smith was worried. As an English civil official, he had spent some time in Massachusetts as judge advocate of the admiralty courts. At an early date he perceived the wealth to be developed in the Mississippi Valley and was anxious for patriotic reasons that the French should not enjoy it. Yet he observed that a Scotsman named John Law, who had gained a reputation as a banker in France, had organized a French company to settle and exploit the riches of the lower Mississippi Valley—at the back door of the British colonies. Stock in this Mississippi Company was ardently sought after, and the price spiralled upward as demand increased, the rising price arousing greater demand.

Not foreseeing the likely result of such speculation, Smith wrote a tract entitled Some Considerations on the Consequences of the French Settling Colonies on the Mississippi, in which he advocated that England take vigorous counter-measures by forming an English Mississippi Company. The Library now owns a copy. Smith’s concern is commendable, but in the same year his tract appeared, 1720, John Law’s “Mississippi bubble” burst. Suddenly the French investors realized they were pursuing only a speculation, that nothing had yet developed in America that would produce the slightest profit for the company. No show, no dough. When the hysterical demand ceased, the stock couldn’t be given away. Smith’s fears also vanished, and the Mississippi Valley was still pretty much a wilderness when England won the eastern half of it in 1763 by conquest.
Three Books to Note
Since our last Quarto, three new books by local men have been published based on research at this Library.

One is a biography, Benjamin Franklin and a Rising People, by Verner W. Crane, professor of history at the University and a member of the Library's Committee of Management. Of course, he used Franklin sources elsewhere, but he made use of the printed and manuscript material we have. The book appeared in the summer and is receiving splendid reviews. It was published by Little, Brown Co. in the series called The Library of American Biography.

After the American Revolution, Sir Henry Clinton, who had commanded the British forces from 1778 to 1812 wrote a narrative history of the war. He is the only commander-in-chief on either side to have done so. The two stout volumes, still in process of revision, came to the Library with the purchase of his papers. Professor William B. Wilcox of the history department tackled it and has transcribed (and deciphered) a definitive text. He also annotated it and provided an appendix of documents from Clinton's correspondence. Yale University Press published the book last month under the title of The American Rebellion. This is the kind of "library publicity" we enjoy.

In recognition of the achievements of both men and of their work here, the Library gave a tea for them on November 8.

The Library's director, Howard H. Peckham, also had a book published, on November 8. It is a collection of stories about white persons captured by Indians in the centuries from 1676 to 1865. Most of them wrote about their experiences after their release, and those accounts are here rewritten in shorter form. The book was published by Rutgers University Press and is illustrated.

Howard H. Peckham, the Library director, was elected president of the American Association for State and Local History this fall for a two-year term. The annual meeting of the Association was held in Madison, Wisconsin. This is the organization that publishes American Heritage magazine, which has now been transferred to a separate corporation set up by the Association and investors.

Satisfaction Plus
The Weekly Magazine of Original Essays, Fugitive Pieces, and Interest-

Victory + 1 Book = 1 Title
The French and Indian War so much overshadows the long struggle between France and England for supremacy in North America that we tend to forget the earlier wars of that rivalry. The last preceding one, 1744-48, is familiarly known as King George's War.

The principal operation of that war was the capture of Louisbourg on Cape Breton Island in 1745 by American colonial troops and British ships. But when the peace treaty was signed in 1748, England agreed to return Louisbourg to the French in return for Madras, India, which had been taken by the French. New England felt insulted by the loss of the hard-bought island, from which the French had preyed on their fishing boats, and this was the reason for the slowness with which New England responded to the next call to arms in 1755.

Source materials on King George's War are fewer in number and harder to find than on the French and Indian War. Therefore we were pleased to obtain one of the very few copies of An Accurate Journal and Account of the Proceedings of the New-England Land-Forces, during the late Expedition against the French Settlements on Cape Breton. Although the author is not known, the account was forwarded to England by William Pepperell, who commanded the troops and hoped his victorious conduct would not be overlooked by the king. It was published by the recipient, his friend Captain Henry Stafford, at Exon in 1746.

Although the publication failed to hold Louisbourg for the British, it paid off Pepperell in personal honors. He was knighted and made a baronet in 1746, the first time this honor had ever been conferred on a native American! As a merchant he was independently wealthy, and as chief justice of Massachusetts sat high in political councils. He fought again in the French and Indian War, until his death by illness in 1759.