Russian Americana

A Christmas present brought to the Library Adam Ivan Krusenstern's monumental *Voyage Round the World*, published in St. Petersburg, 1810-14. It is a timely addition to background material on the far Northwest. Our newest state, Alaska, preserves the memory of Krusenstern in two of its place names: Cape Krusenstern, north of Kotzebue Bay; and the island of Krusenstern in the Diomede group in Bering Straits.

Captain Krusenstern was a Dane appointed to undertake Russia's first circumnavigation of the globe in 1803. He had three objectives in view. He would rejuvenate the Russian American Company, which had bogged down on its land route from the Orient, by pioneering the water route for shipment of furs. He also took with him a special diplomatic mission to renew Russian relations with Japan. Finally, he hoped to explore the area of America's northwest coast. His explorations were the most lasting contribution.

The account of his voyage fills three volumes, accompanied by a huge folio of maps and another of pictures executed with great skill and precision. The latter illustrate natives, their industries, tools, and occupations. Our set in first edition is in the Russian language. By 1821 the text was translated into most of the European languages, but the plates did not accompany all these later editions.

The chief source of spiritual nourishment for any nation must be its own past, perpetually rediscovered and renewed.

Ralph Barton Perry

Mrs. Hubert S. Smith of Bay City presented this rarity to the Library to be added to the books on naval affairs collected by her late husband and which she gave to the Library earlier.

Krusenstern's first contact with America had been in 1795, when as a young naval officer he visited this country and is reputed to have made the personal acquaintance of President Washington. One volume of text and one of plates is currently on exhibition in the Library as part of the display of sources for information about Alaska and the Northwest Coast. Exploration of this area was a continuation of the old European dream of finding a water passage around the top of the American continent. As was demonstrated only last year, what Captain Krusenstern needed to combat the ice barrier was a submarine.

James Clements Wheat

We regret to announce the death of James Clements Wheat, sometime Curator of Maps, University alumnus, and nephew of William L. Clements, on December 21 in Bay City. To within a month of his passing he was at work on his great hobby: a bibliography of maps printed in America before 1800. Years of painstaking study, visits to other libraries in this country and abroad, typing and organizing had gone into his work. More than a year ago he enlisted the aid of Christian Brun, our map librarian, and the two of them began pulling together the last threads of inquiry. A few entries and descriptions have reached final form; others remain to be written up from various notes. Mr. Brun is moving toward a finished manuscript, and we can safely say that the bibliography will be published.

The principal compiler will not see the result, unfortunately. On the other hand, everyone who knew him will know that the fun and the challenge and the achievement was in the research. He earned that satisfaction.

G. W. Score

James S. Schoff, a helpful friend and Associate of New York, has added to his earlier gift of autograph letters of the Revolutionary period a clutch of a hundred additional letters. They include fourteen George Washington letters, bringing the Library's holdings to a total of 78 Washington letters, plus 26 contemporary copies of G.W. letters.

In Mr. Schoff's latest gift are two letters from Gen. Charles Lee, two from Caesar Rodney, one from Benedict Arnold, John Marshall, Israel Putnam, Lord Stirling, Thomas Gage, and others. These are not only important names, but the particular
letters are significant in themselves. They say something! The bulk of the gift is a group of 70 letters and documents of Col. Jonathan Chase about his regiment, a collection that reveals military problems on a regimental level.

**Americana Auction**

In the last Quarto mention was made that the Associates' Board of Governors had allowed the Library a thousand dollars to spend at the forthcoming Bauer sale in New York. Armed with this sum and Library funds, the Director sallied forth to joust with other bidders at the Parke-Bernet Galleries.

A curious situation was soon discovered. Books which the Galleries estimated would sell for about $200 or less were knocked down at about half those anticipated figures. (It was our luck to have most of them or not want them). But books estimated to be worth $300 and more brought fifty to one hundred percent more than such figures! Genuine rarities are simply going up, however much libraries may lament the fact.

The Library was able to purchase five titles. Another one that escaped us was later bought for us. The president of the Galleries ventured the opinion that the higher prices began in English auctions last fall and are now reaching this country. He recognized also that higher prices for paintings influence books. We hate to see books regarded solely as objects of art or their prices based entirely on scarcity, like the prices of stamps. Nevertheless, the inflationary trend is almost inevitable, because as the supply dries up more and more copies of rare books go into libraries never to return to the market. "Available" copies therefore diminish steadily, and each one is regarded as perhaps one of the last that will ever be offered.

**Up the Red River**

We hear so much about the Lewis and Clark expedition into the far Northwest to explore the upper reaches of the Louisiana Purchase that we forget President Jefferson provided for the exploration of the southern area too. Capt. Zebulon Pike was sent into the modern Arkansas region and on up the Mississippi in the years 1805-07. A related expedition explored in 1806 up the Red River (which starts in northwest Texas and becomes the modern boundary of Oklahoma and Texas before it empties into the Mississippi). It was commanded by Messrs. Freeman and Custis, whose report to the War Office was published in Washington or Philadelphia in 1807, in a small number of copies. They went up the river until turned back by Spaniards.

Six copies only seem to be known today, and one of them appeared in the Bauer sale. With Associates' money, we were able to buy it. This is fundamental source material.

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**And Two More**

We took a flyer on a couple of other items in the Bauer sale. One was a biography by the Rev. Joseph Mitchell of the "life, labours, and death of John Stewart," who had founded a Methodist mission among the Wyandot Indians at Upper Sandusky, Ohio, in the early years of the nineteenth century. The book is entitled *The Missionary Pioneer* (New York 1827). What makes the story so unusual is that Stewart was a free Negro, born in Virginia, who migrated to Ohio and after some riotous living became converted and devoted his last years to missionary work.

The other was *A Narrative of Occurrences in the Indian Countries of North America* (London 1817) attributed variously to Simon McGillivray, Lord Selkirk, and Edward Ellice, with the best evidence favoring the first named. The book describes the Red River country around Winnipeg, rich in furs, which was disputed by the American Fur Company and the Hudson's Bay Company. Eventually both lost out to wheat farmers. Lord Selkirk had sponsored a settlement in the region as early as 1812.

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**Ohio Company**

The principal item in the Bauer sale that we missed was the first publication of the Ohio Company: its own *Articles of As-
of 1770, the town turned out for an anniversary oration designed to keep alive this early clash between British soldiers and American civilians (not quite bent on keeping the peace). On each succeeding anniversary another memorial or rousing oration was delivered. This went on for thirteen years, the last one being delivered in 1783. We have had them all except the one for 1780, and this we picked up last month in a presentation copy from the speaker, Jonathan Mason.

A Guide to the Manuscript Maps in the William L. Clements Library, compiled by Christian Brun, will be published next month by the Library. It describes 806 unique maps relating to America drawn chiefly in the 18th century. Clothbound, 225 pages, indexed, and illustrated with five maps, the volume will sell for $4, postpaid. Interested Associates may order it directly from the Library at $3.50. Mr. Brun is our map curator and has done a careful job of listing and explaining these resources, part of the Library’s rich holdings in maps.

Anti-Slavery

Our respectable collection of early anti-slavery tracts continues to grow. We have recently added eight more—speeches, minutes of an American convention, autobiography, etc. For our Lincoln collection we obtained Sen. Stephen A. Douglas’ speech on Kansas, Utah, and the Dred Scott Decision (1857) to which Lincoln made a notable reply, which was published under the name of “Abram” Lincoln. Obviously what he said was more important than the precise identification of the speaker.

Our favorite in the new lot is a rumble from Tom Paine: Ten Minutes Advice to the People of England on the Two Slavery Bills (London 1795). The clever title is reminiscent of an anonymous pamphlet published three years earlier in reply to Tom Paine’s Rights of Man and entitled: Ten Minutes Reflection on the Late Events in France. We wonder if both took their cue from a veterinarian’s guide published in 1787: Ten Minutes Advice to Every Gentleman Going to Purchase a Horse. Anyway, we like this early emphasis on the implication (rediscovered by Readers Digest) that the promise of brevity made the task of reading less objectionable.

A Clutch of New England Divines

Part of the Lathrop and Mabel Harper bequest having come into our hands last year, expendable interest has accumulated. For the first purchase from this new account we wanted to acquire something special, something that would have pleased the Harpers, since they were old friends of Mr. Clements and Mr. Harper was the noted rare book dealer who supplied many of the titles now in this Library.

We have used a part of the money to acquire in a group sixteen seventeenth-century im-
prints relating to New England. One was a sermon, 1647, of the Rev. John White, a Puritan rector in Dorchester, England, hopeful of “purifying” the Church of England. He had been a prime promoter of the colony that settled on Cape Ann, Massachusetts, in the 1620’s. Although it was not a success (the fishermen wouldn’t farm, and the farmers wouldn’t fish, so the sponsors lost money), the Massachusetts Bay Company that settled Boston in 1630 was built on the remnants.

The Rev. Nathaniel Ward was dismissed from his Church of England post for Puritanism and migrated to Massachusetts in 1643. In 1647 he published under a pseudonym The Simple Cobbler of Aggawam (Ipswich), a protest against toleration. The Library has this famous book. The next year he had printed a sequel entitled Mercurius Anti-mechanicus, or the Simple Cobbler’s Boy, which we have just acquired.

Harvard’s President Chauncy is represented by a sermon, Justification of a Sinner (London 1659). It is one of the noted works of this irascible old immersionist. One thing he protested was the “Half-way Covenant” or compromise on church membership worked out by the Massachusetts Synod and proclaimed in 1662. Another title just obtained was that synod’s Proposition Concerning the Subject of Baptism (London 1662).

In the group was an election sermon of 1683, by the Rev. Samuel Torrey, printed in Boston. It was called A Plea for the Life of Dying Religion. Then there is a gathering of eight sermons by the learned Increase Mather in The Mystery of Christ (Boston 1686). His son, the famous Cotton Mather, is represented by A Companion for Communinants (Boston 1690), one of his early works and a discussion of the nature of the Lord’s Supper.

A notable title was the Rev. Samuel Willard’s Doctrine of the Covenant of Redemption (Boston 1693), printed by Benjamin Harris, who was frequently in trouble with the law over freedom of the press. Willard had taken a stand against the court hearing the witchcraft trials, later was acting president of Harvard, and served at Old South Church for decades. No copy of this sermon has appeared at auction since the Brinley sale in 1879.

A group of five pamphlets published in London in 1643 and 1644 represents a religious hassle that involved the Puritans in New England and Old England, the Church of England, and certain Puritans exiled to Holland who apologized for withdrawing from the Anglican Church. The Apologeticall Narration of the latter inspired two commentaries, A Coole Conference and An Anatomy of Independence, which in turn provoked Some Observations and Annotations, which in turn aroused C. C. the Covenant after Vindicated. (Are you with us?) Subtle differences of doctrine and practice were illustrated by the fact that Roger Williams had just arrived in London in an effort to save his Rhode Island settlement and its religious toleration from the grasping hands of the jealous Puritans in Boston. This sort of controversy reminds us of the intense feelings among the founding generation of Massachusetts, especially over the power of civil magistrates in religious matters and of pastors in civil matters.

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Civil Architecture

Practicing Architect Edward Shaw of Boston felt that the greatest deficiency among aspiring designers was ignorance of mathematics “on which this noble art ultimately rests.” Accordingly in his book Civil Architecture (Boston 1831), one of the early American contributions, he has emphasized the mathematics on which the classicists based their forms. Ninety-five plates adorn the work, which he hoped would improve building taste by demonstrating the rationality of certain proportions. Of course, the classical orders are illustrated, but so are bridges and the shadows cast by various moldings and cornices. A notable addition to our books on American building.

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A new bulletin board installed close to the sidewalk out in front of the Library has had a noticeable effect on attracting passing students into the building to view our exhibition and get acquainted with the nature of the place. No more need they wonder whether we’re open, what’s inside, who may enter, etc., etc.