Associates’ Board

The Associates’ Board of Governors, eleven strong, met at the Library on the afternoon of June 10. They reviewed the finances of the organization and of the Library. Since last fall’s special fund raising had been devoted to manuscripts, they turned their attention to printed books. Fifteen items were on hand for their selection in the widest possible price range. Four of the titles appealed to two governors, who asked to make gifts of them to the Library. Then the Board decided to buy the three most expensive books to add lustre to the Library. They are described below.

Future activities of the organization came under discussion, with some decisions pointed toward the next meeting in October. Membership stands at 492. Several recent books whose authors acknowledge use of the Library were on display. The year has been short in time—nine months, actually—because the Board is shifting to a fiscal year of October 1 to September 30, but benefits to the Library have been great.

Pequot War

One of the myths of American history is that we had no trouble with the Indians until the ambitious and cantankerous chief Philip started a war in 1675, during the third generation of English settlement. What we overlook are the several raids on the Jamestown settlers in Virginia after 1607 culminating in the big Indian uprising of 1622, and the war with the Pequots in Connecticut in 1637.

Somewhat conveniently for historians, there are only three contemporaneous sources for the Pequot War. They are accounts written by Philip Vincent (published in London late in 1637), by John Underhill (published in London 1638), and by John Mason (published in Boston, but not until 1736). Surprisingly, the Library owned none of them. In the past twenty-five years we have seen only one of these offered on a major general, and he believed in an eye for an eye and the punishment of heretics. A nice fellow not to know!

There is a better account of Chauncy in Sibley’s Harvard Graduates than in the Dictionary of American Biography. From the latter one would never know Chauncy’s pretensions to being a historian, yet this aspect of his career is of principal interest to the Library. Apparently he had access to Governor William Shirley’s office in 1755 when news of Gen. Braddock’s defeat arrived. Shirley himself was in the field as a major general, and he succeeded to the command of the English forces on Braddock’s death. Chauncy wrote and published immediately a description of Braddock’s disaster which remains a basic source for that battle. Chauncy’s bitter argument was that the expedition failed because it lacked the leadership talent that only New England officers could supply.

Shortly afterward, the English forces under Sir William Johnson achieved a brilliant victory at Lake George, New York, over the French led by Baron Dieskau.

It may not be amiss to say that the citizen of the twentieth century can hardly understand the institutions and the customs of the nation of which he is a part without having studied with considerable care the reasons for their existence, which are to be found only in their origins.

—Max Savelle

Charles Chauncy was a Boston clergyman who served at First Church from 1727 to 1787. Far from being a liberal theologian, he belonged mentally in the seventeenth century, for he believed in an eye for an eye and the punishment of heretics. A nice fellow not to know!

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And Four More

Dr. Lawrence Reynolds, Detroit, a member of the Board of Governors, revealed himself to be a longtime admirer of Andrew Jackson. He presented to the Library a spirited defense of the general by John Overton published in 1819, after a Senate committee had criticized Jackson's attack on Spanish Pensacola in the Seminole War. Dr. Reynolds also gave us a French pamphlet by a Louisiana native, Marigny, who offered a detailed account of Jackson's services in the battle of New Orleans.

James Shearer II, Chicago, wanted to purchase a reply to a recommendation made in 1824 by William H. Crawford that the problem of Indian integration be solved by intermarriage with whites. With a straight face, Jim avowed that only a bachelor should make such an acquisition. Then he also gave us the two-volume Cincinnati Literary Gazette, 1824, the midwest's answer to the overweening literary burgeoning of New England. Besides the local talent exploited, there is an interesting series of letters from a gentleman who migrated to Texas.

Fiction

Shortly after our last issue, the executive committee of the Associates' Board of Governors made it possible for us to bid on three early American novels at the sale of the late Arthur Swan's Library. We obtained Anne Royall's The Tennessean (1827); Timothy Flint's The Shoshonee Valley (1830); and Augustus Longstreet's Georgia Scenes (1835).

Mrs. Royall is important for describing the region she knew intimately. Flint settled in Cincinnati and knew the "movers" westward, and in this book awakens the interest of readers in the Oregon country. Longstreet's book not only details domestic life of the time, but it is an example of early American humor. They represent the literature growing up outside New England, which was authentically American and is so often overshadowed.

Committee of Management

The Library's Committee of Management, meeting in May, took cognizance of the splendid success of the Associates' Board of Governors in raising money for purchase of the Anthony Wayne papers last fall and directed their warm thanks to the Board for this extraordinary support.

The first major remodeling of the building in more than twenty years was authorized. To accommodate the growing Division of Maps and Prints, it will be necessary soon to move it to the west part of the basement, which will need redecorating and relighting. The Committee has asked the budget officer to include this project in the next budget for plant repair and maintenance.

The Committee also adopted a general statement regarding use of library materials. This represented a codification of existing practices which had been authorized from time to time and a philosophical rationale, the whole being a careful summation of several discussions. Several matters concerning acquisitions were considered, but they must remain confidential for the time being.
Do, Re, Me, Fa, So, Law

Maybe it was the effect of having that grand piano in the Main Room, even though it is on loan from the School of Music. We have been collecting early American tune books for several years, but early American musicians have been beyond our reach—both because there were so few of them and because nothing about them ever appeared on the market.

Then suddenly this spring a friend of the University's School of Music, Mrs. Mary Nelson, notified Prof. Allen Britton that while she was rummaging around an antique shop in Camden, South Carolina, she learned that the proprietor owned the papers of Andrew Law, composer, choir director, and music publisher. Prof. Britton called us; we wrote to Camden; and in due course the Library received a box of manuscript material.

Andrew Law (1749–1821) was a native of Connecticut and a minister, but he early turned to music. He collected and issued several books of hymns. Then he conducted choirs and singing schools. He invented a plan of printing music by omitting the staff and using several differently shaped notes. He also did some composing. In sum, he was a professional musician and one of the most important American composers.

What the Library acquired was 1,200 manuscript items, including 500 letters, 700 accounts and business papers, 350 sheets of manuscript music, and 350 pages of personal memoranda. Two of his published books also were in the lot. When Irving Lowens, the eminent music historian, learned of our haul, he offered us his collection of a dozen Law tune books. We bought these also, so that now the Library is the head-quarters for information on Andrew Law. We understand that the papers of only one other eighteenth-century American composer are available, so that the uncovering of this lot is a significant addition of source material for musicologists.

We salute Mrs. Nelson, Mr. Britton, and Mr. Lowens for their friendly interest and help.

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Clements-Lilly Fellows

Setting in operation the summer research program made possible by a contribution from Lilly Endowment, Inc., the Library has offered grants to three scholars well along in their research on topics relevant to Clements holdings.

One award went to Hugh F. Rankin, assistant professor of history at Tulane University, who is working on the American Revolution. Another went to Charles R. Ritcherson, associate professor of history at Kenyon College, who is concerned with Anglo-American relations after the Revolution. The third was given to Miss Betty Fladeland, assistant professor of history at Central Missouri State College, who is doing research on the anti-slavery movement in the West Indies.

It was not easy to make these selections from the applications received. For next year the closing date will be set back and more publicity issued. Ordinarily only two awards will be made per summer. We look forward to meeting these historians and being of service to them.

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Algerine Captives

Harley Bartlett, retired chairman of the botany department, promised us his handful of books on Algerine captives. Upon his lamented death this spring, his sister called us and turned over a dozen books to us.

In the early years of the last century United States commerce was subject constantly to attacks by "pirates" sent out by Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, and Tripoli. These could be avoided only by paying bribes to the Barbary powers. We finally went to war against the Bey of Algiers and ended his little racket in 1805. Other seizures continued until after the end of the War of 1812, when Commodore Stephen Decatur entered the Mediterranean and put an end to the whole business.

Before that happened the narratives of several officers and even women who had experienced captivity and cruel treatment before being ransomed had appeared in print. They were popular sensational reading. We're mighty glad to have some of those accounts.

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For the Record

Our experiment in producing a phonograph record, "Voices of the American Revolution," is working out. A good many were sold to Associates and friends at Christmas time. Then reviews began to appear in school journals, and we sent an advertising piece to high school principals in Michigan. Orders have been arriving steadily.

Secretary, Clements Library Associates
The University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, Michigan

... Count me as an Associate. Here is my contribution ($5 minimum) for 1959. As a bonus I shall receive a reproduction copy of the Columbus Letter (1493) in Latin and English. (over)
History Lesson

In a recent acquisition, Letters Addressed to a Young Man on his First Entrance into Life (Charlestown, Mass., 1809) by Mrs. West, a whole chapter is given to “The Excellent Uses of Historical Studies.” We cannot transcribe the chapter, but after the author points out that history, unlike science, may be studied without the help of instructors, she goes on to say that the subject fits us “for the busy scenes of life. A person conversant in its eventful pages will not so implicitly trust in specious virtue, as to be the ready dupe of the artful hypocrite. By considering what man ever has been, we may readily estimate what he must now be; and so many miseries are occasioned by romantic expectations, and false views of life, that in our pursuit of happiness we cannot use a more salutary preparation than by endeavoring to obtain a thorough knowledge of the scenes in which we are to be actors... Experience, which determines on the present by inferences drawn from the past, is our substitute for wisdom.

“Historical studies, when combined with those religious principles that ought to be the groundwork and foundation on which all knowledge is built, are peculiarly adapted to tranquillize our minds in the eventful agitating times in which we live.

“The concurrent testimony of the most faithful narrators will detect the fallacy of many bold assertions, intended to support the idea that man is degraded by bartering personal independence for general protection... If free-born man be degraded by submission, how comes it that his improvement and happiness have ever kept pace with his ideas of order, regularity and obedience?... Man either continues a solitary savage, roaming from wild to wild, and subsisting by his own exertions in constant danger and distress, or he unites to seek for safety; union teaches him the necessity of choosing a chief; he learns obedience; and after a course of ages becomes comparatively wise and happy.”

Ohio Valley Maps

Lloyd A. Brown, former Clements Library Curator of Maps, is the author of the recently published Early Maps of the Ohio Valley (University of Pittsburgh, 1959). Reproduced in this fine folio volume are fifty-four significant maps chosen from over 500 available originals showing the historical development of the Upper Ohio River Valley from the time of Marquette and his map of 1673 to the Clements Library’s own Hartley-Jefferson manuscript map of 1783. Shown are key maps by Franquelin, Henry Popple, John Mitchell, Lewis Evans, Thomas Hutchins and many other noted cartographers of the period. There is an authoritative descriptive note for each and the reproductions are preceded by a short introductory essay. The early background work for the book was begun by the late Howard N. Eavenson of Pittsburgh and its publication has been sponsored under a fund established by Mrs. Eavenson.

Methodists

Our current exhibition touches on the development of the Methodist Church in the United States. Few persons recall that John and Charles Wesley visited the colonies in the 1730’s, and their disciple, George Whitefield, made quite a stir here in the 1740’s. The church got organized as a separate denomination at a meeting in December 1784.

We were able to pull together a number of relevant books and even a manuscript letter of John Wesley to an army chaplain in America. The exhibition honored the Detroit Conference of the Methodist Church, meeting in Ann Arbor the middle of June.

The JCB Annual Lecture

Your secretary enjoyed the signal honor of speaking at the John Carter Brown Library of Brown University (Providence) for the annual meeting of the Associates of that library on April 14. To open an exhibition on “The Struggle for North America, 1690–1760,” Mr. Peckham reviewed this period of our history and offered some interpretations of what took place. An invited audience of about 200 filled the main room of the library, similar to the gatherings in the Clements Library.

Some of the riches of the John Carter Brown were on display, and the occasion was delightful. The librarian is Thomas R. Adams, son of the late Randolph G. Adams, who headed the Clements Library for so many distinguished years. Following the lecture (but having no connection with it, we trust) the Brown Library is to undergo extensive remodeling.

Mr. Peckham took advantage of his trip to visit certain rare book dealers in the New England.