Hey, Look Us Over

Appearance gets taken for granted in leaflets like ours, and being utilitarian minded in laying out this news sheet, we had not emphasized typographic taste. The Board of Governors wondered about a revised format to make The Quarto more attractive to the eye.

Fortunately we were able to secure the services of Sue Allen, a typographical consultant in Chicago. She has given us a fresh look, greater readability, and perhaps more dignity. We hope you like our new dress.

Winter's Blooms

If it was a good winter for snow and flu, it was a poor one for acquisition of great books. We scanned the usual catalogs and even bid at a couple of auctions, but few exciting titles came our way.

We did get an early book on American building in Robert G. Hatfield's American House-Carpenter (New York and London 1844). It contains more than 300 engravings of architectural details for the ambitious contractor. This was matched by a gift from Associate Roscoe Bonistee of The Buildings of Detroit (Detroit 1968) compiled under the discriminating eye of W. Hawkins Ferry, who ventured to include our library among his notable choices.

We found only twelve new titles on slavery, but we were able to add an early essay on wages in Paul Inglis' Letter to Mechanics and Working Men (New York 1840). Two early books of poetry seemed worth preserving, but we were more impressed by two very early novels: Susanna Rowson's The Fille de Chambre (Baltimore 1795) and the anonymous Margaretha, or the Intracacies of the Heart (Philadelphia 1807). We also found a copy of Henry M. Brackenridge's rare Eulogy on the Lives and Characters of John Adams and Thomas Jefferson (Pensacola 1826).

Texas and Mexico drew our attention. After picking up a collection of 38 broadside decrees by Gen. Santa Anna beginning in 1831, we found Robert Burford's Description of the Panorama of the Superb City of Mexico (New York 1828), a description of one of those impossibly large canvases. Associate Laurin Hunter bought us John Scoble's Texas (London 1839) which the author wanted to see recognized as an independent power. Then we obtained two contemporary accounts of the Mexican War—one by a Mexican and one by a New Yorker. Finally, we secured Victor Considerant's Au Texas (Paris 1855), an appeal for his colony of Frenchmen at San Antonio. Considerant was a dreamy socialist, head of the Fourierist movement, whose venture into Texas ultimately failed.

Erie Canal

Mention of "canal fever" in the last Quarto jogged the memory of Associate Francis F. McKinney. He forwarded to us an account written in 1857 by his grandfather, Elias Willard Smith, about the activities of Smith's father, Israel Smith.

A Yorker, Israel Smith often consulted with Gov. DeWitt Clinton on the latter's project for constructing a canal across the state. Smith saw the necessity of a basin at the Albany end of the Erie Canal which could serve as a terminus for ships loading and unloading freight. He supervised construction of the facility in the face of intense local opposition. Ultimately he became vice president and then president of the canal company before his resignation in 1851.

Smith earlier had a brush with the ill-fated Burr expedition of 1806. He was a brother-in-law of one of Burr's advisers, Gen. John Swartout, and evidently Smith believed he was participating in a legitimate expedition against Spanish possessions and that an American declaration of war
was imminent. Smith was arrested and testified at the trial of Burr for high treason. Burr was acquitted, and Smith returned to western New York seemingly unharmed by his scrape with the federal government.

Telling It as It Is

In a front-page review of The Making of the University of Michigan, 1817–1967, the London Times Literary Supplement for October 31, 1968, explained to its readers that “the great Rackham Foundation and the great Clements Library in part account for the very great distinction of the University of Michigan.”

True, true, and we only hope our colleagues in the Medical School, the Law School, and certain other departments can bear up nobly under this discriminating praise.

Making the Crooked Straight

The Missionary Society of Connecticut did not set out at the beginning of the nineteenth century to win the world to Christ. Neighboring societies were sending missionaries to Hawaii, the South Seas, and India. Connecticut was satisfied if it could shed a little Christian light among the roughnecks who were beginning to fill up Ohio and filter into Indiana and Michigan.

We weren’t aware of this pious concern for our forebears until dealer Cedric Robinson pointed out their annual reports, beginning with 1800. Each one reviews home missionary activities and ministering to the frontier. There were the good guys and the bad guys, and the latter were at least kept on the run. We have all but two of the first twenty Society annual reports.

Housekeeping

The Library has always prided itself on the care it gives its material and not letting a backlog of processing get out of hand. We have no books piled up in corners or cartons of manuscripts awaiting attention. The rate of acquisition has seldom exceeded our ability to repair, encase, catalog, and shelve the new arrivals.

Recently we have had a problem finding enough ready shelving to develop a compact stack area in the basement and have made do with rickety inelastic crates. Now we have installed some double-faced steel shelving that enables us to arrange our chronology of short and tall books in proper order, keep our reference work together, and provide deep shelving for our boxes of sheet music. Librarians have a strong sense of order, and the sight of the new shelving gives us daily pleasure.

The new map cabinet, to house Renvil Wheat’s collection of Great Lakes maps, has also been installed in the Division of Maps and Prints. This purchase was a personal tribute on the part of the Associates’ Governors.

Another View

Our Library contains numerous descriptive accounts of early America by foreign visitors. They give us a balanced view of the developing nation, and foreigners often discerned characteristics that were oblivious to native residents. De Tocqueville was perhaps the most famous observer. We were reminded of this literature a few weeks ago when Time published a letter from a foreign visitor:

“May I, as a foreigner, but not any longer quite a stranger, suggest as Time’s Man of the Year: the American. In his agony may he see the greatness of his idealism, and if in his efforts
to make this ideal a reality he often blunders, fails, fosters dislocation and uncertainty, he merely shares in a perplexity as old, and as common, as mankind. It is his willingness to persist that makes him uncommon. Let it be the greatest hope of all of us that his courage never fails.

"Michael F. N. Dixon."

Andrew Law, American Psalmist

There are two special joys for the librarians who work in rare materials. One is the discovery of a treasure, a collection somehow overlooked by others. The other joy is witnessing the use of the rarities by a scholar with the precise interests, abilities and energies to make the best possible study of them. The Clements Library has known these two joys in the acquisition of the Andrew Law papers, and in the recent publication of the praiseworthy book Andrew Law, American Psalmist, by Richard A. Crawford.

The Andrew Law papers were found in a South Carolina antique shop in 1959 and the next year were acquired by the Clements Library. The collection of over 1200 items, one of the most valuable in the field of early American music, covers the years 1775 to 1824 with letters, account sheets, and more than 350 pieces of manuscript music. From time to time, the Clements Library also has acquired original editions of the tunebooks compiled by Andrew Law. We now have 21 issues by this prolific tunesmith in our collection of early American tunebooks.

Andrew Law (1749–1821) was one of the most industrious music masters of his time. For 40 years he went about the Eastern states, organizing singing classes and issuing music collections for sale. He was the first American to earn his living, such as it was, entirely from music. Along with these strictly business goals, he sought to change the lively American music he considered provincial by advocating the smoother European style. He devised also an original system of musical notation which he employed in many of his tunebooks. His singing schools were excellent sounding boards for his theories and innovations. His pupils and those of other such teachers served to improve the singing of congregations greatly in need of such tutoring.

Mr. Crawford, a member of the School of Music faculty of the University, has meticulously explored Law's career through an intensive study of the papers and compositions. Following the well-written and analytical text are several appendices: musical style in Andrew Law's tunebooks; a detailed bibliographical description of his publications; sources of the tunebooks; an index of tunes and one of composers; and a general bibliography.

The publishers, the Northwestern University Press of Evanston, are to be commended too for this handsome production of 494 pages for the Society of Pi Kappa Lambda, national music honor society.

Fever, But Not Flu

When gold was discovered near Pike's Peak in 1858, the fever brought on by the California discoveries of 1848 began all over again. To take advantage of the interest of potential gold seekers, no less than eighteen guides to the Colorado gold regions were published in 1859. They contained the usual descriptions of various routes to the gold fields, practical advice on miners' equipment and other provisions, as well as maps and advertisements.

All of these guides are listed in the Wagner-Camp bibliography, and many are extremely rare today, some existing in only a single copy.

Between 1947 and 1961, all of the nineteen guides were brought out in facsimile editions under the editorship of Dr. Noley Mume of Denver. This Library owns several of the originals, and now we are pleased to have the complete set of reprints. They were a gift of Morrison Shafroth of Denver, a member of the Associates' Board of Governors.

A Mirror of the Times

The commonest kind of publication today—a newspaper—is about the most elusive to find in the period of 150 to 250 years ago. And when found they are expensive. Although we have nearly four thousand volumes of early newspapers—1717 to 1865—we are always looking for runs we don't have. A "run" is an optimistic word. While we would like to find ten or twenty-year runs, we usually have to be satisfied with issues for a year or two.

That is why we were excited to find recently seven years of The Connecticut Mirror of Hartford. It begins with the earliest issues in mid-1809 and continues into December 1815. Not only is this a long run as newspaper finds go, but it covers the War of 1812, of course. An
extra of June 29, 1812 announces the declaration of war. A few numbers are missing, and it wasn’t cheap, but the opportunity was not to be missed.

Ben’s New Stove

Mention Ben Franklin and many people think immediately of his flying a kite in a storm to demonstrate electrical charges. That was an interesting experiment, but it didn’t lead to any such invention as electric lights. Of more pragmatic value at the time was Franklin’s invention in 1742 of a new kind of heating stove. First called the “new Pennsylvania fireplace,” it was a low stove containing loosely fitting iron plates which checked loss of heat up the chimney and warmed the air before it passed out into the room. (That’s the principle of convection, we learned.) It provided more healthful heating at lower fuel cost. The stove was £5 in Philadelphia.

Equally interesting, the Franklin stove was eagerly received in Europe and widely adopted. Forty years later an ironmonger in London by the name of James Sharp made some improvements on the stove and issued an illustrated pamphlet which was both explanatory and advertising. He entitled it An Account of the Principle and Effects of the Air Stove-grates Commonly Known by the Name of American Stoves (London 1781). He acknowledged that Franklin had invented them. We have just acquired the pamphlet because of our interest in American technology.

The Franklin stove is still manufactured today, although we understand that some of the reproductions lack the “heat box” at the rear—which is the essential feature in warming the incoming air! Consequently they are little more than free-standing fireplaces.

Cleveland 1837

Because of rising interest in urban history, we have been picking up early city directories when we see them. Recently we bought a Cleveland directory of 1837. What delights us about it is thirty-six pages of illustrated advertising.

Business activities included job printing, office form books, auctioning, groceries, liquors, ready made clothing, tailoring, hats, furs, law, books, hotel keeping, hardware, carpeting, dry goods, upholstering, banking, shipping, clocks, china and glass, furniture, carriages, mirrors, salt, mill stones, ship chandlery, boots and shoes, travel via stage coach, steamboats, and canal packets, drugs and medicines, building, painting, marble cutting, livery stable, musical instruments, sign painting, hot and cold baths. The city also had four newspapers, eight churches, a market, a hospital, a theater, a lakeside park, three musical societies, and a reading room.

However, in the population of 5,000, there were 24 physicians and 40 lawyers! Those persons who were not sick must have been suing one another.

Jackson’s Table of Organization

Requested by Secretary of War William H. Crawford to comment on a proposed act for the staff organization of the U.S. Army following the War of 1812, Andrew Jackson answered on December 15, 1815 in a splendid letter recently acquired by the Library. Major General Jackson was still commander of the South.

Jackson regarded “it a radical defect in the Act for the organization of the peace establishment that most of the important branches of the Staff have been left without a head.” He proposed for the “stationary staff” an adjutant and inspector general and a quartermaster general with offices in Washington. He further advocated a commissary general of purchases and an apothecary and surgeon general with offices at Philadelphia, and a paymaster general. For the Division Staff, Jackson’s recommendations followed in outline form. Adjutants, quartermasters, commissaries, topographical engineers, judge advocates, chaplains, hospital and garrison surgeons, apothecaries, paymasters, an engineers corps and ordnance department were listed with respective numbers in each category. It is evident from the letter and its enclosure that Jackson regarded this subject of much importance and one to which he had given much thought. It shows what the future President thought our military organization should be in peace time.

New Members Since December

John T. Bent, Rochester, N.Y.; Beach Conger, Pleasantville, N.Y.; Mr. & Mrs. A. H. Copeland, Ann Arbor; James W. Daily, Ann Arbor; Allan F. Diefenbach, Akron; Harold E. Evans, Saginaw; Peter M. Frenzel, Middletown, Conn.; Robert M. Fuoss, Cincinnati; William P. Hodgkins, Jr., Chicago; Mrs. Sidney T. Miller, Jr., Grosse Pointe Farms; Miss Susan Seger, Ypsilanti; Lewis Sheffield, Eastview, Calif.; Paul H. Townsend, Jr., Grosse Pointe; David S. Logan, Chicago.