

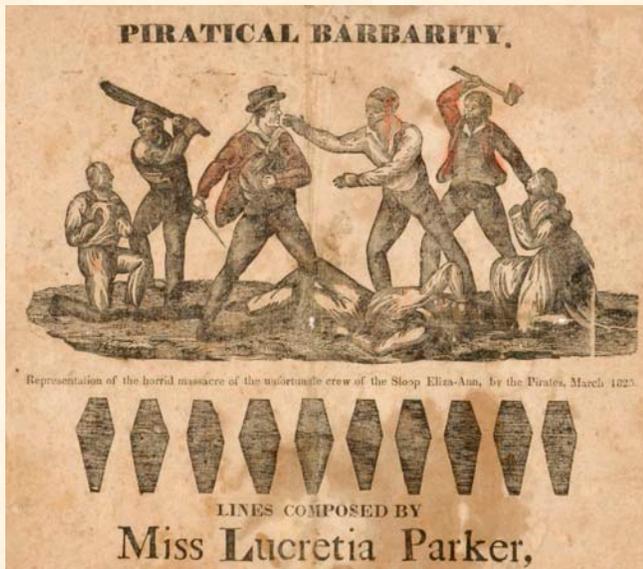


Winter 2012

*Highlighting recent acquisitions, under-utilized collections, and new access-related resources.*

### RECENT ACQUISITIONS: CRIME LITERATURE

One of the strengths of the Book Division is the James V. Medler Crime Collection, which consists of over one thousand items of American crime literature from the mid-18th to the early 20th century. Medler donated his extensive collection to the Clements Library in



*This circa 1825 broadside from the James V. Medler Collection advertises a published account of a bloody encounter with pirates.*

1992, and the Library has continued to add materials to the original collection. It includes books, pamphlets, and broadsides recounting criminal trials, deathbed confessions, and lurid accounts of massacres, atrocities, sin and depravity. These materials provide descriptions of the darker side of American history, but also offer insights into the often unspoken social values and rules of the times, including racial, sexual, and religious attitudes.

The Book Division recently purchased three pamphlets to be added to the Medler Collection. The first is *A Full and Particular Account of the Trial of Francisco Dos Santo, alias Francisco Son, for the Murder of Archibald Graham* (New York, 1806). It describes the

trial and sentencing, as well as providing a brief sketch of the criminal's life and last confession. Dos Santos was a Portuguese sailor who harassed Graham's daughter until Graham struck him down. A few days later, he stabbed Graham to death in an alley.

The second item is *The "Diamond Murder," an Extraordinary Case of an Innocent Man Convicted on Circumstantial Evidence : The Trial of Ignatz Ratzky, Indicted for the Murder of Sigismund Fellner* (Albany, 1868). Ratzky was wrongly convicted of murdering Fellner, a diamond merchant, and throwing his body in the East River. This pamphlet includes character references, Ratzky's statement, an account of the trial, and an appeal to the governor of New York to be pardoned. His sentence was commuted in 1868 to seven years' imprisonment.

*Major General Meade's Report on the Ashburn Murder* (Atlanta, 1868) describes the assassination of G.W. Ashburn, a Georgia politician, by members of the Ku Klux Klan. General Meade led the murder investigation while Georgia was under military rule, but the trial ended when Georgia finally ratified the 14th amendment.

These items are now cataloged and available for research.

### NEWLY CATALOGED: MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION TREASURES

Some of the greatest and largest collections held by the Clements Library have been recently re-catalogued online thanks to a 2009 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Under this grant, the Manuscripts Division processed over 400 collections. Included are some of our most famous, many underused and unknown items, and a selection of recent acquisitions. Most of the grant-funded finding aids are currently available.

The new finding aids describe our magnificent American Revolution and British collections, such as the [William Petty, 1st Marquis of Lansdowne, 2nd Earl of Shelburne Papers](#), [Henry Clinton Papers](#), [Thomas Gage Papers](#), and [Thomas Townshend, 1st Viscount Sydney Papers](#). Many of these include appended subject and other indexes.

The finding aids introduce readers to our holdings pertaining to the French and Indian War era, the War of 1812, slavery and abolition, social and religious reform, Native American history, the Northwest Territory, westward expansion and the Gold Rush, and the Civil War eras. One of many examples of underused collections is the [Dauphin County, Pennsylvania, Slave Records](#), a register of black and mulatto children born in Dauphin County between 1780 and 1825.

Finding aids for several of our collections comprising single manuscripts, such as the [African American History Collection](#) and [Native American History Collection](#), are now accessible online. These include short descriptions of hundreds of significant individual items.

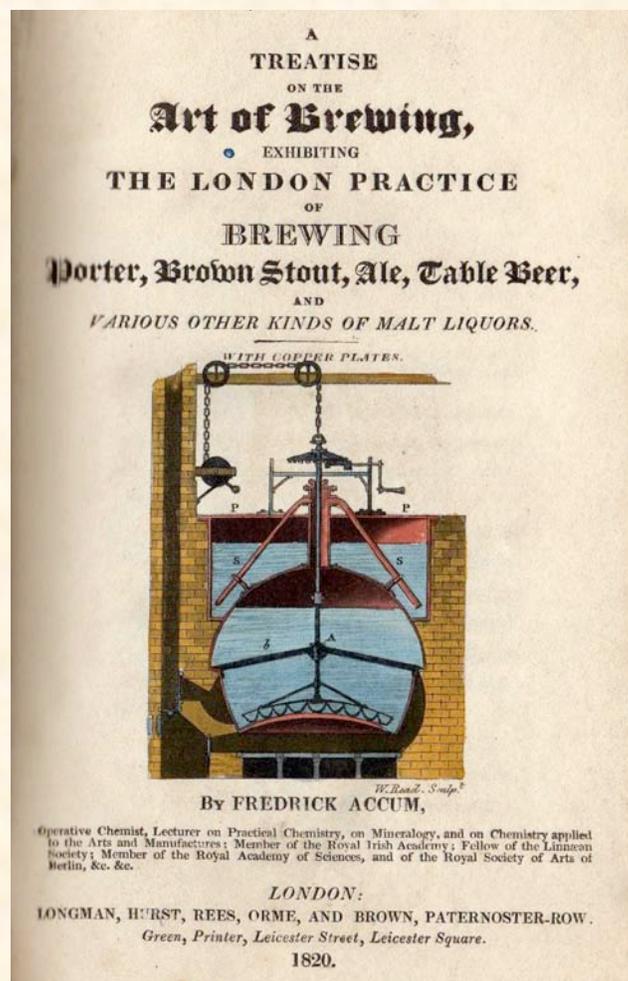
To access manuscript finding aids through Mirlyn, navigate to [www.mirlyn.lib.umich.edu](http://www.mirlyn.lib.umich.edu), narrow your search to the William L. Clements Library, and search for topics in your area of interest. Then, look to the column on the left for the format link to "Archive," "Manuscript," or "Mixed Material." Each Mirlyn record includes a link to the more comprehensive EAD format finding aids.

## BREWING, MADE ACCESSIBLE

The culinary archive has a variety of materials on alcoholic beverages, documenting the circumstances and attitudes that surround their use in the 16<sup>th</sup> through early 20<sup>th</sup> century. These include not only works on the consumption and marketing of wine, beer, and spirits, but also works on their production. Supplementing this last category is the recent purchase of the 1820 [Treatise on the Art of Brewing](#) by Friedrich Christian Accum.

Accum's object, as stated in the preface, is "to divest the art of brewing of the mystery in which it has been involved by interested persons... and lay before those who are interested in it, that scientific mode of operating, which alone can lead to exact and

successful results." This demystification is typical of Accum, a devoted popularizer of chemistry, who gave public lectures on it and strove to write his books in language that would make the subject accessible to a popular audience. Accum came to London in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, and established a career for himself as a chemical analyst, consultant, and lecturer. His analytical work made him aware of the numerous and frequent adulterations of foodstuffs, and this led him to publish [A Treatise on Adulterations of Food, and Culinary Poisons](#), which we also have.

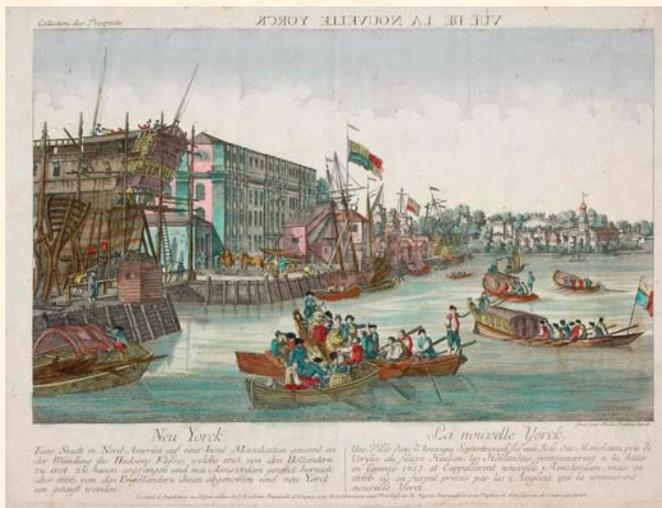


In culinary history, Accum is known for this early work on adulteration, and works on the science behind bread making, wine making, and cooking. The *Treatise on the Art of Brewing* is a rich source on the specifics of malt beverage production in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, both commercial and domestic, with information on malting practices, percentages of alcohol in different beers, and the apparatus used for each step. Particularly useful is a chapter on laws against adulteration of beer and malt, specifying what

adulterants were outlawed, which tells us much about common practices during the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. This work will interest researchers on alcoholic beverages, the early industrialization of food production, and food purity movements.

## PERSPECTIVE VIEWS

Working closely with historical primary source materials can change one's perspective on history, sometimes literally. With the genre of 18<sup>th</sup> century engravings known as "*vues d'optique*" or "perspective views," the illusion of three-dimensional space was intentionally changed and distorted. Furthermore, many of these prints depict largely fictional views. But rather than dismissing such sources as false, one can accept them as truthful, not to the way things looked to the eye, but to how events existed in the imagination.



*This fanciful view of 18<sup>th</sup> century New York, published circa 1776, is in fact copied from an engraved view of Deptford, England.*

In 18<sup>th</sup> century Europe, demand was high for printed views of America during the Revolutionary War. Visual source material based on real observation was limited. Pictures of events taking place in America were slow to arrive, if they arrived at all. The result was a proliferation of European prints based on pirated, re-appropriated, or invented visual information.

The popular *vues d'optique* were made to be viewed through a tabletop lens known as an optical-diagonal machine or zograscope, or a peep-show viewer on the street. These viewing devices distorted the image to enhance the illusion of three-dimensional space,

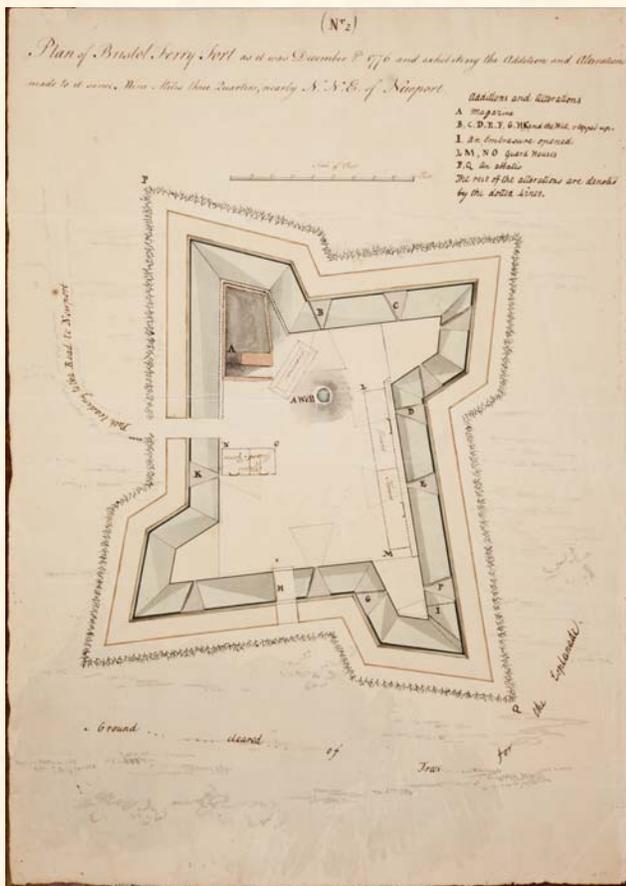
provide backlighting to intensify color and lighting effects, and to close off the real world for a transportive, cinematic experience. On the street, an operator would be on hand to rotate the prints, provide an entertaining narrative explanation of the scenes, and collect payment. Numerous engraved prints of events from the American Revolution and of American cities were produced in *vue d'optique* format, some based on accurate sources, many of them wonderfully fanciful. The Clements Library has a fine collection of 25 *vue d'optique* engravings. They are bright and bold in coloration and concept and often overlooked by historians and collectors. An excellent article on the subject by Christopher Pierce appears in Volume 32, number 1 of *Imprint*, the journal of the American Historical Print Collectors Society.

A modern researcher seeking "accurate" views of the Revolutionary war will be disappointed in the *vue d'optique* collection at the Clements. But, for a researcher who is seeking to understand contemporary perceptions of America, they offer a dazzling perspective.

## DON'T OVERLOOK MAPS FROM MANUSCRIPT COLLECTIONS

Many of the Clements Library's manuscript collections contain more than just the letters and documents expected by historians who have identified them as sources relevant to their research. Sometimes these items are three-dimensional objects—often family keepsakes such as a Civil War officer's sword or a pair of eyeglasses used by the correspondent. Sometimes it is ephemera—calling cards, invitations, tickets, or other throwaway items. Occasionally a collection will include photographs, sketches, or drawings that provide visual documentation. Maps are among the most frequently encountered additional material. These might be printed or manuscript, and some are even sketched into the bodies of letters. Most are individual documents, and, depending on the nature of the collection, they might include property plats, battle plans, charts, or architectural drawings. These maps were often used by the creator of the collection and thus provide an idea of the cartographic information available or important to him or her.

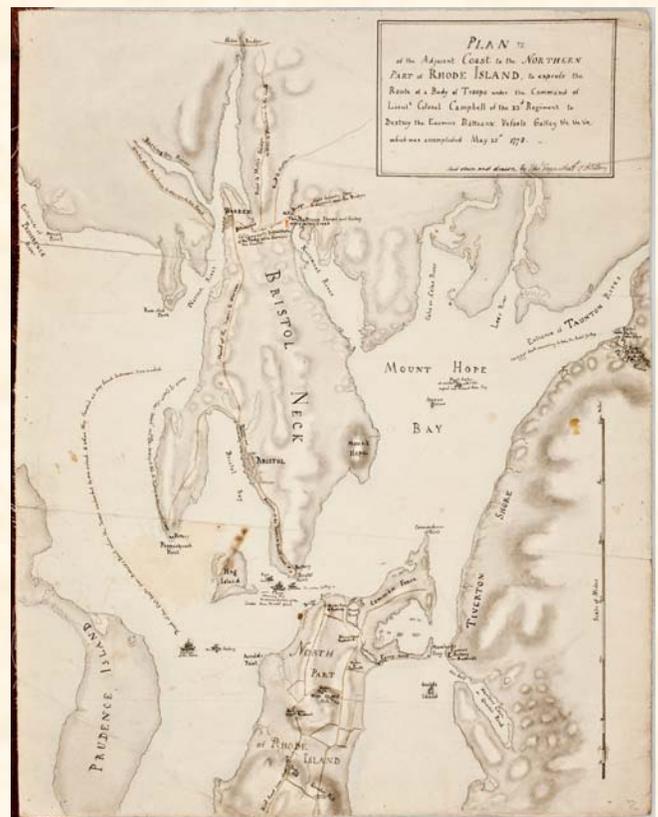
The Library's large British military and political collections—Shelburne, Gage, Clinton, Germain, and more recently Eyre Coote—are particularly rich in maps. The Gage Papers came with 89, while



An engineer's plan of Bristol Ferry Fort on the northern end of the island of Rhode Island. Clinton Map 74.

Shelburne included 33. The Papers of Henry Clinton take the prize with a whopping 380 maps. These are directly relevant to the political, military, or societal events discussed in and documented by the letters of the collection, and a study of them can prove enlightening.

The maps with Clinton's papers illustrate many aspects of the challenges facing him as British commander-in-chief in America from 1778 to 1782. These range from the defense of New York to the war in the South and defeat at Yorktown. One particular location is especially well documented by his maps. Newport, Rhode Island, with its magnificent anchorage on Narragansett Bay, was occupied in December 1776 by British forces led by Clinton. The place was heavily fortified, and its garrison was thus able to withstand a Franco-American assault in the summer of 1778. The British evacuated Newport in the fall of 1779. The Clinton Papers document their three-year occupation. At least 44 plans of



Edward Fage, "Plan of the Adjacent Coast" 1778, showing British operations on Narragansett Bay. Clinton Map 64.

fortifications and magnificent topographical maps of the island of Rhode Island and other parts of Narragansett Bay support the surviving letters and reports. Military engineers created them for reference by Clinton and his staff. All offer details relevant to British efforts to secure and successfully defend the place in August 1778.

Most of the maps and plans that came with the Clinton and other collections have been separated from the smaller manuscript items and are stored in the Map Division. Small maps that can be safely accommodated in manuscripts storage remain with the collection. Catalog records for virtually all of our manuscript maps of the American Revolution can be found in Mirlyn under a variety of search terms. Records for maps associated with individual collections may also be accessed under the search term "[name of collection] Maps" (i.e. "Gage Maps"). All of them are, of course, available for study at the Clements Library.

**LINKS:**

**Online exhibits are located at:** <http://www.clements.umich.edu/exhibits-online.php>

**The *Clements Library Chronicles* blog is located at:** <http://theclementslibrary.blogspot.com/>

**Back issues of *The Quarto* are available at:** <http://www.clements.umich.edu/Quarto/quarto-back.php>

**For information on beginning research at the Clements, please our website at:** <http://www.clements.umich.edu>

We encourage your feedback and suggestions related to the form and content of this newsletter ([clements-reference@umich.edu](mailto:clements-reference@umich.edu)).



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