

# THE QUARTO

VOL. 1

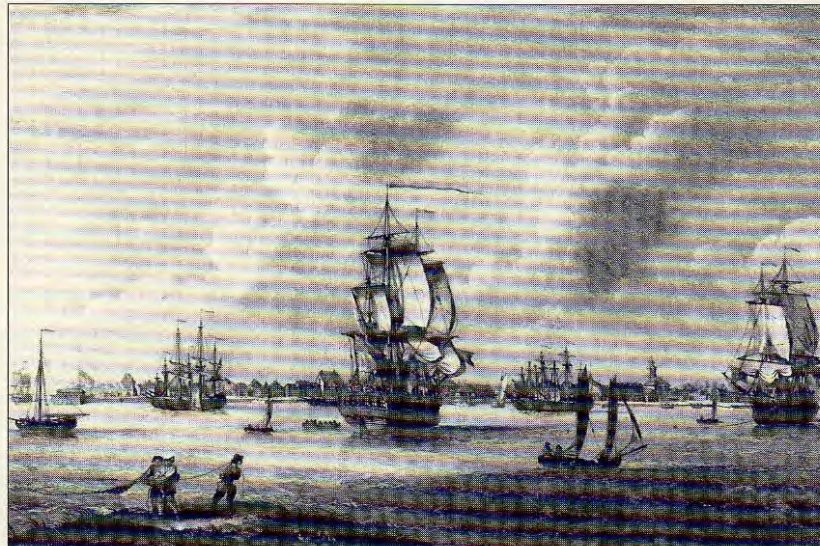
THE CLEMENTS LIBRARY ASSOCIATES

NO. 1

## THE QUARTO, NEW SERIES

With the hope that friends and colleagues will enjoy hearing news of our activities, the Clements Library proudly resumes publication of *The Quarto*. In 1942 Library Director Randolph Adams began *The Quarto* as an occasional publication aimed at the rare book and manuscript collector. Five years later, when the Clements Library Associates was founded, it became the newsletter of this first “friends” organization at The University of Michigan, occupying this role until the 1980s. Much has changed since then, and we want to reflect those changes in *The Quarto*. The Library Associates now include a highly diverse group from all over the country, whose historical interests are as varied as their backgrounds and ways of life. In the last ten years the Library has greatly expanded its holdings, moving into new collecting fields and adding depth to old ones. As this is written, renovations to our building are under way. These are exciting times at the Clements Library, and we want to share the excitement — to tell our Associates about the fine acquisitions which have been made through their generous giving, to inform researchers who have used our resources in the past about the

wealth of new material available to them, and to encourage those who have not yet visited the Library to come and explore. We take advantage of this occasion, this renewal, to greet old friends and welcome new ones to the Clements Library.



*Charleston was a thriving port in the 1760s. Exports of rice and indigo, both crops cultivated by slave labor, brought annual profits of half a million pounds sterling into the South's only large colonial city. In this view from Scenographia Americana (London, 1768), Charlestown is shown from across the Cooper River with Granville Bastion on the far left and Saint Philip's Church on the right.*

## THE COLONIAL AGENT: IMPERIAL LOBBYIST

The colonial agent is an obscure figure in early American history. Few of us know that Benjamin Franklin first made his reputation in London as agent for Pennsylvania in the late 1750s, much less what his job entailed.

In fact, an agent was half-lobbyist, half-ambassador, employed by an American colony to represent its

interest to the British government. Some were Americans living in London, others were Englishmen who had never seen the colonies, many were lawyers, some were Members of Parliament, but all of them were familiar with government politics, accomplished in the art of “dancing

attendance” on the officials who made colonial policy. They frequented the coffeehouses of Westminster and the City, where politicians, bankers, and merchants trading with the colonies gathered to talk and read the latest London news or American dispatches. Regularly attending the House of Commons, they followed the debates from the visitors’ gallery and kept their clients informed about legislation that affected America.

Colonial agents had no standing in law or the formal constitutional structure of the British Empire, yet they played an important role in making the imperial machine work, and work fairly well, given the problems of distance and information. Agents were the ones who brought a colony’s business to the government’s attention. Following the instructions they received from their constituents, agents drafted petitions which they presented to the Board of Trade or the Privy Council — a request for repairs to a fort or men to garrison it, a plea for money to buy the





Indian presents they hoped would buy allegiance or stave off an attack, a claim to land in dispute with another colony, or an application to expand the colony's export market. Whatever the issue, these petitions were supported by reports, statistics, or statements by interested parties, information about the American colonies gathered to impress the British government. As a result, the colonial agents created an invaluable historical record.

A fascinating piece of that record was recently acquired by the Clements Library, a letterbook containing the correspondence of South Carolina agent Charles Garth and his predecessor James Wright, later Governor of Georgia. It adds a substantial number of letters not included in the Garth letterbook published in the *South Carolina History and Genealogical Magazine*. The letters, written between 1758 and 1766, cover the tumultuous final years of the French and Indian War and the first stage of the American Revolution, the Stamp Act Crisis.

Wright's letters of 1758-60, deal with wartime crises — wrangling with the Board of Ordnance for cannon to fortify Charleston Harbor, convincing the Admiralty to provide convoys to protect South Carolina ships trading with London, getting the Secretary at War, "after long sollicitation and much trouble," to approve payment of "all the expences whatever, on account of the War." His petition to the Treasury in November 1758 reveals the colony's vulnerability on two fronts, from Indian attacks on settlements in the back country and from slave uprisings on plantations in the low country. "Two thousand pounds worth of goods to be used as presents" were urgently needed "to gain the support of the Choctaws, as well as Cherokees, Creeks, and Chickasaws who regularly come into Charlestown. Together these tribes have 10,000 Gun Men," that the French could incite against the colony's "8,000 men, who have 60,000 slaves to keep in proper subjection." Within two years of Wright's petition, South Carolina was embroiled in bloody warfare against the Cherokee.

Garth's letters, written in the aftermath of the Seven Years' War, report the policies "relative to North

America, then beginning to be in agitation," as Britain tightened control over her colonies. In May 1764 Garth first heard details of Grenville's plan to raise revenue in America from stamp duties and warned, "It is of great concern to the Colonies not to suffer a precedent of this kind." As American resistance mounted, Garth and his fellow agents organized opposition among London's merchants. When a bill repealing the Stamp Act passed the House of Commons in March 1766, Garth could take a measure of credit for its success. University of Michigan Emeritus Professor of History Jacob M. Price has commented, "In the dozen or so years before the American Revolu-

tion, the agents of the Thirteen Colonies in London were in an unrivaled position to see, analyze, and explain the emergence of the crisis. Few were better observer-reporters than Charles Garth, Member of Parliament and agent for South Carolina, Georgia, and Maryland. His letters to his American employers were particularly perceptive and detailed. Thus the acquisition by the Clements Library of a letterbook containing Garth's reports to the South Carolina legislative committee is particularly noteworthy and greatly strengthens the library's holdings on the genesis of the American Revolution."

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## THE SOLDIER'S LIFE: THE SCHOFF CIVIL WAR COLLECTION

On March 14, 1863, Private Charles Henthorn of the 77th Illinois Infantry wrote to his father from Milliken's Bend, Louisiana, 25 miles above Vicksburg on the Mississippi:

Grant's army is said to stretch for a distance of seventeen miles along the river. The inner side of the levee is thickly marked with graves so taking it all together there has been a great number of deaths since coming down the river. The number may reach thousands. . . . The future historian will record the number who fell on the memorable Battlefields of Bull Run, Donelson, Shiloh and others but who shall know the number who have perished by disease before Yorktown and amid the miasmatic swamps of the Chickahominy.

Henthorn could not have realized that his letters to father, brother, and sister would themselves become a rich source of evidence for "the future historian" of his musings. Even so, the detail and eloquence of his writing about "this 'accursed rebellion'" show that he was well aware of the significance of this vast enterprise in which he played such a small part, and in which he hoped to acquit himself with honor. "How anxiously the world is watching our struggle for existence," he wrote. "[I]f this experiment in self-government by the people shall fail,

where are the oppressed and the down-trodden millions of the earth to look for hope of better days."

Henthorn's lofty ideals would accord with the contemporary popular tendency to romanticize the Civil War, portraying it as a gallant, if brutal, face-off between those who fought to preserve the Union and the defenders of what was to be a tragic "lost cause." Such popularizations, whether in book, movie, or televised form, tend to depict the participants in the war as true believers, as willing and courageous warriors. Indeed, many were. Historian Gerald Linderman's psychological profile of Civil War soldiers, *Embattled Courage*, depicts a widespread allegiance to Victorian-era virtues—courage, manliness, duty, honor, godliness, knightliness. As the war wore on, these ideals were more likely to become replaced by bitterness and disillusion, although years after the fact the romantic myth of a heroic war strongly reasserted itself.

But perhaps for every Private Henthorn, with his patriotism, anti-slavery sentiments, and disapproval of plundering, there is a Robert Sherry. The 32-year-old carriage maker from Buffalo, New York, served as a private in the 21st and 97th New York Infantry regiments from May 1861 until November 1863, when he died of



respiratory disease in an army hospital. In Sherry's letters to his wife, an image of the war more akin to Ambrose Bierce than Currier and Ives emerges, for he was a rough man in a rough regiment. Relations between officers and enlisted men, troubled from the beginning, ended in a mutiny which saw 20 men sent to the Tortugas to serve "without arms, until they show themselves more worthy to bear them." The embittered Sherry wrote that "I hope that I shall live long enough to see the day when we will get into some battle that will be the means of getting a great portion of our Officers killed or wounded so that they will never be fit for duty again." The feelings were mutual. While Sherry was on guard duty his Company

Captain murdered the soldier's pet dog with an ax: "[It] made me very mad at the time and I called him any thing but a gentleman and he threatened to have me court marshied but I guess that he is afraid to do so for I told him as much as to say that I would as soon or rather shoot him as the dog in the battle field and a great deal rather than one of the enemy." The pugnacious Sherry enjoyed looting and fighting, and harbored no illusions about a noble cause. Resentful of the Republican Party and its championing of "adam nigger," Sherry muses about returning to Virginia after the war for an easy, well-paying job on a plantation.

The Henthorn and Sherry papers represent but a tiny part of the richly varied Civil War collection at the Clements Library, but they give some idea of its value as a window into the world of the Civil War soldier—his life in camp, experiences in battle, views on the war, the enemy, African-Americans, and his fellow-soldier, and the effect of these experiences and attitudes on the life of each individual. Users of the collection are nearly as varied as the resources themselves. Researchers of family history, writers of regimental history, undergraduate students fulfilling their university writing requirements, graduate students seeking



"A rough soldier in a rough regiment." Private Robert Sherry, 21st and 97th New York Infantry.

material for theses, academic historians with specialized research interests, popular historians who interpret the war and its characters for a wider audience—many types and levels of research and teaching are served by the Clements' Civil War resources.

University of Michigan History Professor Maris Vinovskis teaches a popular course on the social history of the war, taking advantage of the collections and curators of the Clements and Bentley Libraries to offer undergraduates an intensive experience in original research and writing. He feels that they learn firsthand the challenges and rewards of "doing" history. While they are learning, they rub elbows (sometimes almost literally, when researchers fill every available space and then some) with more seasoned historians, who are often preparing publications based on material in the collections. Currently, studies on General P.G.T. Beauregard, the 19th Connecticut Infantry Regiment, the Battle of Bentonville, NC, the 16th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment, junior officers of the Army of the Potomac, and the Fredericksburg campaign are under way. Noted historian Stephen Sears is at work on an article concerning disloyalty charges against Union General Charles P. Stone

and was most pleased to find that the library owns a unique account written by Stone on his case. He also made extensive use of Clements materials in his book on the Peninsular campaign, *To the Gates of Richmond*.

How did this magnificent collection come to be? From small beginnings! In 1972, when present Clements Director John Dann joined the staff as Curator of Manuscripts, the library had scant Civil War holdings, for past Directors had chosen to concentrate on previous historical periods, building impressive research collections in early Americana. But Dann is a Civil War enthusiast, and he found himself in the right place at the right time. Long-time Clements benefactor and board member James S.

Schoff had, in the 1950s, shifted his personal collecting interests from the American Revolution to the Civil War, and by the early 1970s possessed the finest privately-held collection of its kind. As the two men struck up a friendship based on shared historical interests, Schoff came to appreciate that Dann had the motivation and expertise necessary to exploit the full potential of his collections — to catalog them, promote them with students and scholars, and build upon the initial gift in coming years. Schoff's personal philosophy was to give not to institutions, but to people, and his relationship with Dann and then Library Director Howard H. Peckham decided him in favor of the Clements as a home for his Civil War collection. Between 1973 and 1976 he donated around 20 soldiers' diaries or sets of personal letters, 706 books, and approximately 800 miscellaneous letters. When Dann became Director in 1976 he made frequent visits to Schoff in New York, sharing with him acquisition decisions and adding to the Civil War collection both at Schoff's and the library's expense.

Most purchases were initially made at New York auctions, but increasingly Dann developed a network of dealer contacts throughout the





"Head Quarters, Gen'l. Torbert near Winchester, Va., Nov. 1864."

country. As word spread that the Clements Library was very much "in the Civil War," and potential donors became aware of the special care which would be given their family papers, more gift collections were attracted. The detailed correspondence of Pennsylvania's Miller brothers, Harry Simmons' journal and fine watercolor sketches, surgeon George Trowbridge's daily accounts of military life to wife Lebbey, and the letters of Colonel Henry C. Gilbert of the 19th Michigan Infantry Regiment are examples of the fine collections which have been donated in recent years. Presently the Schoff Collection has some 150 diaries and sets of correspondence, 1400 additional single items — but it's growing so quickly, in both size and diversity, that these figures change from month to month. In addition, there are important Civil War collections, such as the Handy, Haskell, and Gilbert papers, which fall outside of the Schoff Collection. The Clements is particularly strong in documenting Virginia engagements, Vicksburg and the early Mississippi campaigns, prisons and prisoners of war, and regiments from the states of New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, and Michigan. There is extensive coverage of medical aspects of the war and of political prisoners. Other topics significantly treated in the various collections include African-American regiments, the experience of women both in the war and on the home front, military chaplains, and naval operations. Current Curator of Manuscripts Rob Cox actively seeks to extend the

Schoff Collection into areas which are presently less fully documented here: the experiences of Confederate soldiers, African-Americans, women and ethnic minorities, regiments from the border states, the west, and northern New England, operations in the western theater of the war, and guerrilla warfare. Photographic collections have expanded from a solid base donated by Mr. Schoff, including Brady and Gardiner, to outstanding strength.

Growth of the collections has brought increased use and a spreading reputation for excellence. In addition to helping researchers who visit the library to work with the materials in person, the curators respond to an ever-swelling volume of correspondence: answering questions, preparing photocopies, sending papers out to be microfilmed. In a recent letter Stephen Sears inquired about James Schoff, commenting that he must have been "some collector." Indeed he was, and the collection which bears his name has, from the solid core of materials which he donated, evolved into a premier resource for historians of the Civil War.

Among the gems of a great collection is the Nathan Webb diary. Young Webb left a remarkable five-volume record of his experiences in one of the most active Union cavalry regiments, the 1st Maine. The Methodist seminarian enlisted fresh out of school at the age of 19 and saw three hard years of service, mostly in Virginia. His entries, including accounts of battles and skirmishes, opinions of officers and strategy,

anecdotes of camp life and encounters with civilians, views on military ethics and on those who opted not to fight, are powerfully vivid and insightful. A stint in Belle Isle Prison is depicted with great emotional intensity. Even a cursory glance at Webb's diary rewards the reader. Here, he writes bitterly of a poorly-led and failed campaign, and of the sting of being criticized by those safe at home:

Received some Northern papers today. They are full of the particulars of the "Mine Run Campaign." They teem with accounts of the fruitlessness of the affair. I admit it all amounted to nothing. There was no unity of action *certain*, and I don't believe there was any well laid plan. What a privates opinion may be of the commander of an Army, is of little account I am aware, but . . . I *know* that Meade is not an able General, not one who should be entrusted with the command of such an Army as this. The campaign just through with demonstrates to a certainty that he has not the requisite independence to take command. . . . Although the campaign is a failure, and it really amounted to nothing to the cause, yet, to those who are now in their snug parlors before the glowing grate, talking about how the men didn't fight and lacked stamina, and were listless and demoralized, I would have them understand that to the individual soldier, to the man in the rank, the Mine Run Campaign amounted to a great deal. It amounted too much to those who lived from parsnips three days on picket, who marched & counter marched in the mud through cold raw November days, much to



those poor fellows who overcome by fatigue & hunger lay down to rest a while and awoke to find themselves in the enemy's hands, with Libby and Belle Isle looming up before them like ghouls in the dark. It amounted too much to those shot on rear guard while retreating, and fell to the frozen ground, to be left to the mercies of an inhuman foe. It amounted too much to those frostbitten and maimed for life in the trenches before Mine Run. It amounted too much to the friends of those who were frozen to death while on post in those trenches. It amounted too much to those at home whose sons, husbands, & brothers fell on those days, either dead, or to languish days in all the agony of mortal wounds. How I wish these croakers were once, just once, put in our places. I should like to see them once when we were

charging a battery loaded with grape and canister. I should like to see them once on picket when next post has been fired upon. I should like to see them once when for 48 hours they had nothing but raw parsnips to eat and then have them give out. If they then returned to their homes they never again would croak over the failure of campaigns, save to condemn Officers who think more of their position than their country.

Idealistic Charles Henthorn, barefisted Robert Sherry, well-educated, analytical Nathan Webb: these three represent the varied soldierly experiences and attitudes to be found in the Schoff Collection. From their words the real Civil War comes into view — not as a set of romantic, simplistic

tableaux, but as an event of great physical, emotional, and moral complexity. Only from a comprehension of this complexity can valid history be written. And only a great deal of energy and forethought produces such a rich source of evidence. The Civil War collections at the Clements Library have been painstakingly put together through the well-planned, ambitious efforts of James S. Schoff, Howard H. Peckham, the director and curators, combined with the generosity of many other donors. Thanks to such efforts, the Schoff Civil War Collection will continue to grow.

## SHENANDOAH, 1864: “VERY ROUGH SKETCHES” BY EDGAR KLEMROTH

In the fall of 1864 Sheridan's army devastated the Shenandoah Valley, playing out a brutal episode in the climactic confrontation between Lee and Grant in Virginia. Taking part in the action as Corporal in the Sixth Pennsylvania Volunteer Cavalry was 26-year-old Edgar Klemroth, whose three years of service made him a seasoned veteran by Civil War standards. The New York City-born Klemroth had moved to Philadelphia in 1858 and joined up as a Pennsylvanian in 1861. His enlistment papers describe the young man as five feet eight inches tall, of light complexion, and a book binder by trade — but, as we shall see, an artist by inclination. Klemroth was to have his difficulties in the Army. On September 13, 1862, on the eve of a skirmish with Lee's army near Frederick in western Maryland, Klemroth complained of “heart

palpitations,” and upon being examined by the regimental surgeon was pronounced “very much excited” and

Martial on charges of absence without leave. Pleading guilty, the young Corporal was reduced to Private, his

stripes cut off in the presence of his regiment, and ordered to forfeit \$6.50, roughly half his monthly pay, for six months. Yet after all this, Klemroth re-enlisted in January 1864. By August he was on “detached duty” to General Torbert's cavalry corps headquarters, of the Middle Military District.

It turned out to be a disquieting spot for a man suffering from heart palpitations, for the Union cavalry was to play a decisive role in the Shenandoah campaign. Ordered by Grant to follow Early “to the death,” to turn the Valley into “a barren waste,” Sheridan had

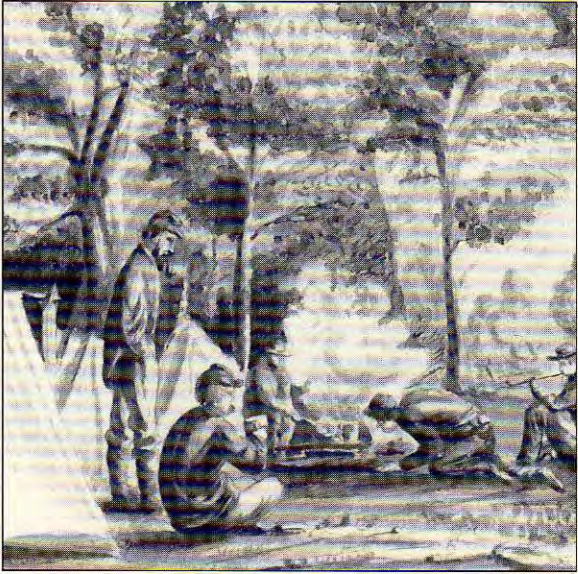
still begun cautiously, well aware of the disasters that had dogged other Union



ordered to the rear wagons. He evidently went farther than the rear wagons, winding up in Washington, DC. He was tried in a General Court

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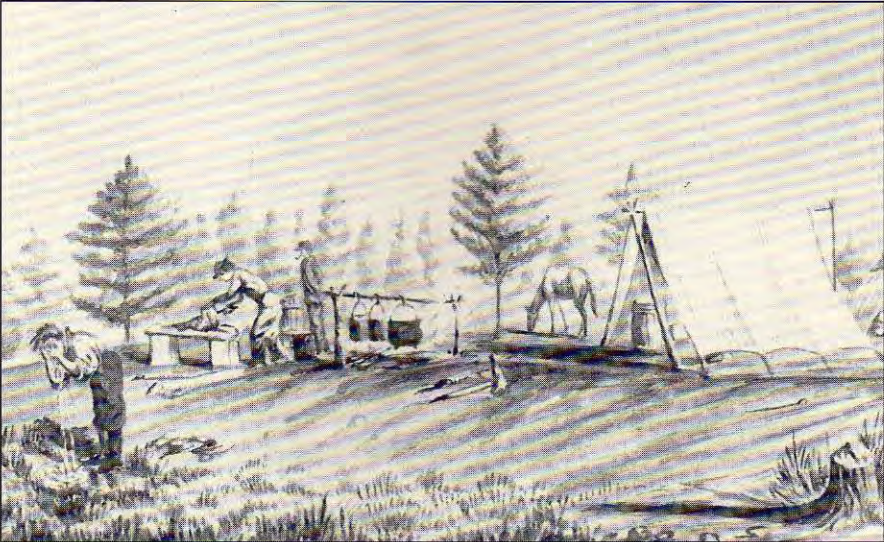


Above: "Cooking coffee."

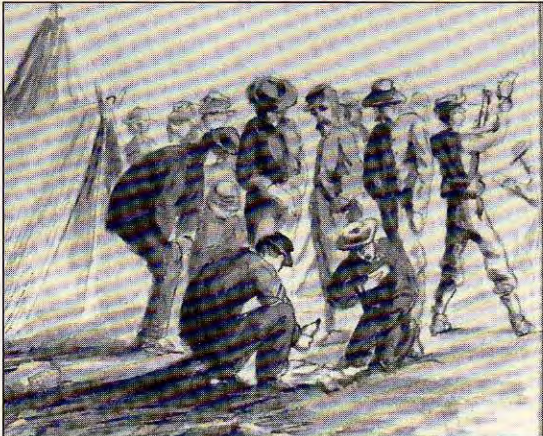


Right: "Inspector Gen'l feels shocked at the wretched condition and discipline of the Troops in his Division"

Below: "Gen'l Sheridan"



Above: "Preparing Breakfast"



Right: "Letter Man"



— continued from page 5

generals. The assignment was of vital importance, for the Shenandoah Valley served as main source of the Confederate food supply, invasion route to the North, and secure base for guerilla operations against the Union rear. Sheridan took the first round at Winchester with two victories in rapid succession. By October 7 he promised Grant that “the Valley ... will have little in it for man or beast.” But Lee would not concede the Shenandoah. He reinforced his general with cavalry and infantry, and while Sheridan left his army camped south of Winchester at Cedar Creek and went to Washington for a strategy session, Early struck. A surprise attack at dawn on October 19 forced the whole Union Army to retreat in disarray four miles down the Valley, losing in the process quantities of guns, ammunition, and 1300 men who were taken prisoner. By mid-morning Early’s victory seemed assured. But he had not reckoned on Sheridan’s boldness, and the Union general made his now-legendary ride from Winchester to the battleground, turning the tide in the Union’s favor by the sheer force of his presence.

Edgar Klemroth left his personal record of the Shenandoah campaign in the form of forty-five lively, skillful pencil sketches. His drawings do not depict the drama and heroics which now capture our imaginations, but the

day-to-day scenes of a soldier’s life — sometimes with humor, sometimes with pathos, but always with a sensitive interpretation of men and events. When the campaign ended Klemroth presented his modestly-entitled “Very Rough Sketches” to Captain Rudolph Ellis, a friend from the Sixth Pennsylvania Volunteers who became Assistant Inspector General on Torbert’s staff. The drawings now enhance the Library’s Schoff Civil War Collection, providing another window into the world of the Civil War soldier. Some of the men whose personal effects would find their way to the Clements Library expressed themselves in words, others in drawings; all have much to tell those who would understand and interpret this compelling episode of American history.

Below: “Gen’l Custer.”



Below: “Union foragers in the Shenandoah.”



Above: “Contrabands”

Below: “Fishing for the Bean”





## SUMMER SCHEDULE DURING BUILDING RENOVATION

**Major building renovations will disrupt the Library's service schedule from April to mid-Fall 1994.** During this period the main room exhibit area will be closed to visitors. Readers will enter from the rear of the building. Those planning to use the Library during this period are urged to call ahead so that our curators can advise them about the accessibility of material, as the construction work progresses.

## IN MEMORIUM

During the past year, the Staff and Associates of the Clements have been saddened by the loss of close friends, all from the Ann Arbor area, each of whom made a unique contribution to the life of the Library.

**Frederick H. Wagman**, Emeritus Director of the University of Michigan Libraries, served as Vice Chairman of the Committee of Management from 1953 to 1978. **Bly Corning** was a dedicated member of the Associates Board for nearly thirty years. He gave to the Library a major collection of nineteenth-century American sheet

music from the Edison Phonograph Company archive, and through his efforts the Clements acquired a rare first edition of *The Star Spangled Banner*. **Eugene Power**, founder of University Microfilms, ardent book collector, friend and advisor to all three of the Library's directors, generously established our Randolph G. Adams lecture fund. Prominent Michigan attorney and state legislator **Robert Sawyer** was a direct descendant of Josiah Bartlett, Signer of the Declaration of Independence for New Hampshire. Among his gifts to the Library is a Bartlett cherry card table, a fine example of colonial American furniture. English Professor Emeritus and cherished friend **Robert Haugh**, a scholar of nineteenth-century American literature whose teaching enriched generations of UM students, is survived by his wife Georgia, our former Book Curator. Dedicated volunteer **Nancy Perkins** contributed hundreds of entries to our picture catalog through her work on the Library's image project, and in her enthusiastic collecting of nineteenth-century furniture, glass, fabrics, and prints, displayed a wide knowledge of American domestic arts. Volunteer

extraordinaire **Elizabeth Stranahan** was well-known throughout the University of Michigan and Ann Arbor communities as an engaging personality who used her talent and intelligence, energy and tough-mindedness to make things happen. Betsy brought all of these qualities to her work at the Clements as a contributor to the image project and as a member of the Associates Board. The Clements Library will not easily replace the dedication, generosity, and talents of these dear friends.

## NEW ASSOCIATES BOARD MEMBERS

The Associates Board of Governors is pleased to announce the election of five new members. From Michigan, we welcome Ruth Hoyt, Elk Rapids; Anne Marie Karmazin, Ann Arbor; Martha R. Seger, Bloomfield Hills; and William C. Stebbins, Ann Arbor; and from Rye, New York, Joanna Schoff. Our new members bring to the Board, along with their individual talents, a close personal acquaintance with the Library, enthusiasm for its programs, and commitment to its future.



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John C. Dann

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Clements Library Associates share an interest in American history and a desire to ensure the continued growth of the Library's collections. Funds received from Associate memberships are used exclusively to purchase historical materials. Annual membership is \$25.

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University of Michigan Regents: Deane Baker, Paul W. Brown, Laurence B. Deitch, Shirley M. McFee, Rebecca McGowan, Philip H. Power, Nellie Varner, James L. Waters, James J. Duderstadt, President, *Ex-officio*.

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