I would guess that most twenty-first-century Americans have little sense of the deep interest our early forebears had in this country’s flora, fauna, geology, and geography. Native American tradition is rich in connections to the natural world, of course, and when the first European explorers and settlers came to the Americas they soaked up information about the animals, birds, marine life, trees, plants, and minerals of the New World. Whether their interest was financial, scientific, self-preservation, or a combination of the three, the result was that most early written accounts of European experiences in North America are full of natural history observations. Although we may smile today at the lack of sophistication in some of the theories and conclusions that authors from Samuel de Champlain to Louis Agassiz put forth, we should appreciate their sense of wonder at the world around them. Some of us still have it, thank goodness, and the rest of us are poorer for having lost it.

This issue of The Quarto, with its focus on the Library’s natural history collections, stems from a very special recent acquisition. Early in 2014 we received a query asking if we would be interested in purchasing a set of John James Audubon’s 1845–48 *Viviparous Quadrupeds of North America*. By one account, Ohioans were responsible for pinning the nickname “wolverine” on Michiganders, claiming that they shared the animal’s ill temper and greedy nature.

Quadrupeds of North America. As most readers of The Quarto know, tradition at the University of Michigan says that Audubon’s magnificent *Birds of America* was the first book U-M purchased after moving from Detroit to Ann Arbor in 1837. I was aware of that, having coveted the Audubon *Birds* for the Clements ever since I arrived at the Library (it certainly makes sense to me that the University Library should turn the set over to us as early printed Americana best housed at the Clements), so it was a surprise to learn that U-M never acquired a set of the *Quadrupeds*. Inspired by the prospect of correcting that oversight at this early stage of the Victors for Michigan campaign and to send a clarification reminder that U-M’s libraries and museums have world-class collections, I was eager to make it happen. Even with a favorable price and generous payment terms from the owners, however, the Audubon set represented a daunting commitment for our acquisitions budget. I sometimes think that in collection development my three predecessors as Director were the inspiration for Danton’s “l’audace, encore de l’audace, toujours de l’audace,” but U-M’s auditors and my own cautious nature in spending other people’s money sent me in search of an institutional partner and generous donors for bringing the Audubon beasts to campus.

We quickly got lucky on both fronts. Martha Conway and Bryan Skib at University Library immediately agreed to a Clements-Special Collections partner-
ship. When the B. H. Breslauer Foundation and A. Alfred Taubman stepped up with major support, we had the funding we needed to pull the trigger. We’re still looking for additional gifts to ease the remaining strain on the Clements and Special Collections treasuries, but the Audubon Quadrupeds volumes are at U-M to stay. The books and their 150 prints are in magnificent condition, presenting everything from moles to grizzly bears in vibrant original color. Together with the Birds, we can offer U-M faculty, students, and others an extraordinary resource for the study of nineteenth-century American natural history. The University Library has digitized the set, so we can make the images available electronically to researchers who cannot come to Ann Arbor. From the Library’s perspective, this is a story with a very happy ending.

As the articles in this issue indicate, the Clements will be a good home for the Quadrupeds. Emi Hastings offers details on some of our natural history treasures by authors and illustrators every early Americana collector will recognize—Mark Catesby, Alexander Wilson, Maximilian zu Wied, Karl Bodmer, George Catlin. All of these fall squarely into the “thank goodness we have those, or we couldn’t afford to acquire them” category. Jayne Ptolemy’s discussion of the Jane Colden, Henry Grimes Marshall and Bert Whitney papers shows the tip of the wonderful iceberg that our NHPRC grant to provide electronic access to the manuscript collections is uncovering.

Fans of castor canadensis, long a four-legged model of industry and hard work, will enjoy Brian Dunnigan’s overview of the fur trade that almost wiped out the species. In “Nature Surveyed,” Clayton Lewis reminds us of the bonanza in American natural history knowledge that came from the transcontinental railroad surveys of the 1850s. If you’ve ever wondered how the donkey and elephant became symbols of the Democratic and Republican parties, Diana Sykes’s article will enlighten you. And, if you have any idea what a gormagunt is or was, be thankful you received a better education than I did back in Vermont.

— J. Kevin Graffagnini
Director
Our recent acquisition, Audubon’s Viviparous Quadrupeds of North America, joins several large illustrated books of natural history already in the Clements Library Rare Book Room. Natural history has traditionally been a popular subject for illustrations in books, book project of 19th-century America.”

From 1722 to 1726, English naturalist Mark Catesby (1683–1749) traveled through eastern North America and the West Indies to collect plant and animal specimens for the Royal Society. After his return to England, Catesby spent the next several years learning how to etch plates from his own paintings. He paid for the publication of his work, financed by an interest-free loan from another member of the Royal Society. In 1731, he completed the first volume of his Natural History of Carolina, Florida and the Bahama Islands, following it with a second volume in 1743 and a supplement in 1747. His work was the first to use folio-sized colored plates in a natural history book. Catesby’s Natural History includes parallel English and French text, accompanied by one hundred color illustrations of birds, fish, reptiles, amphibians, mammals, plants, and insects.

In a preface to the first volume, Catesby describes his early interest in natural history and the travels he undertook to gather specimens for this work. He writes of the assistance given by local Native Americans who guided him, saying “To the Hospitality and Assistance of these Friendly Indians, I am much indebted, for I not only subsisted on what they shot, but their First Care was to erect a Bark Hut, on the Approach of Rain to keep me and my Cargo from Wet.”

Catesby’s work proved so popular in Europe that a Nuremberg engraver, Johann Michael Seligmann (1720–62), soon began to issue pirated editions of his Natural History. Seligmann’s version, a combination of natural histories by Catesby and George Edwards (1694–1773), was published in seven parts between 1749 and 1770. The Clements Library holds one of these pirated works, Die Beschreibung von Carolina, Florida und den Bahamischen Inseln (Nuremberg, 1755). It is a separate issue of the preface to Seligmann’s fourth part, which contains a German translation of the introductory chapter of volume two of Catesby’s Natural History.

As image-printing technologies advanced in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries from woodcuts and copper plate engravings to aquatints, lithographs, and finally chromolithographs, printers were able to produce larger-format, more lavishly illustrated works. Quadrupeds of North America, printed in imperial folio size, has been called “the largest successful color plate...
History. Seligmann, and later his heirs, continued to publish pirated Catesby editions in German, French, and Dutch. Although unauthorized, these and other pirated editions helped Catesby’s work reach a much wider European audience than the English edition would have alone.

An important milestone in American natural history books was Alexander Wilson’s American Ornithology, or, The Natural History of the Birds of the United States (1808–14). This book is regarded as the first significant study of American ornithology, more comprehensive than Catesby and preceding Audubon by almost twenty years. It is also the first great color plate book to be produced entirely in America, published in Philadelphia by Samuel Bradford (1776–1837) with engravings by Alexander Lawson (1773–1846). American Ornithology was originally published in nine volumes. Wilson died in 1813, during the preparation of the ninth volume, and his friend George Ord (1781–1866) completed the publication.

The Clements holds the large paper edition of Wilson’s American Ornithology, published by Collins & Co., New York, and Harrison Hall, Philadelphia, in 1828–29. Sometimes called the Ord edition, it consists of three volumes of text and one folio volume of plates. The seventy-six color illustrations were printed from the original copper plates, carefully retouched by Alexander Lawson. George Ord added a sketch of the life of Wilson. He also rearranged the species into a systematic order, compared to the irregular order of the first edition.

Another important natural history book is Travels in the Interior of North America, with text by Prince Maximilian and illustrations by Karl Bodmer (1809–93). From 1832 to 1834, the German naturalist Prince Maximilian of Wied-Neuwied (1782–1867) led an expedition into the American West. Swiss artist Karl Bodmer and hunter-taxidermist David Dreidoppel accompanied him to record their journey. Maximilian’s goal was to provide Europeans with a description of North America’s natural scenery and the cultures of its indigenous inhabitants. As they explored the Great Plains and traveled along the Missouri River, Bodmer painted watercolors of the people, scenery, and wildlife they encountered.

Following the trip, Prince Maximilian edited and published his travel journals in German as Reise in das Innere Nord-Amerika (1839–41). This was followed by a French edition (1840–43), and a condensed English edition (1843). All three were accompanied by an atlas of eighty-one aquatint engravings by Bodmer, published in Paris. Numerous binding and printing variants can make it difficult to distinguish the German, French, and English editions of the atlases. The Clements Library has a set of the forty-eight large aquatint plates by Bodmer, possibly the German edition. A complete set would include the thirty-three smaller plates, known as the vignettes. Bodmer’s color plates depict American landscapes and...
wildlife, as well as numerous portraits and scenes of Native Americans, including Mandan, Assiniboine, Dakota, and Blackfeet people encountered on the Missouri.

The Clements also holds the English edition of Maximilian’s text, *Travels in the Interior of North America* (London, 1843). It is inscribed on the flyleaf, “Presented by S.C. Hall to Geo. Catlin Esq., in testimony of his respect, and in gratitude for his heroic services in the cause of humanity. The Rosary, Old Brompton, Feb. 5th 1844.” This inscription provides another association between Maximilian and the American artist George Catlin (1796–1872), who was in London in 1844 to publish his own color plate book and exhibit his Indian Gallery of art and artifacts.

Maximilian and Catlin crossed paths at least twice during their travels and subsequent publishing. While in St. Louis, Maximilian and Bodmer saw several paintings by Catlin, who had gone up the Missouri River a year earlier to gather materials for his *North American Indian Portfolio* (1844). Later, when Catlin was accused of fabricating a description of a Mandan ceremony, he appealed to Maximilian for support. Maximilian, who had collected his own notes about the ceremony, defended Catlin’s account.

By far the most famous illustrated works of American natural history are the *Birds of America* (1827–38) and *Viviparous Quadrupeds of North America* (1845–48) by John James Audubon (1785–1851). With *Birds of America*, Audubon’s goal was to surpass the earlier work by Alexander Wilson, creating the largest and most complete record of North American birds. His ambitious double-elephant folio with life-size color plates was published in London with engravings primarily by Robert Havell, Jr. (1793–1878). Audubon’s next project, *Viviparous Quadrupeds of North America*, was printed in Philadelphia by J.T. Bowen. The plates are hand-colored lithographs. With the recent acquisition of a fine copy, the University of Michigan now owns both of Audubon’s greatest works, *Birds and Quadrupeds*.

— Emiko Hastings
Curator of Books & Digital Projects Librarian
Benjamin Franklin has a well-earned reputation as a public figure, printer, and inventor. While famously credited for designing the Franklin stove, bifocals, the lightning rod, and the glass armonica, one of his more intriguing endeavors receives less notice. In order to foil the ever-present threat of counterfeiters, in the late 1730s Franklin perfected a method of printing currency using real botanical specimens, relying on the natural intricacy of leaves’ veining to befuddle forgers.

The fragility of biological matter does not lend itself to repeated printing, and Franklin closely guarded his process. Mainstream printing would not discover a reliable method of casting plates from original botanical specimens until the mid-nineteenth century. However, botanists had been performing basic ink transfers to document their natural collections since as early as 1229 A.D. The Clements Library’s Cadwallader and Jane Colden Manuscripts and Leaf Impressions

A three-pound note issued by New Jersey in 1776 uses a botanical print to confound counterfeiters. It also bears the ominous reminder, “’Tis Death to counterfeit.”
show the level of detail such ink transfers could yield.

Cadwallader Colden—a wealthy physician, farmer, surveyor, and New York lieutenant governor—was interested in a variety of sciences, but he took pains to cultivate a love of botany in his daughter, Jane Colden. On October 1, 1755, Cadwallader Colden sent a letter to John Frederic Gronovius, a Dutch botanist, commenting on women’s proclivity for botanical study. “I frequently thought, that Botany is an amusement, which might be made agreeable to the Ladies, who are often at a loss to fill up time. Their natural curiosity, & the pleasure they take in the beauty & variety of colours & dress seem to fit them for it.”

While steeped in the restrictive gender norms of the day, Colden’s letter goes on to note his efforts to nurture his daughter’s botanical interests by teaching her the recently developed Linnaean system and translating and simplifying texts to help ease her into the field. He goes on to celebrate her method of “taking the impression of the leaves of plants.”

Between 1753 and 1758, Jane Colden compiled a volume that described over three hundred botanical samples in the Linnaean system. Her father, much as he did to Gronovius, sent out samples of her work to his colleagues. Jane Colden, through her botanical work, keen eye, and ink impressions became the first American woman to enter a renowned international circle of scientists. The Clements’s examples of Jane Colden’s impressions, along with her father’s proud letter to Gronovius concerning them, represent an emerging American botanical field that was still fluid enough to allow female participation.

The Clements’s Manuscripts Division offers a wide range of botanical samplings, from the remarkable example of women’s early use of Linnaean documentation to Lewis Cass’s 1820 government-sponsored natural science survey in the David B. Douglass Papers, the commercial trade in plants in the Humphry and Moses Marshall Papers, and individuals’ general interest in botany across many collections. Manuscript materials are now more accessible than ever, thanks to the painstaking work performed under a recently completed National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) processing grant. With an additional 1,600 finding aids now available online, researchers can more readily mine the Clements’s collections and identify relevant sources. This proves especially important when seeking out traces of ordinary Americans’ involvement with the natural world.

One of the great joys of working with manuscript collections is discovering the surprising array of enclosures that people sent with their correspondence. Swatches of fabric, locks of hair, newspaper clippings, photographs, and occasionally a pressed flower complement the written record. The great fortune that these ephemeral items not only survived but remained with their original letters makes them doubly enjoyable. The difficulty with such relics, however, lies not only in their preservation but also in the public’s ability to find them. Thanks to the generosity of the NHPRC means that scholars can perform targeted searches of the bulk of the Clements’s manuscript collections and pinpoint papers that contain flower and plant materials.
Bert Whitney pressed some "Poppies picked from 'No-man's' land 10-22-18 before Verdun" in his diary. The delicate flowers are now enclosed in protective mylar.

Take, for example, the Henry Grimes Marshall Papers, which give a rich look into a Connecticut Civil War soldier’s life from 1862 to 1865. With incredible detail, Henry Grimes Marshall recounted his experiences in camp, on the battlefield, and as an officer with an African American regiment. Marshall also mused on the various plants and flowers he encountered while fighting in the South. Describing local vegetation for his family, Marshall turned from the war and looked to the familiar natural world. “Flowers are beginning to appear thick & I can hardly keep track of them,” he wrote on April 30, 1863, while in Virginia. “Jim Ford showed me a Wild Lady's slipper pink, you have one painted you know. It reminded me of home. I forget the Botanical name.” The familiarity of plants and flowers, even if their scientific names escaped them, tied the soldiers to home and to a mentality distanced from the encompassing tragedies of war. “There is a purple & white flower, very pretty that grows round here[,] in the fields on a short vine about 2 or 3 feet long & has a seed pod as big as a harvest pear. I will try & send one with a leaf in this,” Marshall wrote to his family in August 1863. “It is quite a showy flower & will pay to have in the garden & I think I can get the seeds & you (or I) can plant them next spring.”

Looking to the future of his family’s flower garden showed a determined hopefulness in the face of the Civil War’s incredible mortality rate. This letter bears the faint ghost impression of the flower that was once enclosed but is no longer contained in the correspondence.

Delicate and ephemeral, the flowers and plants sent by mail were precious tokens, and those that survive give us intimate glimpses of the creators of the manuscripts and the abiding significance of the natural world to them.

This wartime impulse to pluck, press, and send flowers persists into the Clements’s later holdings, including Bert C. Whitney’s diary, which he penned while serving in France during World War I with the 304th Sanitary Train. Whitney diligently recorded his experiences, filling 132 pages with closely packed text. On October 22, 1918, he described his first view of the war front. “Clif and I went over the big hill and looked our first time, at the German lines stretching to the North. Saw the old Wire entanglements of the past years and the scars on the trees. Wonderful sight and very impressive. Especially when an occasional shell burst over our head.” A poignant entry is made all the more touching by the discovery that forty pages later, Whitney had pressed two poppies he picked that day. The flowers appear between two pages intentionally left blank, underscoring the significance of the botanical memento to Whitney and raising questions about how soldiers looked to their natural surroundings to make sense of their experiences. Pressed in his diary, the flowers could act as a very effective reminder and symbol of a significant day and place. He did not look to the scientific classification of the flower, instead referring to it by its popular name, but by making the conscious decision to include the poppy in his diary Whitney illustrated the resonance the botanical world has to the human experience. “The online finding aid points us to this powerful moment with the simple addition of a genre term: ‘Flowers (plants).’”

Another World War I collection, the Cottrell-Jury Correspondence, includes floral enclosures, some sent without mention seemingly as signs of affection from David C. Cottrell, a member of the 18th Engineer Regiment stationed in France, to his sweetheart, Ethel M. Jury. One letter, however, directly comments on the pressed flowers. On February 24, 1918, Cottrell reflected on a walk he took “to the edge of town.” “They are spraying the grape vines with white wash or lime as they are white. And there are little flowers peeping through the ground and blooming. I picked a few but am afraid they will lose there [sic] color before they reach you as they are delicate looking and very pretty as they grow in the fields.”

Wartime censors prevented Cottrell from revealing where in France he was stationed, but they allowed the passage of these small floral tokens. Evoking an intimate sense of place, the pressed flowers connected soldiers abroad to their loved ones back home while also reinforcing a sense of normalcy amidst the turbulence of war. Much like Bert Whitney’s poppies, the small flowers from the field were not kept as scientific specimens but emotional ones. These beautiful enclosures too often remain hidden from sight, but the support of the NHPDC has enabled the Manuscripts Division to produce online finding aids that, with targeted searches, can direct researchers to these fragile yet powerful botanical mementos.

— Jayne Ptolemy
Curatorial Assistant
Arguably, no wild animal of North America, aside perhaps from the bison, conjures up visions of the wilderness frontier more readily than the beaver. *Castor canadensis* was prized for its fur and praised for its industry in building lodges and dams that altered watercourses and created ponds in the forests. Commercially, the trade in furs was the economic mainstay of colonial New France as well as an important business concern in the Anglo-Dutch colony of New York. Along the way, the beaver trade intensified the competition between France and England and their Native American allies and fueled four North American wars during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Of course the beaver was not the only North American animal to be taken for its fur or skin. Nearly every fur-bearing creature had its value to Native American hunters, who exchanged their pelts with Europeans to obtain manufactured goods—from beads to gunpowder—that they were unable to produce themselves. While beaver fur ruled in the northern cold, deerskin was an important resource for trade as one moved south of the Great Lakes. The deerskin trade, however, has never had a hold on the popular imagination and lacks the romance of the northern fur trade with its colorful, canoe-paddling voyageurs, winter trapping, summer gatherings of traders, and, later, solitary “mountain men” of the far West.

North American fur, and particularly that of the beaver, was desired largely for sartorial purposes. Felt made from processed fur (especially the soft underfur of the beaver pelt) was the material preferred for the manufacture of hats worn by European and colonial men and women until well into the nineteenth century. The advent of hats made of silk and other fabrics finally ended the large-scale beaver trade in North America. It had been a good long run.

Bartering for furs had been a side activity of the earliest European fishermen, who processed their catches ashore long before the first colonies were established. Permanent settlement by the French at Québec and Montréal and by the Dutch in the upper Hudson Valley led to more organized efforts. From the early seventeenth century, young Frenchmen went west to trade for furs, while the Dutch and English relied on their Iroquois allies to serve as middlemen.

Native Americans were understandably curious about the European preoccupation with trading for furs, and they constructed stories to explain the practice. Jesuit missionary Claude Allouez recorded one of them in the *Relations* of 1669–70. The powerful native god Michabous, he wrote, once chased a beaver into Lake Superior with strides “eight leagues” long. “In view of so mighty an enemy, the Beavers changed their location, and withdrew to another Lake, Alimibegoung [Nipigon],—whence they afterward, by

*Audubon depicted his beavers . . . well, beavering away.*
means of the Rivers flowing from it, arrived at the North Sea [Hudson Bay], with the intention of crossing over to France; but, finding the water bitter, they lost heart, and spread throughout the Rivers and Lakes of this entire Country. And that is the reason why there are no beavers in France, and the French come to get them here.”

The French and their English rivals came to get them throughout much of the eighteenth century until, in the aftermath of the British conquest of New France in 1760, the management of the trade passed increasingly into the hands of English-speaking merchants. Montréal nonetheless remained the headquarters of the beaver trade and the place where independent businessmen banded into joint stock companies (such as the North West Company) to meet the challenges of the American Revolution.

Wholesale hunting and trapping of beaver had the effect one might expect. They were quickly wiped out in many areas. As early as 1749, the creatures were scarce near the St. Lawrence River although old-timers in Montréal claimed to recall that, in their youth, the waters near town were filled with beavers and their dams. By the time of Kalm’s visit one had to go “several miles up the country” before encountering one. In fact, by 1749, the most desirable trapping grounds were in the western Great Lakes. Despite a rapid reproduction rate, the stress on the species was extreme and the survival of castor canadensis and its furry cousins was seriously threatened—at least until the 1830s. Silk hats, it seems, became fashionable just in time!

— Brian Leigh Dunnigan
Associate Director & Curator of Maps

Like muskrat, Kalm found that beaver meat appeared “black when boiled and has a peculiar taste.” He judged it “eatable, but has nothing delicious about it.” Father Pierre Charlevoix was less charitable. “It is the worst eating I ever tasted,” he wrote from Québec in 1721.

With underwater entrances to their lodges, lives spent in ponds and streams, and adaptations to eyes, ears, fur, feet, and tails, beavers were highly developed aquatic animals. So much so that, as Swedish naturalist Peter Kalm observed in 1750, many Canadians ate its meat on fast days, because they believed that “his Holiness the Pope has . . . classified the beaver among the fishes, since he spends most of his time in the water.” Residents of Michigan’s River Raisin (Monroe) still claim that a similar dispensation once applied to muskrat!

This impression of an active beaver pond assailed by hunters appeared in the 1703 English edition of Lahonton’s New Voyages to North America.
When the United States embarked upon surveys of the American West in the 1850s, with the purpose of identifying possible railroad routes from the Mississippi to the Pacific, authorities on natural science were deeply involved. They included surveyors, cartographers, and astronomers necessary for navigat-

...completed of fish in the rivers, insects on the ground, birds in the air, and animals in the forests. Magnetic fields, climate (temperatures of up to 115 degrees were experienced), cloud cover, barometric pressure, mineral deposits, forestry, paleontology, “phenomena observed,” rainfall, soil (borings as deep as 160 feet), Native American crops and...
traced and an area of over 400,000 square miles of the American West was described in detail. Arduously long, slow, and dangerous, the expeditions faced challenging climates, animals, and insects. Frequent and unpredictable encounters with Native American residents added a level of complexity.

The motives for the whole endeavor were many. Certainly the discovery of gold, silver, and other valuable natural resources encouraged the westward rush of the nation. This raised military considerations. Secretary of War John B. Floyd (1806-63), in the departmental annual report of 1859, stated clearly that the inability of the United States to defend its Pacific coast from foreign intrusions was a huge concern. In a nation so large, the railroad was a military as well as an economic necessity.

The massive, twelve-volume published summary, *Reports of Explorations and Surveys, to Ascertain the Most Practicable and Economical Route for a Railroad from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean*, totaled over 6,290 pages and was profusely illustrated with 525 lithographed plates, numerous engraved text illustrations, and 89 lithographed maps. The plates and maps were produced by several printers, including top-notch Sarony, Major & Knapp of New York, with many in color. Although it is a spectacular document, the report has remained something of a hidden treasure for historians, perhaps because its greatest strengths are not central to the purpose stated in the title. It includes more information on the natural world and Native American interactions than it does practical information about plotting a railroad.

Much of the content is a tabulation of the data collected, with dry narratives of the deserts traversed, rivers crossed, mountains climbed. The tables, charts, and lists include “irresistible” reading such as the chart of the relative sizes of fish scales. However, the report has been lauded for observing and reporting larger patterns, particularly in the world of botany. Assistant surgeon, geologist, and botanist John Strong Newberry (1822–92) of the Williamson expedition made comparisons between California and eastern botany that biographer Charles A. White asserted made Newberry’s botanical report “one of the most interesting as well as one of the most useful of all the botanical publications issued from our government offices.”

Several aspects of the report are indicative of a typical but disturbing nineteenth-century attitude towards Native Americans, their culture, and beliefs. The lists of specimens include human remains alongside reptiles, fish, and birds. In the Southwest it was observed and recorded that the Zuni people were deeply offended by the taking of frog specimens, as they believed the frogs to be sacred keepers of their water. The specimens were taken all the same.

Of interest to print collectors and scholars of American visual culture are the lithographic plates scattered throughout the twelve volumes. These were based on the work of a group of over a dozen talented artists and scientists, with perhaps the most interesting being Detroiter John Mix Stanley (1814–72). Stanley was an accomplished landscape artist, a daguerrean photographer, and survey expedition veteran. He attended treaty negotiations with Cherokee, Creek, Comanche, and other Western nations and, as an artist, became a specialist in Native American and western subjects. Stanley was part of the 1846 Kearney expedition to California and in 1853 was appointed chief artist for Stevens’s expedition along the 47th and 49th parallels. The Stevens section of the report in Volume 12 includes some seventy lithographs by Stanley that parallel the written narrative. The images show the climbing of mountain passes, fording of rivers, negotiations with Native Americans, and the vast and beautiful landscape of the region.

After the railroad survey, Stanley exhibited an enormous traveling panorama of his journeys, with hundreds of western landscape paintings, and numerous portraits.

Impressive as the Pacific railroad reports are, with all the data they contain, they lacked the local topographic detail that was needed when the time came to actually lay track. The Union Pacific and Central Pacific Railroads railroad companies employed their own survey parties in advance of the track laying crews and probably paid scant attention to most of the report and its detailed census of fish in the rivers they were bridging.

The first transcontinental railroad line, one of the greatest engineering accomplishments of the century, was completed with the driving of a golden spike at Promontory, Utah, on May 10, 1869. The railroad opened communications and trade between the two coasts and immediately accelerated the conquest of the American West through parceling and development. Eventually, naval bases in California and Washington State eased concerns over foreign invasion.

Measuring the natural world to support technology and development, the Pacific railroad survey reports read today as Manifest Destiny made tangible, specific, and quantifiable. They stand as a detailed panoramic view of the American West as it was prior to widespread settlement from the East, with much of the natural world uninterrupted by modern development. Robert Taft in his *Artists and Illustrators of the Old West: 1850–1900* (New York, 1953) stated that “these volumes . . . constitute probably the most important single contemporary source of knowledge on western geography and history.”

— Clayton Lewis
Curator of Graphic Materials
With his *Viviparous Quadrupeds of North America*, John James Audubon wanted to create a definitive record of North American animals in their natural habitats. At the other end of the spectrum, the Clements Library holds many examples of animals depicted in a wholly unnatural setting: the political cartoon. The Graphics Division has a substantial collection of satirical prints that feature animals as caricatures of historical figures. These zoomorphic images provide a symbolic snapshot of the political climate of their time and leave the viewer with hints (whether subtle or direct) of the artists’ feelings towards their subjects.

As representations of the Democratic and Republican parties for nearly 150 years, the donkey and the elephant are the most widely recognized animals used in political cartoons. In the 1828 presidential election, political opponents of Andrew Jackson referred to the candidate as the less-favorable term for a donkey. To the dismay of his enemies, Jackson eventually adopted the donkey as a campaign symbol. The association between the donkey and the Democratic Party stuck, and Thomas Nast, working as an editorial cartoonist for *Harper’s Weekly*, would capitalize on this association in his cartoons in the 1870s. Nast also popularized the elephant as the symbol of the Republican Party. In his cartoon “The Third-Term Panic,” originally published in 1874, an elephant labeled “The Republican Vote” made its first notable appearance, shown frightened by the *New York Herald* as represented by a donkey in a lion’s hide. The *Herald* had sounded the call of “Caeserism” to rally Democratic politicians against the possibility of a third term for President Ulysses S. Grant.

Although both Charles James Fox (inset) and Martin Van Buren were portrayed as crafty foxes in satirical prints, their caricatures could not have been more dissimilar.

Nast used the elephant to signify the size and power of the Republican vote but also to excoriate it for being so easily disaffected by the Democratic press’s fear mongering. Nast continued to use the donkey and the elephant in his cartoons, and other artists followed suit, cementing these motifs in American culture. The Clements Library’s run of *Harper’s Weekly* includes “The Third-Term Panic” and other noteworthy example of Thomas Nast’s use of the Democratic donkey and the Republican elephant.
Although the elephant and the donkey might be the most recognizable animals in American political cartoons, they are by no means the only members of the animal kingdom used in this type of print. The fox appears in several different roles in the Graphics Division’s collection of satires that pre-date Nast’s Harper’s Weekly cartoons. For example, prominent British parliamentarian Charles James Fox (1749–1806) was portrayed as his namesake animal in etchings published in the 1780s. While the use of the fox for this historical figure might have been a simple connection to draw, the etchings themselves were quite elaborate. In James Gillray’s Dame Rat, and Her Poor Little Ones, Charles James Fox has the body and fashion of a British statesman with a fox’s facial features. Seventy years later, Martin Van Buren’s nicknames “The Red Fox of Kinderhook” (due to his hair color and birthplace) and “Sly Fox” (because he was a clever manipulator) earned him the same depiction in several political cartoons. Yet the rendering of Van Buren as a fox was much different than that of Charles James Fox. In the lithograph Whig Candidates for the Presidency, published by J. Childs circa 1851, Van Buren’s face is stuck on the body of a red fox. He watches from a foxhole in the background as candidates Winfield Scott, Millard Fillmore, Daniel Webster and U.S. Senator William Henry Seward sit around a cauldron labeled “Loaves and Fishes.” As a former president, Van Buren was no longer a candidate but a bystander who may have been coveting the material gain (the “loaves and fishes”) of public office that the other four men were discussing. In the two caricatures discussed above, both artists used the same animal, and neither depiction is flattering, yet each portrayal tells a very different story about its subject.

By the mid-nineteenth century ordinary Americans were purchasing lithographs from commercial printmaking firms. The Clements Library holds several prints published during the Civil War in which muscular dogs represent Union generals. In Why Don’t You Take It?, published in 1861, General-in-Chief of the Army Winfield Scott is a fierce bulldog wearing epaulettes and a cocked hat guarding a substantial supply of corn, flour, and other provisions. He taunts Jefferson Davis, cast as a gaunt greyhound in a southern planter’s hat, with a bone labeled “Washington Prize Beef.” Early in the Civil War when Scott was in charge of defending the capital, many southerners bragged that its location across the river from Virginia would prove an easy target. This print and others like it, without needing much in the way of text, served as a provocation to the Confederacy and expressed the cartoonist’s belief that its leaders were underestimating the Union’s might.

This brief introduction notes just a few instances within the Graphics Division’s collections where animals caricature historical political figures. The animals provided a physical embodiment to the nature of the subjects, from the guile of Van Buren and the timidity of the post-Civil War Republicans to the confident and defiant nature of General Scott and the Union. These political cartoons give insight into the minds of their artists and communicate a strong message to viewers. With the majority of these prints now searchable through Mirlyn, the University of Michigan’s online catalog, more researchers will be able to investigate the influence this popular iconography had on American culture.

— Diana Sykes
Head of Reader Services
THE GORMAGUNT

Despite his attempt to comprehensively record the viviparous quadrupeds of North America, John James Audubon (1785-1851) was unable to document the rarest of the continent’s creatures. This beast, reportedly known by the Indians of Canada as the “gormagunt,” seems to have made only one appearance. That was in the immediate aftermath of the British conquest of New France at a time when readers were hungry for information about the recently captured land to the north. The beast was described in the New-York Mercury of February 16, 1761:

“Whereas a surprising MONSTER. Was caught in the Woods of Canada, near the River St. Lawrence, and has with great difficulty been tamed, and brought to the House of James Elliot, at Curler’s Hook. This is to inform the Publlick, That it will be exhibited at said House till the Curious are satisfied.

“This MONSTER is larger than an Elephant, of a very uncommon Shape, having, three Heads, eight Legs, three Fundaments, two male Members, and one Female Pundendum on the Rump. It is of various Colours, very beautiful, and makes a Noise like the Conjunction of two or three Voices. It is held unlawful to kill it, and is said to live to a great Age. The Canadians could not give it a Name, ‘till a very old Indian Sachem said, He remembered to have seen one when he was a Boy, and his Father called it a GORMAGUNT.”

What, exactly, “the Curious” saw at Curler’s Hook is not at all certain, but a week later the monster was moved to Mr. Coome’s at Jamaica on Long Island, with the promise that it would soon return to Curler’s Hook. No further sightings have been recorded in the intervening 253 years, however, so it must be presumed extinct unless a few survive in the wild corners of Canada.

But seriously now. It is virtually certain that the 1761 advertisement was a hoax by the printer or a subscriber, for the description of the gormagunt was constructed from a very old and crude riddle. Can readers of The Quarto solve it? What is a gormagunt? Send your answer to the editor at the Clements Library or email briand@umich.edu. One winning entry will be drawn in March from among the correct answers. The winner will receive a copy of Frontier Metropolis: Picturing Early Detroit, 1701–1838.

DEVELOPMENTS

In his introduction to this issue of The Quarto, Kevin Graffagnino writes about our recent acquisition of John James Audubon’s Viviparous Quadrupeds of North America. Each of the volume’s 150 prints is beautiful in its own way, from the peaceful vision of the deer to the predatory stare of the wildcat. I hope that when you are in Ann Arbor you will come to the Clements and see this wondrous collection.

Although we have the three volumes of the Viviparous Quadrupeds safely stored in our Rare Book Room, we have not fully paid for this beautiful set. We are fortunate to have been able to bring them to the University of Michigan and that the sellers have faith that we will raise the funds we need. And we are confident that we will do so too. But we are asking for your help.

This set of rare lithographs cost $480,000, with the total expense split evenly between the Clements and the Special Collections Library. We are collaborating on fundraising, and thus far, through the generosity of three major donors, we have $290,000 to put toward the total purchase price. Over the next eighteen months our two libraries need to raise another $190,000. Our generous Clements Library Associates Board of Governors has offered to match, dollar for dollar, up to $10,000, each gift that helps to purchase the Viviparous Quadrupeds. I hope that you will follow the lead of our Board of Governors and consider a gift.

In the next few months, you’ll be hearing more about the Viviparous Quadrupeds. We are planning a talk in the spring that will focus on these prints and their importance to history and collecting. We hope, when we move back to the restored Clements Library building, to sponsor an exhibit and multi-disciplinary forum with curators from the Clements and Special Collections and faculty from a number of University departments including history, art history, and American studies. Please keep an eye out for future mailings and publications.

John James Audubon once wrote, “How could I make a little book, when I have seen enough to make a dozen large books?” The University of Michigan is a richer institution because it now owns the best of his large books—both The Birds of North America and the Viviparous Quadrupeds.

Thank you all for your ongoing support and dedication, and please consider helping to fund this wonderful acquisition.

— Ann Rock
Director of Development
ANNOUNCEMENTS

DOUGLAS W. MARSHALL

It is a particularly sad task to report the passing of Doug Marshall, curator of maps at the Clements Library from 1970–82. Doug is remembered by many as a founding member of the Michigan Map Society. He was the author of three books and numerous articles on the subject of cartography. He later held appointments at General Motors. After leaving the Clements Doug was active in the antiquarian map trade. He resided in Harbor Springs at the time of his death.

HONORARY GOVERNOR

At its fall 2014 meeting the Clements Library Associates Board of Governors named long-serving board member Margaret W. Winkelman an honorary governor. Many thanks, Peggy, for your years of service to the Library.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

October 18, 2014 – January 18, 2015: Exhibit at U-M Museum of Art: “Detroit Before the Automobile: The William L. Clements Library Collection.” Tuesday-Sunday, 11:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

May 5, 2015: CLA Board of Governors meeting. 10:00 a.m.