

## *Report of the Librarian*

NOT infrequently someone offers us a book with the remark that it will be of particular interest to us because it deals with New England. As a matter of fact, the range of our collections is such that we usually ignore lists of books relating to the New England states but check with care those relating to, say Kentucky and Mississippi. I would personally like to concentrate on the history of this part of the country, about which I happen to know something, but our correspondents and visitors, with demands nearly as broad as the purposes of the founders of the Society, will allow us no such limitation. This year the number of the historical and bibliographical inquiries which come by mail has held up to the level of recent years, and the number of visiting research workers, including distinguished professors, novelists, collectors, and bibliographers from all parts of the country, has for the first time reached pre-war figures. Naturally a majority of the queries which come to us relate to fields in which our strength is well known, but their scope includes every subject with which a newspaper, or a book printed before 1820, might deal. So the field of our labors this year might be said to have been bounded on the periphery by such subjects as octagon houses, triplets in colonial families, the transit of Venus in 1769, Bolivian newspapers, and the history of Brazil. Indeed, some of our calls went beyond the bounds of history, as when a gentleman came bringing a turtle for which he sought a home, and another asked us to prescribe a diet for one.

In looking over this year's accessions, which number 4,175 volumes and 2,485 pamphlets in spite of our stern deter-

mination to add nothing but significant works,<sup>1</sup> I have been impressed by the paucity of important New England items. Three which relate to the Indian wars are worthy of mention. These are Thomas Thacher, *A Fast of God's Chusing*, Boston, 1678; the Amherst, New Hampshire, 1795 edition of the Rowlandson captivity; and Joseph Emerson, *The Fear of God. . . . A Sermon Preached at Pepperrell, May 7, 1758. To Capt. Thomas Lawrence, and Part of his Company of Soldiers: Before their Going out into Public Service*, Boston, 1758.

In the manuscript field we deliberately restrict ourselves to regional material. This year, while we had in press the orderly-book of Colonel William Henshaw, two of his descendants, the Misses Mary and Caroline Thurston of Leicester, presented us with the thirteen-volume diary of his daughter Ruth. She was born on December 15, 1772, and kept this record from 1789 until her death in 1847. Successively the wife of Dr. Asa Miles and the Reverend Ezekiel L. Bascomb, she lived in Westminster, Deerfield, Fitzwilliam, and Ashby, and took one trip to Norfolk, Virginia. She was a personal friend of Ethan Allen Greenwood, a list of whose portrait paintings we printed in the last volume of *Proceedings*, and was herself a portrait artist of considerable ability. Not long before we received the diaries we had been visited by an historian of art who was investigating her work and life.

So far as the field of the history of American art is concerned, we range at large. Here probably our most interesting accession was a companion piece to that unique and incredibly crude red-and-black broadside picture of the *Murder of the Whole Family of Samuel Wells on the Missouri*

<sup>1</sup> We also added 86 maps and 350 unbound newspapers. The present total count of the library is 275,148 bound volumes and 416,193 pamphlets, making a total of 691,341 items exclusive of unbound newspapers, maps, prints, and manuscripts.

which we acquired and exhibited a couple of years ago. The new broadside is entitled the *Hieroglyphics of John Bull's Overthrow; or a View of the Northern Expedition in Miniature*, and like the other was probably printed in New York in 1813. Another new War of 1812 caricature is almost identical with the well-known cartoon by William Charles, *John Bull Stung to Agony by Insects*, Philadelphia, 1813, and having as imprint only "the Patriot Office" may well be a piracy made in some other city. This new variant is a woodcut with typeset mottoes, "Huzza for 'Free Trade and Sailors' Rights'" and "John Bull stung to Agony by the Wasp and the Hornet." Our collection of Charles' War of 1812 cartoons being almost complete, this piracy, if such it is, is particularly interesting to us.

Another remarkable accession of pictorial material relating to this period came to us from the estate of our old associate, Charles H. Taylor, to be on deposit with us during the life of his relict. This collection consists of a number of historical engravings and lithographs, among them the following:

Engagement between the Serapis and the Bon Homme Richard, J. Boydell, London, 1781.

The Eruption of Mount Etna in 1787, E. Savage, Philadelphia.

Action between the Constellation and L'Insurgent, E. Savage, Philadelphia, 1799.

Constellation & L'Insurgent—the Chace, E. Savage, Philadelphia, 1799.

Attack made on Tripoli, August 3, 1804, J. B. Guerrazzi, Leghorn, 1805.

Burning of the American Frigate Philadelphia in Tripoli, J. B. Guerrazzi, Leghorn, 1805.

U. S. Sloop Gen. Pike and British Sloop Wolf, Sept. 28, 1813, Shelton & Kensett, Cheshire, Conn., 1813.

South Sea Whale Fishery, T. Sutherland after W. J. Huggins, London, 1825.

Northern Whale Fishery, E. Duncan after W. J. Huggins, London, 1829.  
View of the Fire in Main Street, Nantucket, May 10, 1836, Moore's  
Lithog., after Starbuck.

We had also the privilege of choosing from Mr. Taylor's library such books relating to American history and literature as we lacked. We have only begun the work of processing this collection, so we cannot as yet report on the gift in detail. During his lifetime Mr. Taylor was a constant donor of books, as our shelves testify to all who use them, and this collection is the last drops of a great stream.

As usual, we have acquired this year a large number of early Pennsylvania German tracts, one of which is worth a bibliographical note. Evans in his bibliography, under number 24,396, lists Tobias Hirte, *Ein Neues, Auserlesenes Gemeinnütziges Hand-Büchleins fur die Deutschen in Amerika*, Philadelphia, 1792. In 1946, the Rosenbach Company, in its catalogue, *Monuments of Wit and Learning*, offered a copy with an entirely different title, and remarked that Evans had erred in taking the title which he gave from the copyright rather than from the title-page. We have now, however, purchased a copy of this same work, in original wrappers, with the title as Evans gives it except that the phrase "fur die Deutschen in Amerika" is omitted. This book, of which only two other copies are known, is famous as the first promotion literature of the oil industry.<sup>2</sup> About the same time we acquired another rare book, John M'Culloch's *Introduction to the History of America*, Philadelphia, 1787, which gives one of the best early accounts of the natural occurrence of oil in Pennsylvania.

Perhaps our friends in the investment business will not think me unduly cynical if I say that speaking of oil promotion literature reminds me that this year we acquired two

<sup>2</sup> Rudolph Hommel, "Tobias Hirte, Pioneer of the Petroleum Industry," *Hobbies*, vol. 53, no. 9 (Nov. 1948), p. 34.

dream books not in Harry B. Weiss' *Oneirocritica Americana*. One of these, *The Universal Interpreter of Dreams and Visions . . . Historical Narratives of Apparitions and Remarkable Providences*, was printed at Philadelphia in 1797. The other, *The New Dream Book . . . Alphabetically Arranged*, was printed at Boston in 1815.

Of the important newspapers which we acquired this year, all come from the post-colonial period and from the states outside of New England. The best of them are files of *The Balance and State Journal*, of Albany, for 1811, and *The Western Spy*, of Cincinnati, for 1816-18. We were fortunate in filling a gap of the years 1796-97 in our file of *Claypole's American Advertiser*, of Philadelphia, and in obtaining the *Catskill Packet and Western Mail* for 1796, which was contiguous to our earlier holdings. We also acquired a file of *The Ohio Register*, of Clinton, which runs from February 15, 1814, to December 5, 1815.

We have one important item among our newspapers accessions which claims to be a New Englander. This is *The American Gazette* of April 2, 1778, "printed at Boston by Humphrey Humbug." It carries a volume numbering of 4545 and was, it says, "Published by Authority of the Congress." It prints eight startling resolutions said to have been passed by Congress on April 1, and a notice by John Hancock of the same date discharging Sons of Liberty of their debts to English merchants. There is also a scurrilous paragraph relating to Benjamin Franklin and the ladies. Having read thus far in the paper one begins to question and to notice peculiar things about it. Its size and format are precisely those of the *London Gazette*, and its red revenue stamp is an imitation of the variety used in Great Britain but not in the colonies. In short, the evidence is that a group of Tory refugees in England was having a little fun. Probably Dr. William Paine, one of the founders of this Society, knew

all about it. At any rate, this is the first notice of the existence of such a paper.

We have long been uncomfortably aware that we had only a fragmentary file of the *Firelands Pioneer*, a journal of vital importance for the history of the opening of Ohio. This year we purchased a complete run, in twenty-five volumes, covering the years 1859-1937.

Moving across the Ohio into the beginnings of Tennessee, we purchased one of the two known complete copies of the bibliographic cornerstone of the State: *A Declaration of Rights, also the Constitution, or Form of Government . . . of the State of Frankland*. This constitution was drawn by Sam Houston who, after its rejection by the convention of 1784, went to Philadelphia where in 1786 he had this printed with an explanatory introduction as a protest against the acceptance by the people of Tennessee of the constitution of North Carolina, which was much less democratic document. We also acquired the only known copy of the *Journal of the Proceedings of the Legislative Council of the Territory of the United States of America, South of the River Ohio, begun and held at Knoxville the 25th of August, 1794*. Except for a broadside and a small leaflet, this is the earliest complete copy of a Tennessee imprint.

Even more incredible was our good fortune in obtaining a perfect copy of the first Alabama imprint. This is *The Declaration of the American Citizens, on the Mobile, with relation to British Aggressions. September, 1807*. Its colophon reads: "Printed on the Mobile. . . . The Printer apologizes for the execution of his work: his types are old and much worn: and the situation of the country does not justify his purchasing new ones." The tract is the protest of the people of "a remote corner of the territory of the United States, and unconnected with every other body of American citizens," against the British conduct in the Leopard-Chesapeake affair.

It was at one time believed on the basis of what appears to be a presentation inscription on our unique copy of the fifth Alabama imprint, *The Last Campaign of Sir John Falstaff the II*, St. Stephens, 1815, that the author of this bitter verse was one Demos Darling. Other sources, however, proved that the author was Lewis Sewall. However, Mr. Brigham has recently discovered that the man who autographed the pamphlet was Dennis Darling, a prominent citizen of St. Stephens in 1815.

By purchase we obtained a fine uncut copy of an important North Carolina imprint, *A Pastoral Letter, from the Synod of the Carolinas to the Churches under their Care*, Fayetteville, 1790. The importance of this book lies in the fact that it is a careful study of the effects of the Revolution on the American churches, and of the change of attitude toward the non-essentials of religion. It would be well-known to historians of religion were it not for the fact that it has hitherto been known by only two copies, neither of them readily accessible.

Another work of both bibliographical and historical importance is a tract with the caption title, "*The American Crisis*," and the colophon, "Williamsburg: Printed by Alex. Purdie, at the Constitutional Post Office." From notices in Purdie's *Virginia Gazette* it is evident that this item was published in May, 1776, although it has hitherto been undiscovered and unrecorded. It is a plea for a firm Colonial stand, even to independence, in its argument almost as distorted, eloquent, and extreme as the *Crisis* which Thomas Paine was to publish seven months later. Internal evidence suggests the work of some Virginian political leader; which one, the specialists in their works must decide.

As strange and unrealistic as were the dreams of the Fathers as to the kind of world in which they would find themselves when they achieved independence of Great

Britain, stranger still were their ideas of the West. The fictitious *Travels to the Westward, or Unknown Parts of America*, attributed by the printers to Alonzo Decalves, ran in a few years to more than twenty editions which Mr. Vail lists in his bibliography of the Vandeleur Captivity in the twenty-sixth volume of Sabin. We this year purchased a beautiful copy of the printing made at Portland in 1796.

There are few more fascinating experiences than watching the transformation of this dream picture of the West into reality as the authentic narratives of the exploration of the lands between the Mississippi and the Pacific appeared. This year Mr. Frost gave to the Library the last installment of his great collection of books relating to the West. It includes every significant narrative in one edition or another, most of them in every edition, and most of them in superb condition. The range is from a *Cabeca de Vaca* of 1555 through Chivington's defence of the Sand Creek massacre printed at Denver in 1865. The Frost collection also includes complete sets of the important serials, such as the Champlain Society Publications. Even the great folio and quarto Pacific voyages are present in fine old gilt calf which is practically museum material. The collection of maps would be an object of wonder if it were not supplementary to such a great collection of books. It includes such pieces as the magnificent wall maps published by Arrowsmith of London from 1796 to 1824, showing step by step the exploration of the American West. In all, the library included about 4,000 pieces of which we lacked 1775. The terms of the gift insure the growth of the collection by instructing us to sell the duplicates and to apply the proceeds to the purchase of Western material.

Another remarkable collection which came to the Library this year was a gift of broadside auction book catalogues from Dr. A. S. W. Rosenbach. There are about four hundred



broad-sides in the lot, covering the years 1857 to 1878, and they must be exceedingly scarce as only three out of the four hundred were previously located in George L. McKay's comprehensive *American Book Auction Catalogues*. Nearly all of the broad-sides were issued by M. Thomas & Sons, of Philadelphia, one of the leading auction firms of the day, but there are a few, less than a score in all, issued by C. C. Mackey in 1860-1863, James A. Freeman in 1860-1866, Barritt & Co. in 1862, Davis & Harvey in 1867, and Thomas Birch & Son in 1872, all of Philadelphia. The names and dates of these firms add bibliographical information to Mr. McKay's excellent list of American Book Auction Houses. Most of the sales were of miscellaneous books, invariably without name of consignor and without numbering of lots. Judging by this very large collection of unknown pieces, there must have been many similar broadside catalogues issued by other book auction firms of the period. Dr. Rosenbach's gift made a notable addition to our already outstanding collection, which has been used constantly in bibliographical research.

In last year's report I remarked on the incredible fact that we had obtained three early unknown Worcester imprints; this year we found two more which had escaped Dr. Nichols and the rest of us. One of these was the *Travels of Robinson Crusoe*, the second Worcester edition, Isaiah Thomas, Worcester, 1789. We already had the first and third editions, but we had hardly hoped to find a copy of the second in its original flowered-paper covers. The other unrecorded Worcester item was an edition of Isaac Watts' *Divine and Moral Songs for Children*, printed by Isaiah Thomas, Jr., in 1803. It is a 24mo. of sixty-two pages, with interesting woodcuts.

Since our collection of the American editions of Watts is much the best, we were particularly pleased to obtain a copy

of the *Divine Songs for Children* printed in Boston in 1730. Evans lists a 1714 edition, but there is evidence that he obtained his reference from a newspaper; if there was such a Boston printing, no specimen is known to survive. Hitherto, the earliest reported American copy was "the Eighth Edition. London printed: Philadelphia: Reprinted . . . 1737." Stone assumes that this implies seven earlier Philadelphia editions, but of course it does not. At any rate, our copy is the earliest American *Divine Songs* known, if not a specimen of the first American edition.

Other early juveniles acquired this year include the Boston, 1790, *Robinson Crusoe*; Franklin's *Way to Wealth*, New York, 1814; *The Burial of Cock Robin*, Albany, 1810, and Philadelphia, 1811; *An Astronomical and Geographical Catechism*, Jaffrey, 1814; *The Hermit of the Forest*, Boston, 1792; *A New History of Blue Beard*, Montpelier, 1808, and Windsor, 1810; *Nurse Truelove's Christmas Box*, Charlestown, 1802; *A Pack of Cards*, Stonington-port, 1800; and *The Youth's Monitor*, Leominster, 1799.

In spite of the reputation which the New England fathers have for being mean to children, they certainly turned out more children's books than all other Americans together. Indeed, most of the juveniles printed in New York or Philadelphia were reprints of New England or English Puritan works, and all collections of American children's books must be strongly New England.

Our collection of New England Primers being more than three times as large as that of any other, it is not to be expected that we could obtain many new additions; yet during the past year no less than eight Primers have been added. Of those before 1830 listed in Charles F. Heartman's checklist of 1934, this Society has 184, followed by the Huntington Library with 60, the New York Public Library with 51, the Boston Public Library with 50, and the Library of Con-

gress with 48. The private collections are led by the Wilbur M. Stone estate with 86, Albert C. Bates with 67, and Dr. A. S. W. Rosenbach with 40. Of course, this comparison is not quite fair, for the count for the other collections is not up to date.

The Primers acquired by us during the year are as follows: Boston, E. Draper, about 1783; Portsmouth, John Melcher, about 1786; New Haven, A. Morse, 1789; New London, James Springer, 1795; Northampton, T. M. Pomroy, 1806; Haverhill, Horatio G. Allen, 1813, New York, Samuel Wood & Sons, 1818; and Philadelphia, printed for the Booksellers, 1823.

Of these the most interesting edition is that printed at Boston about 1783 by E. Draper and sold by the Booksellers. Only one copy of this was known and that privately owned. On the front page, before the title, is a type-metal cut of General Washington. The plate is identical with that shown in *Weatherwise's Town and Country Almanack for 1781*, printed at Boston by John D. M'Dougall and Company. The interest of the portrait lies in its ascription to Paul Revere. In a letter of October 6, 1781, Revere wrote to his cousin, Mathias Rivoire, in France: "Before this reaches you, you will have heard of the victory gained over the British Army by the Allied Armies commanded by the brave General Washington. A small engraving of him I send enclosed, it is said to be a good likeness and it is my engraving."<sup>3</sup> Charles Henry Hart in his *Engraved Portraits of Washington*, p. xv, says that he believes that the cut shown in the Almanac (and later in the Primer) was engraved by Revere, who worked on type-metal as well as copper. The cut followed the drawing of the C. W. Peale portrait, and is very similar to the design of the small engraving shown in John Norman's broadside Philadelphia Almanack

<sup>3</sup> Elbridge Goss, *Life of Paul Revere*, Boston, 1891, vol. 2, pp. 501-2.

for 1780 (reproduced in Hart, opposite p. 22). Whether or not this engraving is by Revere, it does resemble his work. The Draper edition of the Primer is known only by one other copy, and on that the type border of the title-page differs from ours.

It is not often that this Society has the opportunity to add to its collection of early American bookplates. We have nearly all of the plates entered in Allen's Checklist, and in addition, many that Allen did not find. But during the year we have acquired two new plates of unusual interest. One is the armorial bookplate of Thomas Greene, Jr., engraved by Nathaniel Hurd, one of the very few Hurd plates which we lacked. The most important acquisition is the fine plate of John Franklin of Boston, brother of Benjamin, engraved and signed by James Turner, about 1745. It is one of the earliest, if not the first, American bookplate signed by an engraver, is exceedingly scarce, and is one of the most elaborate and attractive of American eighteenth century plates. It is also interesting since so little is recorded in print about John Franklin. An elder brother of Benjamin Franklin, he was born in Boston, December 7, 1690. He married, for his second wife, Elizabeth (Gooch) Hubbard, and followed his father's trade of tallow-chandler. In 1715, he removed to Newport where Benjamin visited him in 1724. Later he returned to Boston and soon became a person of some consequence. In 1755 he was chosen postmaster of Boston, receiving the appointment from his brother Benjamin, American Postmaster General. He died on January 30, 1756, and the *Boston Gazette* of February 2, 1756, extolled his qualities in a long paragraph of praise. The *Boston News-Letter* of August 5, 1756, advertised the sale of his "large and valuable" library. James Turner, the engraver, appeared in Boston about 1743 and his earliest engraving that can be dated was in 1744. He removed about 1755 to Philadelphia,

where he died in 1759. He was an able engraver, and his work is duly chronicled by Stauffer, who misses, however, the engraved map of Nova Scotia, done in 1750, with its attractive cartouche, a copy of which was recently acquired by this Society. In addition to the bookplate of John Franklin of Boston, he engraved at least two other plates, those of Sir John St. Clair and Isaac Norris, both of Philadelphia. The Franklin coat-of-arms, which was unusually elaborate and detailed, was used as a seal by Benjamin Franklin.

As a gift from Mr. Brigham the Society has acquired a rare piece of early Philadelphia engraving. This is the advertising card of J. J. Boudier, stating that he engraves likenesses, pictures, and manuscripts by the new method of the physiognotrace and that his new office is at No. 32 South Third Street in Philadelphia. At the top of the card is a circular engraving, after the style of St. Memin, of a handsome youth, possibly the limner himself. Boudier advertised frequently in Philadelphia newspapers, and five of his advertisements during the years 1796-1797 are quoted in Alfred C. Prime's *Arts and Crafts in Philadelphia, Maryland, and South Carolina*, vol. 2, pp. 66-7. The Society has another of his round vignette engravings, the portrait of Dwight Foster, which is signed "Boudier Fecit." St. Memin also used the physiognotrace method, an excellent description of which is given in Fillmore Morfleet's *Saint-Memin in Virginia*, 1942, p. 13.

The effort to cover the entire field of American History strains our physical facilities, our book funds, and our fund of knowledge. Blasé collectors may complain that there are no more rare books to be bought, but they fairly well up around us. The constant call for information which we do not have in our memories keeps us in an intellectual scramble. Blessed with a very slow rate of personnel turnover, we have from year to year sharpened our mental equipment as

we have improved our bibliographical tools, with the result that there has been, in the eighteen years that I have known the library, a steady increase in the efficiency of the service we offer. And, in the last analysis, that service is the purpose of our existence as an institution.

Respectfully submitted,

CLIFFORD K. SHIPTON,

*Librarian*

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