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Library Notes: Selected Acquisitions [v. 3, no. 3]

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Selected Acquisitions

Books of the Romantics
Several important books have recently been acquired by purchase in an effort to build on strengths in early nineteenth-century English literature firmly established by the recent gift of the W. Hugh Peal Collection. The most important of these acquisitions is the author's proof copy of Charles Lamb's *Album Verses* (London: Edward Moxon, 1830), containing corrections in Lamb's hand. This is a worthy companion for the dedication copy (to the publisher Moxon, with the manuscript of Lamb's dedication laid in) which forms a part of the Peal Collection.

We have also added several volumes of verse by William Wordsworth, perhaps foremost in importance among the Romantic poets. Wordsworth's long poem, *The Excursion: Being a Portion of The Recluse, A Poem* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees and Orme, 1814) will complement the Peal copy of the poet's other major long poem, *The Prelude* (London: Edward Moxon, 1850). We have also added first editions of Wordsworth's *The Waggoner* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme and Brown, 1819), dedicated to Charles Lamb, and *Poems, Chiefly of Early and Late Years; Including The Borderers, A Tragedy* (London: Edward Moxon, 1842), bound handsomely by the Scroll Club bindery of New York, with the poet's autograph tipped in.

Other valuable titles related to the literature of the early nineteenth century include Coleridge's *Sybilline Leaves* (London: Rest Fenner, 1817) and Thomas De Quincy's anonymous *Confessions of an English Opium Eater* (London: Taylor and Hessey, 1822).

Fine Printing
Victor Hammer: Printer and Craftsman, a companion to the recent volume entitled Victor Hammer: Artist and Craftsman, is a gift of Mrs. Carolyn Reading Hammer and represents an especially valued addition to the Special Collections Department. In this study
various authorities examine Hammer’s lettering and typefaces, and the work includes too a bibliography of writings by and about Hammer as well as a checklist of his printing. Contributors include Ulrich Middledorf, R. Hunter Middleton, Hermann Zapf, W. Gay Reading, Jr., Paul Holbrook, and David Farrell.

Another recent addition to the fine printing collection is Byron’s *Natural Man*, by Prof. John Clubbe. This study of Lord Byron’s poetic treatment of Daniel Boone is an important item of Kentuckiana and an attractive specimen of the work of the King Library Press. (Members of the Library Associates may acquire copies at a discount through the Press.) The work contains a frontispiece, by Lexington artist Robert James Foose, depicting both the poet and the pioneer.

**Printed Americana**

A key title in American historiography has been added to the collections as a gift of the Library Associates. This is the first appearance of Frederick Jackson Turner’s *The Significance of the Frontier in American History*. Turner’s work appears as a part of the *Proceedings of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin* for 1894. A valuable item of Kentuckiana has come to us in the form of Charles’s *Kentucky, Tennessee, and Ohio Almanac for the Year 1806* (Lexington: Joseph Charless, n.d.) which contains a Lexington city directory for 1806. This fragile pamphlet, listing many of the early residents of the community, will prove a valuable tool for research on Lexington and adds significantly to our state and local history collections.

**Manuscript Acquisitions**

The libraries have acquired several items of literary correspondence which appropriately enhance our current holdings. Included in these accessions are valuable letters by two nineteenth-century Poet Laureates, William Wordsworth and Robert Southey, as well as one letter by the Victorian novelist Charles Dickens. The undated Wordsworth letter is addressed to Thomas Noon Talfourd, remembered for his *Final Memorials of Charles Lamb*. Wordsworth compliments his correspondent on a new home; he encourages him to visit when Talfourd returns from Ireland and recalls that “... from the top of Snowden I have been a witness to the Sun’s rising, & never shall I forget that night and morning.” Southey’s
letter, dated Keswick, May-day 1837, is addressed to “K.T.” He wittily concludes it by writing: “I give my joy of the Parenthesis, & heartily wish you all happiness to the end of the chapter, wishing also that the chapter may be a long one.” Dickens, in a letter to James Sheridan Knowles, takes initiatives to find help for a financially distressed author.

We have also acquired several attractive letters of famous Kentuckians. These include three letters of Henry Clay. In one, dated 27 February 1823 and addressed to David Jennings, Clay acknowledges a letter of support in his campaign for the presidency: “I have the most undoubted assurances,” he writes, “of receiving the undivided support of Louisiana; and I think there is no doubt of the co-operation of the nine Western and South Western States. . . . Upon the whole, there is every ground to entertain high hopes, and no occasion for the least despair.” The libraries have also obtained an 1857 letter in the hand of Albert Sidney Johnston, the West Point-educated native of Washington, Kentucky, who became a Confederate general and was killed at the Battle of Shiloh. Johnston writes from Indianola, Texas, to the Adjutant General in Washington requesting funds to meet the government’s local financial obligations. Varina Davis, wife of Kentucky-born Jefferson Davis, probably took by dictation a passage signed by the Southern leader concerning Henry Clay and the Missouri Compromise of 1820, which was also recently added to the manuscript collections.

A literary item of unusual interest came as a gift of Mr. Walter E. Langsam of Lexington. This consists of a printed proof sheet with the text of poet E. E. Cummings’s “Pity This Busy Monster.” Cummings has approved and initialed the work in the margin. We have also added three letters by Kentucky author Robert Penn Warren. One is a letter to Babette Deutsch recommending John Crowe Ransom for an award, and the other two are personal letters to Prof. William S. Ward, former chairman of the Department of English at the University of Kentucky. We have also added two lengthy letters to Dr. Ward from Kentucky writer Jesse Stuart.

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