
IN JCB

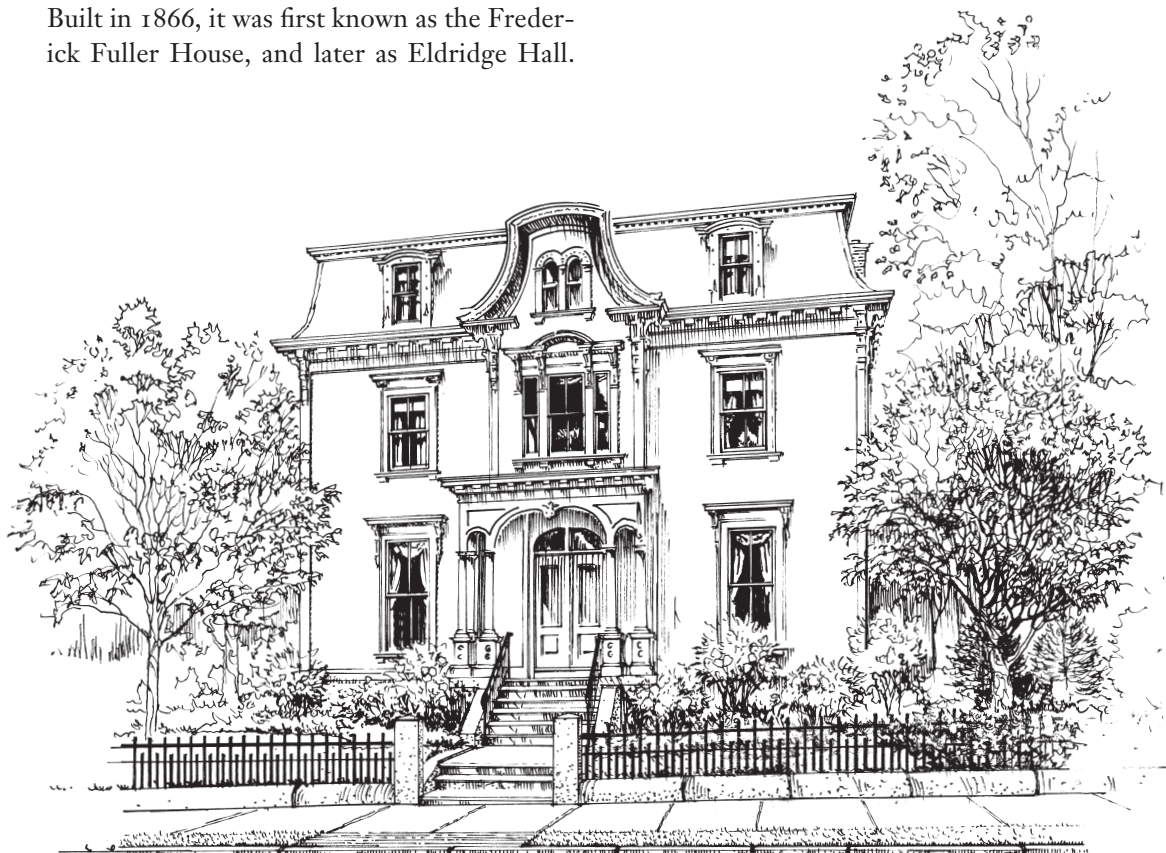
AN OCCASIONAL NEWSLETTER OF THE JOHN CARTER BROWN LIBRARY

79 Charlesfield

ON FRIDAY, JUNE 1, 2007, the John Carter Brown Library inaugurated a new phase of its history as it declared its stately new residence open for business. An impromptu celebration brought many friends of the Library to 79 Charlesfield Street to inspect the rooms, marvel at the house's transformation, and converse happily over wine and pizza. Two new fellows arrived that night to take up residence, reminding the rest of us that we should not overstay our welcome. It was most fitting that two former directors of the Library, Thomas Adams and Norman Fiering, were there to usher in this new chapter.

The house has quite a history of its own. Built in 1866, it was first known as the Frederick Fuller House, and later as Eldridge Hall.

Mr. Fuller's brother built a similar house just down the street at 73 Charlesfield Street, and together they owned the Fuller Iron Works in Providence. A guide to Providence architecture describes the house as "a flamboyant 2½-story Second Empire dwelling with a flared mansard roof and sunbonnet gable centered on the façade." It adds that "the elaborate arcaded entrance porch is particularly fine." What was once a private home—and more recently a student boardinghouse with murals worthy of Salvador Dali—has become a charming and tranquil place for JCB scholars to reside during their tenure in Providence. Eleven capacious apartments have been created, with high ceil-



ings, natural light, and spacious bathrooms. Ample public space on the first floor will lend itself well to conversation, presentations, and quiet study.

The project, conceived by Norman Fiering, was approved by the JCB's Board of Governors in the spring of 2006, and from that point work proceeded very quickly. The project team included architect Alan Berry, the Mill City Construction firm, interior decorator Carol Sanderson, and Ray Bourcier of Brown University. Vivian Tetreault was heroic monitoring every detail of the project, and Maureen O'Donnell and Val Andrews pitched in to bring the house to complete readiness in the exciting (translation: hectic) final weeks of preparation. We passed our final inspection the day before the house opened. Sighs of relief were audible across Rhode Island.

Director's Message

THIS ISSUE OF *In JCB* offers a welcome chance to introduce myself to those readers I still have not met, and to summarize a few salient achievements from a busy year. Looking back, it's remarkable how much we accomplished at the JCB, despite the rare novelty of a change in directors, and the fact that I spent much of the year learning my way. Fortunately, the Library holds a very large collection of books relating to the proper method of exploring *terra incognita*. And the general consensus seems to be that one simply forges ahead into the unknown, working hard, and taking care to avoid poisonous berries.

No achievement looms larger than the completion of our new residence for scholars at 79 Charlesfield Street. There were many setbacks and hard decisions, as any owners of old houses will recognize, but in the end the ambitious rehabilitation of this handsome 1866 residence came out exactly on schedule and exactly on budget.

We also have spent much of the year digesting the extraordinary bequest of Maury Bromsen—a legacy that includes rare books, manuscripts and works of art from many different countries and centuries, and which also includes support for a new position at the JCB. The first Bromsen Curator of Latin American Books, Ken Ward, is profiled separately, and we are confident that a glorious era of Latin

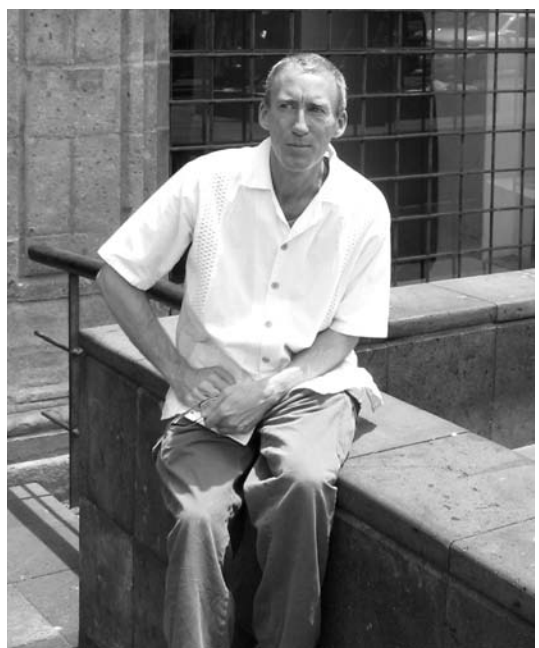
American scholarship will ensue from these generous thoughts and deeds.

Beneath the surface of these grand events, I spent a great deal of time introducing myself to the members of the JCB's global constituency, including former fellows, staff, board members and general admirers of an institution that has enriched the lives of many thousands of people over slightly more than a century in its current location. I want to thank all of you who have conveyed your heartfelt thoughts about this special place. And I look forward to meeting the rest of you soon, Providence willing.

—TED WIDMER

Bromsen Curator

KEN WARD, soon to receive his Ph.D. from the University of Texas at Austin, comes to us from Mexico City (shown below, sitting outside the Archivo General de Notarias) where he was completing his research on the printers and booksellers descended from Bernardo Calderon and Juan de Rivera. These two families produced roughly half of the printed output of seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century Mexico. With the arrival of Bernardo Calderon in Mexico in 1626, he and his descendants established a virtual monopoly on printing through their extensive commercial ties to Spain and their connections with the civil and religious establishment in Mexico.



the new colony established on the James River. In 1997 the Library was able to complete its collection of all nine tracts, with the gift by Paul Mellon of Richard Rich's *Newes from Virginia* (London, 1610). Other highlights include contemporary maps and accounts of the Virginia experience, works by Captain John Smith, and the so-called First Folio of Shakespeare, opened to the *Tempest* (elements of which were inspired by news from the new colony).

The Bolívar Room

SINCE THE Maury A. Bromsen-Simón Bolívar Room was dedicated on March 12, 2000, it has housed an exhibition containing a selection of Mr. Bromsen's gift of manuscripts and iconography related to Simón Bolívar. That exhibition was changed at long last this year, and since January the Bolívar Room has housed "Portrait of a Revolution: Toussaint Louverture," which was set up to illustrate Madison Smartt Bell's lecture on the "Two Freedoms of Toussaint Louverture," given for the annual Sonia Galletti lecture on February 12, 2007. The exhibit features all the images of Toussaint held by the John Carter Brown Library, as well as images that illustrate the world of Saint Domingue. Both Bolívar and Toussaint were



Frontispiece of *Histoire de Toussaint-Louverture* (Paris, 1802), by Cousin d'Avallon.

crucial to the liberation of their countries from the colonial governments which controlled them, and both men were brilliant strategists and charismatic military leaders.

By 1824, when Bolívar can be said to have overcome the Spanish in South America, Toussaint Louverture was long dead—he had died in a French jail in 1803. Like Bolívar, Toussaint's legacy is mixed. The declaration of independence of Haiti established it as the first free black republic and the second independent nation in the western hemisphere. The exhibition now in the Maury A. Bromsen-Simón Bolívar Room commemorates Toussaint, another liberator, without whom the Haitian Revolution would never have been realized and whose country contributed to the success of the Bolívar's revolutions.

Online at www.jcbl.org

WE OFTEN SAY that the JCB has one foot in the nineteenth-century and the other in the twenty-first. We still maintain a card catalogue and hand-annotate bibliographies with our holdings (on the one hand), and now we are happy to announce our first online exhibition, *Slavery and Justice: Selected Sources from the John Carter Brown Library*, which is a modified version of the exhibition we mounted in the Macmillan Reading Room from February to May.

Fall Events and News

ON OCTOBER 4 at 5:30 p.m. in the Macmillan Reading Room of the JCB, former JCB Fellow Karen Racine (University of Guelph) will deliver a lecture entitled "Love, Liberty, and Lobbying: The Transatlantic Life of Francisco Miranda, Precursor to Spanish American Independence," co-sponsored by the Center for Latin American Studies. Dr. Racine is the author of *Francisco de Miranda: A Transatlantic Life in the Age of Revolution*. Her talk will be followed by a reception.

Author Laurence Bergreen will be at the JCB on Thursday, October 25, 2007 at 6:30 p.m. for an event jointly sponsored by the Library and the Providence Athenaeum. He will read from his new book *Marco Polo: from Venice to Xanadu*, which will be published by Alfred A. Knopf on October 23. Bergreen first came to the JCB in

Ken officially assumed his new post on the first of August. In his role as curator, Ken will be a central resource for scholars studying Latin America. Says Ken, “I am thrilled to be joining a very talented group of professionals on the JCB staff, and look forward to working closely with students, faculty and visiting researchers to support and further their research. My brief visits to Brown and Providence have been wonderful, and—after nearly three years of changing countries every six to eight months—I look forward to settling in, making a home, and becoming part of the community!”

Manuscripts Librarian

IN NOVEMBER 2006, Kim Nusco was appointed to this position under a two-year contract to organize and describe a large archive of business records (ca. 1770–1860) given to the Library by Senator Theodore Francis Green in 1944. Kim comes to us from the Massachusetts Historical Society, where she served as the reference

librarian, and has worked with related manuscript collections at both the Rhode Island Historical Society and the University of Rhode Island.

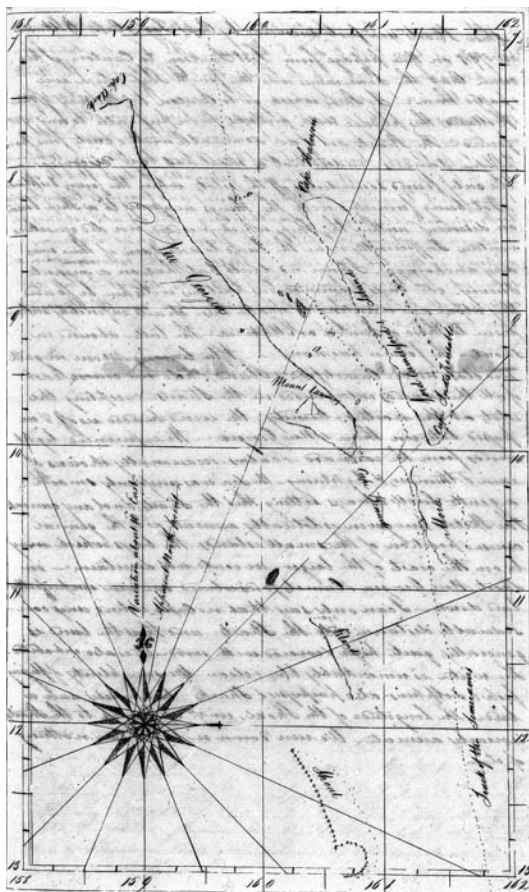
The initiative to process the collection was sparked by a generous donation from Ira Unschuld (Brown ’86), a New York investor and collector of documents related to American financial history. Mr. Unschuld visited the Library in May to view items of interest in the collection, including a fair copy of a journal kept aboard the ship *Semiramis* on a voyage to Canton in 1798, which provides a fascinating and detailed account of the ship’s travels through the South Pacific and around Australia. Kim would be pleased to entertain visits or questions from other interested parties. Inquiries can be sent to Kimberly_Nusco@brown.edu.

New Acquisitions

ACQUISITIONS ARE the lifeblood of a collection. Every book, pamphlet, manuscript, and broadside added to the Library is important, because each item is related in multiple ways to other works in the collection, creating a value far greater than the sum of its parts. In an age of increasingly “virtual” realities, this purpose of perpetual accumulation enjoys a heightened significance. Within the collection that is the JCB, however, are innumerable conceptual collections, linked by various unifying principles.

For example, the Library’s small treasury of Russian Americana and its miscellaneous books pertaining to the Russians and other Slavs were never displayed in one place until the exhibition “Slavs and the West, 1500–1815” was mounted in 2003 and curated by Dennis C. Landis, marking the tercentenary of the founding of St. Petersburg. This display, coupled with an annual meeting address by Dr. S. Frederick Starr, had the effect of re-invigorating the Library’s quest for sources in the field.

The most stimulating recently acquired example of these sources is a four-volume study of global economics by Count Walerjan Strojnowski (1759–1834). His *Vseobshchaia ekonomiiia narodov*, (St. Petersburg, 1817) includes numerous references to American resources and trade; it even mentions the impact on Europe of the American and Haitian revolutions. This copy was inscribed by the author to Empress Maria Feodorovna, widow of Tsar Paul I and mother of Alexander.



Manuscript chart of islands in the South Pacific, from the log of the *Semiramis* (ca. 1798), in the Arnold Papers business archive.



An engraving depicting members of various Native American tribes from *Opyt zhivopisnago putesthestviia po Sievernoi Amerikie* ["The Experience of a Picturesque Journey through North America:;], (St. Petersburg, 1815), by Pavel Petrovich Svin'in.

We also placed a successful bid on a scarce book which came up in a London auction—an American travel account published by an early Russian envoy to the United States, Pavel Petrovich Svin'in (1788–1839). His *Opyt zhivopisnago putesthestviia po Sievernoi Amerikie* (St. Petersburg, 1815) evokes the fascination of an approving foreign visitor of the cultural peculiarities of the new nation. In *JSB* circles, Svin'in has been dubbed “the Russian Tocqueville.”

New acquisitions are always exciting, but retrospective cataloguing (bringing old records up to a modern standard) can also create a momentary buzz of enthusiasm among staff and Fellows. Catalogue Librarian Allison Rich recently re-catalogued the *Courier de Boston*, printed by Samuel Hall of Cornhill in a run of 26 issues (we acquired a bound set in 1948). This was the second French language newspaper published in the United States (the first was the *Courier de l'Amérique*, published in Philadelphia in 1784). Published weekly from April 23, 1789 to October 15, 1789, the *Courier de Boston* could also be found for sale in Salem, New York, and Philadelphia. The newspaper

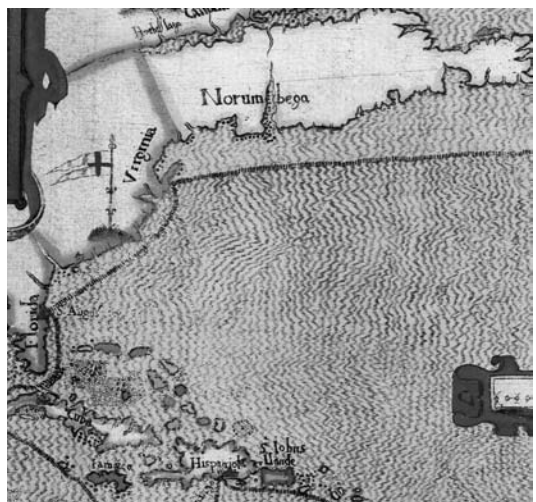
offered local and national news (including George Washington's inaugural address), business news and “prices current” for commodities in foreign ports, and gossip and commentary on reports from Great Britain, France, and Spain. Other highlights include a detailed discussion of Harvard (where the editor taught French), advice for émigrés to America, reports on the war with the Creek Indians, and the horrific (to the editor) news of the storming of the Bastille.

Exhibitions

MacMillan Reading Room

MAY TO SEPTEMBER

TO CELEBRATE THE quadricentennial of the founding of Jamestown, Virginia, Susan Danforth, Assistant Librarian and Curator of Maps and Prints, has mounted an exhibition entitled “Jamestown Matters.” We opened the exhibition on May 11, with a stirring talk delivered at the Annual Meeting of the Associates by professor Karen Kupperman (NYU), author of the recently published *The Jamestown Project*. Promotional literature is the foundation of any collection related to colonial Virginia, and the exhibition showcases our particularly rich holdings in this genre. In order to encourage “adventurers” (investors) and “planters” (colonists), the Virginia Company of London published nine tracts between 1609 and 1615 that described in glowing terms the opportunities presented by



Detail of Baptista Boazio's map, entitled *The famous West Indian voyage made by the English fleet*, published in London (1589).

the course of conducting research for his recent book on Magellan, *Over the Edge of the World: Magellan's Terrifying Circumnavigation of the Globe*. A reception will follow Mr. Bergreen's presentation.

If you find yourself in Boston in mid-November, we invite you to visit the JCB's booth on "Cultural Row" at the 31st annual Boston International Antiquarian Book Fair. Taking place November 16–18 at the Hynes Convention Center, the Fair offers a broad range of rare and antique books, modern first editions, maps, atlases, autographs and fine and decorative prints from over 120 exhibitors from around the world. Special events scheduled throughout the weekend include discussions on Cookbook Collecting, the Ticknor Society's Collectors' Roundtable, Crime Novels and Books that have Inspired American Film Noir, and the Art of the Book. We will offer a selection of JCB publications for sale, but our primary interest is to increase our visibility to dealers, collectors, and other librarians who attend the Fair. For further information, visit www.bostonbookfair.com, or call 617 266-6540.

Tony Horwitz at JCB

THE CELEBRATED author Tony Horwitz (a Brown alumnus) will be in residence at the JCB and 79 Charlesfield Street throughout the fall term. A former recipient of the Pulitzer Prize, he is esteemed by scholars and the public alike for his compelling historical narratives, including *Blue Latitudes*, about the 18th century explorer Captain James Cook, and *Confederates in the Attic*, which describes his journey across the South in a quest to understand the impact of the Civil War on contemporary America. While here, he will complete work on *A Voyage Long and Strange: Rediscovering the New World from Viking Vinland to Pilgrim Plymouth*.

A Memorial Note

WE MOURN THE recent loss on August 12 of Frances (Franna) Low, who joined the Library staff in 1976 and retired in June 2006. Franna served for decades as the nerve center of the JCB Associates. She knew everyone, it seemed, in Rhode Island, and always exhibited an iron-clad loyalty to the intellectual mission of the Library. Franna will be missed by all whose lives she touched.

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The John Carter Brown Library is an independently funded and administered institution for advanced research in history and the humanities founded in 1846 and located at Brown University since 1901.
