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The Penn Manuscript Collective: An Update

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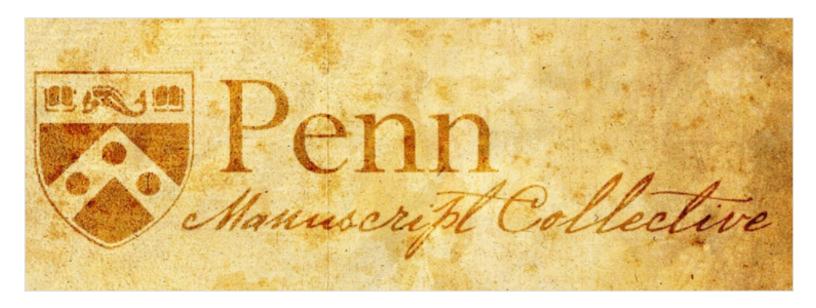
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24 Monday Nov 2014

The Penn Manuscript Collective: an update ...

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The Penn Manuscript Collective has been exploring a diversity of materials. For our September 24 meeting, we looked at the J. R. Pitman promptbooks together and practiced transcription. For our second meeting, on November 7, we looked at some materials within Penn's collections that have yet to be thoroughly explored by scholars. Here is some information on those manuscripts:

Ms. Coll. 167 Folders 7-11

The Priestly family papers, including the personal diary of Joseph Priestley, a merchant and the cousin of the famed Joseph Priestley, and an attached diary of his daughter Phebe. Both diaries are meticulous and would offer great transcription practice, thanks to the tiny handwriting!

Ms. Coll 766

From Franklin: "A bound volume containing John Haighton's Syllabus of the lectures on midwifery, reprinted in London in 1803, interleaved with the manuscript notes of Thomas Dove, who signed and dated the first flyleaf and also annotated the printed pages. According to the printed title page, the lectures were delivered at Guy's Hospital and Dr. Haighton's medical theater, both in the Southwark section of London." This book's lecture notes makes me personally very thankful I was not alive in 1803. (Just in time for Thanksqiving!)

Ms. Coll 251

Poetry written by John Syng Dorsey, and later by his son Robert. From his Franklin bio: "Noted Philadelphia anatomist and surgeon, Dorsey began the study of medicine under the direction of his famous uncle, Dr. Philip Syng Physick,(1768-1837). Dorsey became adjunct professor of surgery at the University of Pennsylvania in 1807 and in 1813 became professor of materia medica. An attack of typhus killed him in 1818 at the age of thirty-five." Poor guy. But on the last page of this remarkable journal, the now-adult son Robert completes his father's unfinished poem. I discovered this by accident while looking through possible PMC materials—it was quite a moving moment.

Ms. Coll. 692

These files hold three unfinished novels of Jane Porter, a British novelist who lived from 1776 to 1850. All three are epistolary novels; one is titled *Belville Park*. This is a really exciting opportunity for someone to discover the unpublished words of a famous novelist. For more information on Jane Porter:

http://www.reformation.org/jane-porter-bio.html

Ms. Coll. 329

Just in time for Halloween—I thought it would be fun to have a look at this 19th century scrapbook after reading this hilarious Franklin description: "Scrapbook containing clippings and engravings, evidently belonging to Lizzy Fry who received a certificate of appreciation from the Committee on the Restaurant of the Great Central Fair in Philadelphia (1864) tipped inside front cover. Many of the clippings are stories of tragic deaths."

Any of these materials would make great research projects for anyone interested in history, literature and transcription. Thanks to everyone who came to the meeting!





Group photos by the amazing Alex Atienza!

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