

Ruggles Collection

In 1985, Chicago lawyer and Newberry Trustee Rudy Lamont Ruggles gave his personal library to the Newberry Library. The Ruggles collection, numbering over 400 volumes, contains a diverse array of print rarities and historical gems in superb physical condition.

Though a major aspect of the Ruggles collection is early American law, particularly constitutional law, the collection's scope goes well beyond the Constitution and American law. In general terms, the Ruggles collection can be broken down into six broad subject areas:

American Revolution: High spots from the American Revolutionary War Era are well represented in the collection, from the hated and incendiary 1765 Stamp Act and Franklin's testimony in Parliament against it, to Paine's *Common Sense*, to the first magazine printing of the *Declaration of Independence*.

Constitutional Period: The intensive period of Constitution making in America from 1776 to 1789 is a special emphasis of the Ruggles collection. A focal point is Thomas Jefferson's own copy of that great American commentary, *The Federalist*. (There are only two other known books from Jefferson's Library in the Newberry: the Graff copy of Lewis and Clark's *History of the Expedition* and a 1542 edition of Quintilian's *Institutiones Oratorae*.) Jefferson's *Federalist* is complemented by an extremely rare John Jay manuscript of the Federalist essay number three. Among a group of closely related, rare works is the first magazine appearance of the *Constitution*. Also represented are the amendments that became the *Bill of Rights*.

American Indian History: Works on American Indians form a small but important focus of the Ruggles collection. For instance, three important captivity narratives can be found in Ruggles: Rowlandson's *A True History of the Captivity* (1682), Seaver's *A Narrative of the Life of Mrs. Mary Jemison* (1824), and Barber's *Narrative of the Tragical Death of Mr. Darius Barber* (1818).

Early American Maps: At least fifteen important maps are included, for example Champlain's *Voyages* and Joutel's *Journal* and an amazing series of strip maps of the Eastern United States in 1789.

Americana: The Ruggles Collection contains seminal works that illustrate the development of American history. A few examples will illustrate the point: Jay's *Treaty*, Washington's *Farewell Address*, *The Monroe Doctrine*, the *American Scholar*, *Davy Crockett*, the *Lincoln-Douglas Debates*, the *Gettysburg Address*, the *Emancipation Proclamation* and *The Education of Henry Adams*. However, more important than individual rarities are focused collections. For instance, Ruggles material on early Illinois history is a small but outstanding collection.

American and English Literature: Rarities and gems of the Western Canon are well represented in the Ruggles collection, by authors from William Cullen Bryant to Hemingway, from Shakespeare to Joyce.

There are several important works in Ruggles that escape categorization. To discover treasures within the Ruggles collection, explore the exhibit catalog *A Princely Gift: The Rudy Lamont Ruggles Collection* (1986) or search in the Newberry's online catalog. The Newberry is also listed as a location in the OCLC's WorldCat.