

## PREFACE

BY ROBERT G. SEWELL, EDITOR

This volume of the journal presents four intriguing articles: three are appreciations of the book and its history, and the other is on a nineteenth-century medical practice relating weather to health in New Jersey. All of these articles reflect treasures in Rutgers' Special Collections and University Archives.

Karl Morrison's article, "'The Mask of Ceremony': Rutgers' Growing Collection of Festival Books with a List of Holdings," brings to the attention of readers a fascinating book genre from the early modern period of European history: books describing massive festivals commemorating major events in the lives of the elites. The article results from a long association between Morrison and Rutgers' Special Collections, which also has led to a growing collection of festival books and a 2004 exhibition of them, for which he wrote a splendid catalog. In this piece Morrison gives us another perspective on the collection, influenced by a leisurely rereading of Miguel Cervantes's *Don Quixote*.

Jack Lynch expands this journal's exploration of historical dictionaries. In volume 61 there were two articles on the Edward J. Bloustein Dictionary Collection: In "Exploring the Edward J. Bloustein Dictionary Collection" (<http://jrul.libraries.rutgers.edu/index.php/jrul/article/viewFile/17/50>), Jeffery Triggs used the extensive holdings in this collection to illustrate the history of English dictionaries; in addition, Christine Becker compiled a bibliography of the collection (<http://jrul.libraries.rutgers.edu/index.php/jrul/article/viewFile/18/53>). In this volume, Lynch, the editor of *Samuel Johnson's Dictionary: Selections from the 1755 Work That Defined the English Language* (New York: Walker & Company, 2004), provides an entertaining look at the battles of lexicographers and the great variety in form and content that dictionaries have shown throughout their history.

David Cowen's short piece concerns the joys of book collecting in his area of interest, the history of pharmacy. His collection was donated to the Rutgers University Libraries after his death in April 2006. Cowen had a long association with Rutgers. He received his bachelor's degree in 1930 and master's in 1931 from Rutgers, and he taught at the university from 1944 until his retirement in 1974. Yet he did not retire from his research and book collecting until his death at 95. He handed me this article at the time we were looking over his collection and asked me if I would be interested in publishing it in the journal. Not only is the article informative and charming, but it demonstrates what an active and alert mind he had right up to the end of his life.

Like Cowen, the retired M.D. and now history graduate student Sandra Moss is interested in the history of medicine. Her article investigates how nineteenth-century New Jersey doctors attempted to document sources of illness in topography and especially weather of particular locales, in a process known as "medical topography." The process became a significant part of public health investigation and epidemiological methodology, especially between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries in Europe and America.

#### Editorial note:

The look of the journal has changed, in this and forthcoming volumes. The typeface is now ITC Giovanni, the official typeface of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey; the Rutgers University Libraries' logo also has changed; and the color of the cover has reverted to its original scarlet.

The "official" date of this volume is 2006 although it is actually coming out in late 2007.