
5th ed.
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Manuscript documents written or signed by John Marshall.


Written by John Marshall, while special minister to France during the XYZ Affair, to Charles Lee, U.S. Attorney General under George Washington and John Adams.

Dear Sir:

I feel much pleasure in being able to introduce to you my friend Mr. Hopkins. He is a sound & well informed American who has passed some months not unobservingly in Paris. He has the power to state & the inclination to state truly a variety of circumstances relative to our countrymen & their situation which cannot be comprhd in a letter.

I am dear sir, yours truly, J Marshall

Franklin and Marshall College is fortunate to have in its collections several rare books and manuscripts relating to Benjamin Franklin, 1706-1790, and John Marshall, 1755-1835. Listed here are most of the items held in the Archives and Special Collections, Shadek-Fackenthal Library.

Original imprints from the press of Benjamin Franklin and [David] Hall, Philadelphia.


Whitefield, George, 1714-1770. Sermons on Various Subjects. 1740. BX9178.W5 S3 1740


This Franklin-printed German title is unusual as it is printed in a Roman type rather than the fraktur script preferred by German readers.
The Charters of the Province of Pensilvania and City of Philadelphia; Bound with: A Collection of all the Laws of the Province of Pennsylvania: Now in Force; and An Appendix; Containing a Summary of Such Acts of Assembly as have been formerly in Force within this Province, for Regulating of Descents, and Transferring the Property of Lands, &c. 1742. KFP30 1742.A2X

One of numerous works Franklin printed for the provincial government as the official printer of the Pennsylvania legislature.

Books reputedly from the personal library of Benjamin Franklin.

Goguet, Antoine-Yves, 1716-1758. The origin of laws, arts, and sciences, and their progress among the most ancient of nations. Tr. from the French of the President de Goguet. Edinburgh: G. Robinson [etc.] 1775. 3 vols. CB311.G64 1775

Each volume contains the handwritten initials B.F. 1780 on the title pages. A later owner attributes ownership to Franklin with their own annotation.


The life of George Washington, Commander in Chief of the American forces, during the war which established the independence of his country, and first President of the United States. Compiled under the inspection of the Honourable Bushrod Washington, from original papers... 5 vols. Philadelphia: Printed and published by C. P. Wayne, 1804-07. E312.M33


Cicero, Marcus Tullius. M.T. Cicero’s Cato major, or his Discourse on old age. 1744. PA6308.C2 L6 1744

Considered the finest example of work produced by Franklin’s press. This copy contains the notable error of “ony” for only on page 27, that appears correctly in other copies. This edition of Cato Major is also noted as the first Latin classic to be translated and printed in English in America.

Fisher, George. The American instructor, or, Young man’s best companion containing, spelling, reading, writing, and arithmetick, in an easier way than any yet published... The ninth edition revised and corrected. 1748. AG104.F4 1748
Works of the late Dr. Benjamin Franklin; consisting of his life, written by himself, together with Essays, humorous, moral & literary; chiefly in the manner of the Spectator. In two volumes. The second American edition. New York: Samuel Campbell, 1794. PS745 .A2 1794

The immortal mentor: or, Man's unerring guide to a healthy, wealthy, and happy life. In three parts. By Lewis Cornaro, Dr. Franklin, and Dr. Scott. Philadelphia: Printed for the Rev. Mason L. Weems, by Francis and Robert Bailey, 1796. BJ1561.I6 1796

This early compilation contains Franklin's The Way to Wealth and Advice to a Young Tradesman.

Early editions of works about Benjamin Franklin.

Der Weg zum Glück, oder: Das Leben von Dr. Benj. Franklin. Ephrata: Gedruckt bey Benjamin Mayer, 1796. EPHRATA 1796 M468W

A German translation of Franklin's Autobiography to the year 1731 followed by a brief sketch of the remainder of his life, together with his epitaph, an extract from his will, and a letter to the reader.

Manuscript documents written or signed by Benjamin Franklin.

Autographed Document signed by Benjamin Franklin as President of the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania, June 26, 1787. Herbert Rawnsley Collection.


A rare example of Franklin job printing. Franklin printed 200 blank land warrants for the Province of Pennsylvania in 1748. This example was filled out in 1753 and grants land in Lancaster County to George Smith from proprietor James Hamilton.


While this example of the Pennsylvania Gazette dates from after Franklin sold his last remaining interest in the newspaper to partner David Hall, it is nevertheless representative of Franklin's famous newspaper. Franklin owned, published, edited, and printed the paper from October 1729 until January 1766.
Early editions of works by Benjamin Franklin.

Galloway, Joseph, 1731-1803. Die Rede Herrn Joseph Galloways, eines der Mitglieder des Hauses für Philadelphia County, zur Beantwortung der Rede welche Hr. John Dickinson gehalten in dem Hause der Assembly der Provinz Pennsylvanien, am 24ten May, 1764... Mit einer Vorrede... Philadelphia: Gedruckt und zu finden bey Henrich Miller, in der Zweyten-Strasse, 1764. PHILADELPHIA 1764 .M647RE

The preface of this work is attributed to Franklin.

A Narrative of the late massacres in Lancaster County of a number of Indians, friends of this province, by persons unknown. With some observations on the same. [Philadelphia:] 1764. F152.F83

Franklin’s response to the murder of Conestoga Indians in Lancaster County by the Paxton boys in 1763. Some scholars attribute this pamphlet’s printing to Franklin and Hall.


Plate from Experiments and Observations on Electricity showing Franklin’s famous stove.


First French translation of the fourth English edition of Experiments and Observations on Electricity.
