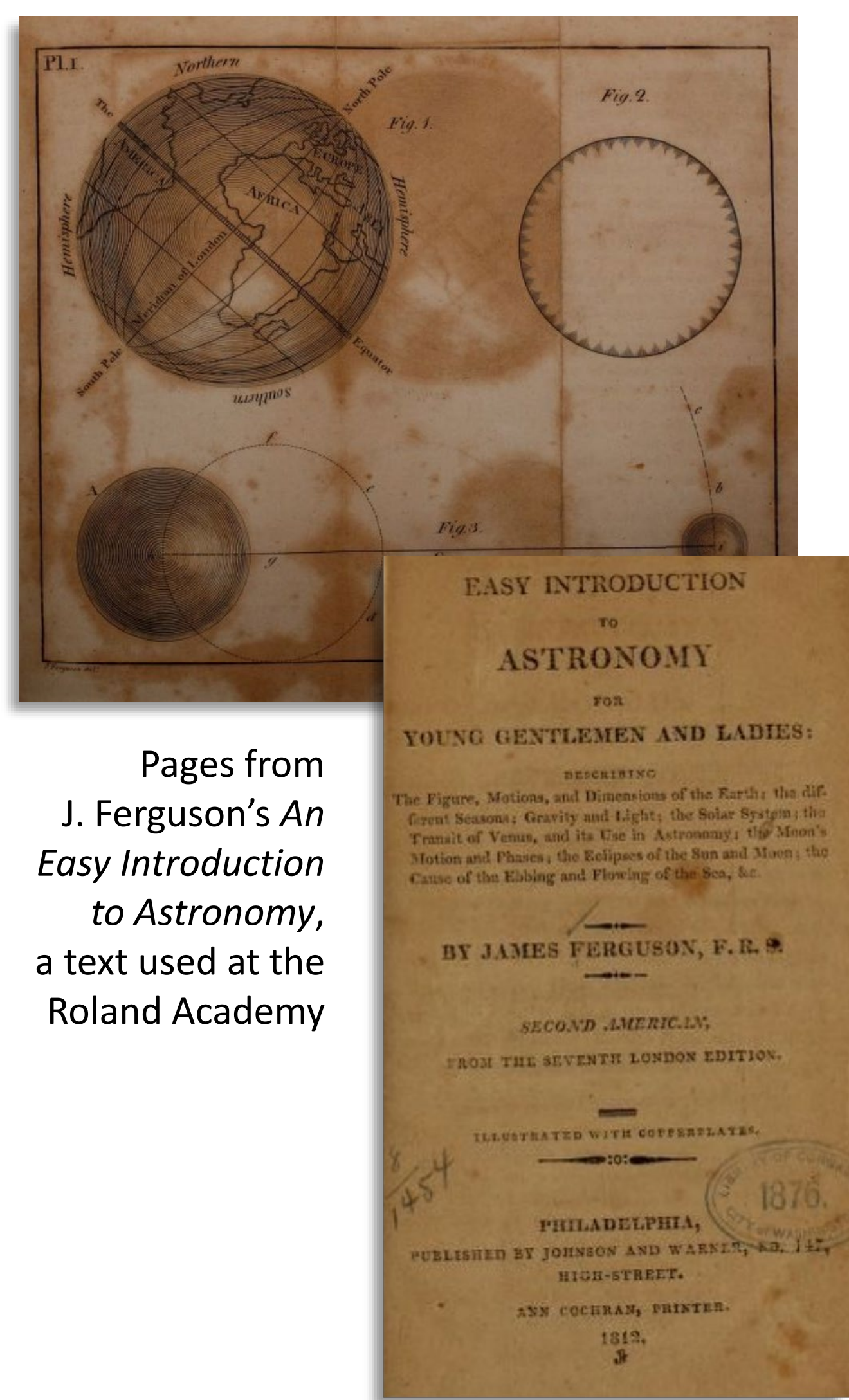


The Roland Academy at Mead’s Tavern

c. 1811-1821



Pages from J. Ferguson’s *An Easy Introduction to Astronomy*, a text used at the Roland Academy

Photo Credit: Ferguson, James. *An Easy Introduction to Astronomy*. Johnson and Warner (1812), Library of Congress.

Courses

The Roland Academy attracted students from the best families for miles around. The Millers offered both boarding and day school options for students.

In addition to typical girls’ school lessons in needlework and drawing, students studied History, Geography, Latin, English, and Mathematics. For an extra fee, students could also learn French, music, and dance.

The Millers furnished the school room with a set of Cary’s Globes, five of Arrowsmith’s large, colored maps, Lewis’ map of the United States, and Madison’s map of Virginia.



1816 globe by J&W Cary

Photo credit: Cary, J&W. “George III 18-inch Diameter Library Globe.” *The Strand* (1816), Patrick Sandberg Antiques.



Samuel Thomas Miller

Samuel T. Miller and his mother, Ann (Nancy) Ball Miller, ran the girls’ school. Ann—a lady of refinement—served as the head of the school while Samuel served as the teacher. The school temporarily shut down when Samuel served in the War of 1812.

Around 1813, Samuel returned to New London where he continued teaching at the Roland Academy and purchased various properties, including the site of the future Bedford Alum Springs Hotel.

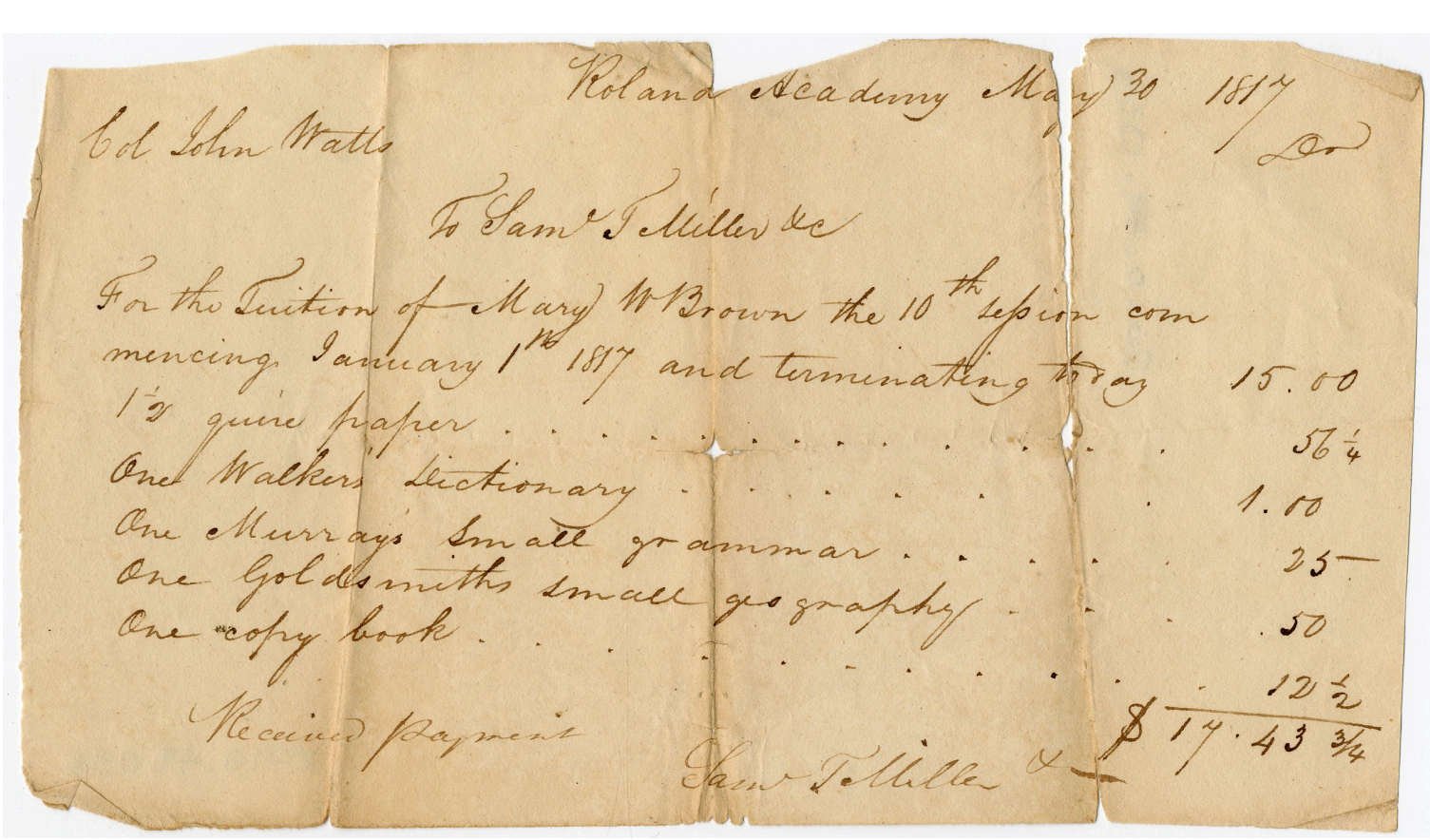
Samuel married a former student of the academy—Francis Elizabeth Fitzpatrick—in 1817. In 1821, Miller closed the Roland Academy after being appointed principal of the nearby New London Academy.

Photo Credit: Miller, Samuel Hartshorn. “Life of Samuel T. Miller.” J.P. Bell Company, Inc. (1911), Tennessee State Library and Archives.



Student Mary Charlotte Mitchell—under Ann Miller’s guidance—crafted this sampler around 1815. The sampler includes decorative stitching, two poetic verses, the alphabet, and the names of family members, friends, and the Millers.

Photo credit: Mitchell, Mary Charlotte. “New London Sampler.” (ca. 1815), Private Collection, Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts.



1817 account statement and receipt for the tuition and expenses of student Mary Watts Brown. The payment of \$17.43¾ includes the cost of tuition, supplies, and three textbooks.

Photo Credit: “Account Statement and Receipt from Samuel Thomas Miller to John Watts, for Tuition and Expenses of Mary Watts Brown.” Flat Creek papers, History Museum of Western Virginia.

Cost Per Session:	
Boarding and Tuition.....	\$60.00
Tuition.....	\$15.00
Books and Supplies.....	Extra charge

Archaeology

In the 2019 excavation of the basement at Mead’s Tavern, archaeologists recovered a variety of sewing implements from the period of the girls’ school. These include pins, thimbles, a fragment of a needle case, and buttons. Other items possibly related to the girls school include fragments of slate pencils and clay marbles.

Major renovations of the former tavern coincide with its transformation into a girls’ school. These alterations include removal of the corner fireplace and the construction of a new, interior chimney.



19th century andirons discovered in sealed fireplace on the second floor of the Mead’s Tavern building.

