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Book Review of The Charlemagne Tower Collection of Colonial Laws

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519. **The Charlemagne Tower Collection of American Colonial Laws.** Philadelphia, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1890; repr., Littleton, Colo., Fred B. Rothman, 1990. 298p. \$45.00. KF4.C46. 016.34973. LC 90-37284. ISBN 0-8377-2017-6.

This is a bibliography of the most comprehensive privately assembled collection of American colonial laws, numbering nearly 1,000 items. Charlemagne Tower was a nineteenth-century lawyer and entrepreneur. His widow donated his collection to the Historical Society of Pennsylvania after his death in 1890. The Historical Society originally published the bibliography in 1890, from which the Rothman reprint has been prepared.

In an 1890 letter, the president of the Historical Society commented that the collection is divided into two classes, “those which relate to the history of the laws of the several colonies and States, and those which relate to American history in general” (pp. 22-23). The bibliography is in four sections: a biographical sketch of Tower; letters of correspondence and a description of the collection, all circa 1890; the bibliography of the volumes on the laws of the colonies (supplemented by entries for several Caribbean islands as well as Quebec and Nova Scotia); and the bibliography of the volumes on Americana. While the bibliography has neither an index nor a detailed table of contents, a five-page description of the collection and the arrangement of the entries chronologically by jurisdiction make this an easy source to use. *The Charlemagne Tower Collection of Colonial Laws* is recommended for most law libraries and for other libraries in which research on colonial law is conducted.

—James S. Heller