

Huntington acquires Louis Pasteur's notes on brewing beer

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People interested in what kind of beer the guy who invented pasteurization kicked back with after work will want to pay a visit to San Marino's Huntington Library.

The Huntington, whose treasures include a First Folio edition of Shakespeare's plays, announced Tuesday it has acquired French scientist Louis Pasteur's beer-brewing notes.

The extensive writings from the 1870s were acquired earlier this month by the Huntington's Library Collectors Council, a group of 37 families who support the Southern California institution by helping buy materials it could not otherwise afford. Also acquired were several unpublished letters and poems by family members of Jane Austen, and writings, drawings and paintings by the 19th century New England seaman known as Wicked Ned.

Pasteur's notes will be added to the Huntington's already prolific collection of works by the famous French scientist.

Melissa Lo, the Huntington's history curator, said these papers show Pasteur was not only trying to develop a better beer, but also working on concepts he would apply to such scientific breakthroughs as disease-preventing vaccinations. He developed vaccines for both rabies and anthrax.

His most famous accomplishment, developing pasteurization, kills

disease-causing microbes in substances like milk.

"These notes provide a key window into a particular area in the history of science, but my sense is that these may well be of interest to researchers who more and more are investigating the history of food and drink, as well as hand-crafted beer," Lo said.

The Austen acquisition includes 52 unpublished letters, poems and other materials from Austen's mother's side of the family, but not from the author herself.

The Wicked Ned acquisition, from self-taught writer and artist David E. Marshall, who gave himself that pseudonym, provides a rare insight into the lives of 19th century mariners.

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