

## Three California Printing Collections

Three major collections of letterpress-related printing objects are located along the coast of California. They exemplify three distinctly different types of collections: private, academic, and public. On a recent trip I was able to visit each of these within a few days of each other, and the distinctions remain vivid.

### The Craemer Collection

The collection put together by Jeff Craemer in his museum in San Rafael, near San Francisco, typifies the private approach. In a sense, however, the personal enthusiasm of an individual is the starting-point for every collection. Museums do not make great collections; enthusiastic individuals do.

Jeff Craemer's family is in the newspaper business; his grandfather was co-owner of the Marin County *Independent Journal*. Visiting the shop with his grandfather, Jeff was fascinated by the Linotypes and high-speed presses. This fascination with the clanking and whirring machinery, compounded by the pervasive smell of printing ink, is something that will be familiar to many of my readers.

In his late teens Jeff purchased an old Chandler and Price platen press and began to rebuild it to its original condition. That soon led to other presses. In 1981 he found a warehouse in San Rafael and began to assemble a collection of platen presses and hand presses, as well as pictorial and printed material. The acquisitions, like those of many collectors, encompass almost any kind of letterpress machinery that is old and available. It is only in the later stages of a collection that filling in specific gaps become a serious goal.

The Craemer collection has a number of platen jobbers, including a 10x15 California Reliable, made by the local San Francisco typefoundry, Palmer and Rey, about 1886. Because it was in production for so short a time, and because many of this model were probably destroyed in the 1906 earthquake, it is uncommon. (It has survived the recent quake, as has the rest of the collection, although the warehouse suffered some minor cracks.)

When I visited the Craemer collection in September, he was away on a trip. I was escorted around the presses by Roger Levenson, who is well known in academic and printing circles as a fine printer and teacher. It would be hard to find a more knowledgeable guide, or one with more enthusiasm for his subject.

Among the hand presses are a tabletop Albion press made by Ullmer of London, ca. 1870; a Columbian by J.C. Paul

(1889); a Palmer and Rey Washington made about 1885; and a Cincinnati Type Foundry Washington built just after the Civil War, whose casting is a veritable frenzy of American flags, shields, guns, cannons and cannon balls, plus oak leaves. This last has been gaudily (and unauthentically) painted up in the brightest colors.

The rarest of Jeff Craemer's hand presses is the only known example of the Union Press, built in Boston in 1826 for Greele and Willis, who had been owners of the New England Type Foundry. The press was built by Erastus Bartholomew, one of a small group of interconnected machinists and press builders working in Boston at that time. The press has the usual equal-length toggle invented by John Wells, but the bar is connected to the rod leading to the toggle with a unique geared connection. The press' frame is in the shape of Gothic arch, and is decorated in the casting with thirteen stars of the American Union. Very few of these presses could have been made, and only this one has survived; it was on view at the Smithsonian from 1980 to 1983.

The Craemer collection (at 35 Mill Street, San Rafael CA 94901) open to interested visitors by appointment only. For a private tour, call Jeff Craemer at 415/454-9763.

### Shakespeare Press Museum

Jeff Craemer has used his own financial resources to put together his collection. Further south along the California coast is a collection in an academic setting, the Shakespeare Press Museum at California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo.

The Shakespeare Press Museum began, like the Craemer collection, as the personal enthusiasm of one person. Charles L. Palmer was a former newspaperman who was the public relations representative for a northern California utility company. During the 1930s through the 1960s his work was in the gold country, and he roamed the area during his free time locating and purchasing old printing equipment.

His collecting was spurred by the sponsorship of the California Newspaper Publishers Association. As the collection grew, Mr. Palmer began looking for a suitable place for a permanent display. This is often the crisis point for a collection; presses are relatively inexpensive and can be moved, but a display site is expensive and requires long-range funding. Charles Palmer's collection was respectable but not huge, and he was lucky to find a receptive institution, California State Polytechnic College. He began sending his collection to San Luis Obispo in 1950; the transfer was not completed until after his death in 1964. It was opened to the public in 1969.

The aptness of the setting is clear; the museum is administered as part of the Graphic Communications

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Department. The building that houses the collection also contains the latest in computer technology. It is a superb tool for teaching the history of printing. Pulling the bar of a hand press or running a platen jobber is more immediate than reading about it.

The collection's largest piece is a Campbell Country Cylinder Press of about 1890. It was used as late as 1950 to print a newspaper in Soledad. There are several jobbers: Peerless, Golding, Golding Pearls, a Palmer and Rey, and a Columbia jobber made by Curtis & Mitchell of Boston about 1880. Iron hand presses include Washingtons by Hoe, by Hoe's rival Taylor, and two by the Cincinnati Type Foundry, which in the mid-19th century was the press manufacturer furthest West.

Smaller items from the composing room include many fonts of old type, composing sticks, mallets and shooting sticks, bellows for blowing dust out of typecases, and lead and rule cutters. I was graciously shown the collection by Stephen Mott of Cal Poly.

A nicely-produced catalogue of the collection was published in 1978 by the museum, filled with pictures of presses and other materials and descriptive notes. In addition it contains several pages of specimen settings of old typefaces in the museum collection.

Admission to the Shakespeare Press Museum is by appointment; contact the museum at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, CA 93407.

### International Museum of Graphic Communication

Further south, in the Buena Park suburb of Los Angeles, is the International Museum of Graphic Communication. Like the collections described above, this one also began with the enthusiastic collecting of an individual. The bulk of material on display in the IMGC is the Ernest A. Lindner collection of antique printing machinery, which has long been one of the largest, if not the largest, in the country. Because of his position inside the printing equipment industry, Ernest Lindner was able to amass an amazing collection of printing machinery.

Like other collectors, Mr. Lindner sought a permanent home for his collection. That was achieved through the establishment of the IMGC, funded by David Jacobson, producer of the annual Gutenberg Exposition of printing machinery. It is by far the broadest-based and most ambitious of the three collections; in fact there is nothing like it anywhere in the country.

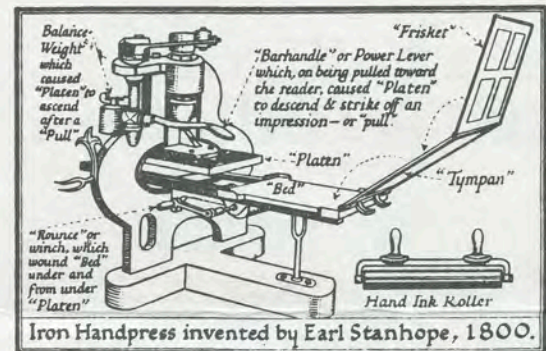
The Museum is housed in a large one-story warehouse in a modern industrial park in Buena Park. If your picture of a warehouse includes concrete floors and exposed steel beams, forget it. This warehouse has lots of wood panelling and wall-to-wall carpeting. It also has *lots* of printing presses.

There are over a dozen platen jobbers of various kinds, including a few British versions of the Gordon-style press. There are tabletop presses, including several of the attractively ornate Excelsior presses made by Daughaday of Philadelphia in the 1880s. There are two La Magand automatic card presses, used at the turn of the century in five-and-dime stores to crank out small numbers of business cards in a hurry.

There are four flat bed newspaper presses. There seem to be more of these in California than anywhere else—they

are pretty large for the average collection.

Among the most interesting items in the Lindner collection are the iron hand presses. Again, there are more of these here than anywhere I know except perhaps the Smithsonian. There are four Albions, one dating from 1829; two Columbians, the earliest dated 1824; and four Washington presses. The rarest of the latter is the C. Foster & Bros. press, made in Ohio in 1855.



For Americans the most interesting of the hand presses will be the English Stanhope press. The Lindner collection is the only place I know of on this side of the Atlantic where it can be seen. It is a Stanhope "of the second construction," i.e. an improved version, and it dates from about 1810. It is well worth seeing as an important transitional press. It uses the old screw augmented by power-increasing levers, and it moves from the old wooden construction to all cast iron. The Lindner collection includes not one Stanhope, but two; the second is an even rarer French-made bench model, called La Typote, illustrated in plates L and LI of Moran's *Printing Presses*. I would call this one of the most attractive and rarest small presses in the world.

IMGC has a great many of the smaller items associated with 19th century letterpress printing, nicely displayed in many glass cases. I was pleased to have Mark Barbour, the Curator, give me a guided tour with brief, accurate descriptions of the material. There are type punches and moulds, inking balls, case duster bellows, and all the other paraphernalia, in greater profusion than I have ever seen.

The Lindner Collection is described in a fine catalogue printed in 1971 by Vance Gerry of the Weather Bird Press. It would be nice to see this catalogue brought up to date, expanded and re-issued by the IMGC.

As Mr. Barbour explained to me, IMGC has been open for a year and is broadly based. It provides industry meeting rooms and product displays; school seminars and programs; amateur and hobby programs. In short, every possible group is being approached to make use of and support IMGC. From what I saw, that effort is succeeding. It is helped enormously by Mr. Jacobson's generous funding, which has even made possible color ads in national printing trade publications. Although in its early stages, IMGC is well on the way to being a first-class printing history resource—as well as being financially solid.

The International Museum of Graphic Communications is at 8469 Kass Drive, Buena Park, CA 90621. It is open to the public by paid admission Tuesdays through Sundays, closed Mondays. Call the museum at 714/523-2070 for hours and other information.

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# APHA NEWS

APHA thanks all who helped in the effort to make the APHA Annual Conference at Harvard on October 7 an outstanding success. There were 112 people registered before the conference, and more who registered at the door.

The APHA Nominating Committee has proposed the following slate for election at the annual meeting (at the New York Public Library Trustees Room, January 27, 1990): President, Virginia Smith; Vice-President for Programs, Jennifer Lee; Vice-President for Membership, Stan Nelson; Vice-President for Publications, Irene Tichenor; Secretary, Martin Hutner; Treasurer, John Hench; Trustees (3-year terms), Jerry Kelly, Mark Carroll, David Pankow; Trustee (1-year term to replace Martin Hutner), Jeff Kaimowitz.

## EDITOR'S NOTES

I would like to call our readers attention to a superb small publication related to the history, art and craft of letterpress printing. It is *The Devil's Artisan, A Journal of the Printing Arts*. It has been published since 1980, and is now edited and designed by a dedicated group of Canadians: Paul Forage, Glenn Goluska, William Rueter, and Diane Egerton. Our own Paul Hayden Duensing is a frequent contributor. It is well-written, always interesting, and always imaginatively and beautifully printed. It is published in June and December; subscription rates for 1990 are \$22.50 postpaid. Back issues for 1989 are available at \$12 for individuals and \$18 for institutions; outside of Canada add \$1.50 postage. Write *The Devil's Artisan*, 191 Albany Avenue, Toronto, Canada M5R 3C7. Highly recommended!

## OBITUARIES

**Rollo Silver** Rollo Gabriel Silver, the leading American printing historian, died August 20th at his home on Beacon Hill in Boston. He was 80 years old. Mr. Silver was professor of library science at Simmons College from 1950 to 1965. He was the author of the authoritative *Typefounding in America, 1787-1825* and *The American Printer, 1787-1825*, as well as numerous monographs on printing and the book trades.

Rollo Silver was a member of the Royal Society of the Arts and an honorary member of the Bibliographical Society of America. He was founding member of APHA and has served on its advisory board. He received the 1977 APHA Award for his contributions to the history of American printing. His interest in the organization and this newsletter were continuing; as late as a few months ago we received a postcard clarifying a point. He gave his time and talent generously to help scholars in the printing history field, including your editor.

The American Printing History Association sends its deepest condolences to his wife, Alice.

The APHA Newsletter is published six times yearly by the American Printing History Association. Subscriptions are through membership in APHA, and include all publications. Personal memberships for the calendar year are \$25; \$30 for U.S. institutions. All subscription matters (other than purely editorial) should be sent to APHA, P.O. Box 4922, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163-4922. Newsletter editorial correspondence only should be addressed directly to the Editor: Stephen O. Saxe, 1100 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10028. Copyright © 1989 by the American Printing History Association. All rights reserved.

**Berthold Wolpe** A leading type designer, typographer, and typographic historian, Berthold Wolpe died July 5 in London. He was 84 years old. Mr. Wolpe was the designer of the Albertus typeface for the Monotype Corporation Ltd. (Albertus is widely used throughout the world.)

A pupil and later assistant of Rudolf Koch, Mr. Wolpe left Germany for England in 1932 and settled there permanently in 1935, the year Albertus was introduced. He designed books for Gollancz and later for Faber and Faber, where he remained until his retirement in 1975. He designed the new masthead for the London *Times*, which remained in use from 1966 to 1970.

As a scholar, he was Lyell Reader in Bibliography at Oxford in 1981, and co-author with Alfred Fairbank of *Renaissance Handwriting* (1960). His copy of the Vincent Figgins type specimen of 1815 was reprinted with his introduction by the Printing Historical Society in 1967. He was a leading member of PHS, the British counterpart to APHA. The Victoria and Albert Museum presented a retroactive exhibition of his work in 1980.

Mr. Wolpe was a man of warmth with an inexhaustible delight in every aspect of lettering. This was apparent to many Americans who had the opportunity to meet him when he came to America some years ago. In New York, The Typophiles held a memorial meeting in his honor in September.

**Richard J. Hoffman** Noted printer and teacher of printing Richard J. Hoffman died in Los Angeles on September 25 at the age of 77. After apprenticing as a printer and working for several commercial firms in his youth, Richard J. Hoffman began a long career as a teacher of printing. He had been chairman of the Journalism and Graphic Arts Department of Los Angeles City College, and then became Professor of Industrial Studies at California State University in Los Angeles. He retired from that position in 1978.

Mr. Hoffman designed and printed many books over the years. Some of his recent books were listed briefly in *Newsletter 90*. He had a one man show at the William Andrews Clark Library of the University of California at Los Angeles in 1978, and won the Zamorano Award for typographical excellence in 1981. His book design for *Eleven Western Presses* was one of the AIGA best books of 1957. Mr. Hoffman was a member of the International Typographical Union for 40 years, as well as the Rounce & Coffin Club (Los Angeles), the Typophiles (New York) and APHA.

A memorial service for Richard J. Hoffman was held on October 8th in Sherman Oaks, attended by many of his friends and students. He is survived by his wife Ruth.

## NOTES & QUERIES

To the Editor:

I have a correction to your piece on the Kemble Collections in No. 90 of the *Newsletter*. The financial problems that caused the closure were not the Kemble's; the Kemble was in fact doing quite well. The doors were closed because the California Historical Society, in whose library building the Kemble is housed, has—and continues to have—severe financial difficulties. The distinction is important.

I suggest that for corroboration and further clarification you write to Charles N. Johnson, the Kemble's librarian at the time of its closure, and now librarian of the Ventura County (California) Historical Society.

Robert D. Armstrong  
Sparks, Nevada

To the Editor:

The item about the Kemble Collections on Western Printing & Publishing [in *Newsletter* 91], winner of the much-appreciated 1988 APHA Award, may have inadvertently given our many friends and supporters throughout the country the wrong impression concerning the financial status of this important library. For the record, it is the California Historical Society (CHS) which went into the financial difficulties that forced the closing of the Kemble and the main Library with no warning whatsoever. We were the tail on a kite which crashed.

A matter of historical record: when I was the Curator, immediately after the death of founder George L. Harding, one of my first moves was to get our finances separated from those of CHS itself, and that is the way our budgetary matters have been handled ever since. At the time we were closed down we were on a modest roll; donations and renewals came in until the very last day. We had recently raised funds for our own computer from four generous donors, in particular Elise (Mrs. James W.) Elliott. (Her late husband was donor of the records of Taylor & Taylor, the celebrated San Francisco printers, whose archive is one of the most valued holdings of the Kemble Collections.) We acquired a computer and the last issue (#42-43) of *The Kemble Occasional* was set and made up entirely in-house at great saving, and more frequent issues had been planned as a result.

The position of Curator, now paid, has long been a part-time appointment with a maximum of eight hours a week, the cost of which have *never* been borne by CHS but *always* underwritten by one generous supporter. The remainder of the work week the Curator was a reference librarian in the CHS Library. CHS has mainly furnished office and storage space, light, heat and some supplies. However, CHS interest in the Kemble has been minimal to non-existent, but when APHA made its award in 1988, the story's lead in the CHS newsletter said that the award had been "made to the California Historical Society."

Gross mismanagement, poor planning, a colossal lack of interest in the Library as a whole and many other problems have led to the downfall of CHS and the Kemble Collections fell with it. Many new members have recently been elected to the Board of Trustees (25 out of 50) and it is possible that saner heads may rule. However, even if the Library, and thus the Kemble Collections, were to open tomorrow,

institutional continuity has been lost. Our volunteer Researcher, who has been with Kemble since 1972, is moving away, as am I. There are no others who know *anything* about the Kemble Collections except former employees who are at work elsewhere and are no longer involved with Kemble or CHS.

This is an unhappy report, alas, and with the future uncertain, it will be a very long time, at best, before things might be restored. Another problem ahead of the Kemble Collections is the pending sale of the CHS headquarters building which will mean all staff will be moved into the Library, an already overcrowded old mansion. The Kemble Collections occupy most of the third floor and are vulnerable to the coming demands, especially as there will be no one knowledgeable on hand to protect their interests.

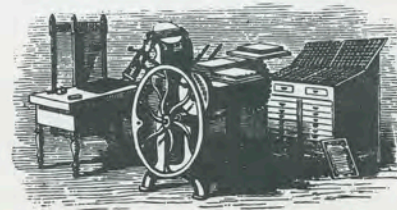
Robert Levenson  
Former Curator and Research Assistant  
The Kemble Collections  
San Francisco

The APHA *Newsletter* is glad to set the record straight on this important matter, and joins with all interested in this major archive in hoping that the Kemble Collections can be restored.

## TYPE & PRESSES

Bob Huff (P.O. Box 241, Montchanin, DE 19710; tel. (H) 302/571-8686 and (O) 302/992-2277) has for sale a collection of printing antiques. Included are several tabletop and toy presses, composing sticks, wood type, litho stones, etc. He wishes to sell the entire group as a collection. Call Mr. Huff for a complete list.

Robert E. Ashcraft (92 Spring Lane, West Hartford CT 06107; tel. 203/521-1835) has a 10x15 Golding Jobber with treadle for sale at a very reasonable price for someone willing to remove it from his basement. It is in good operating condition, although it needs new rollers. (The Golding Jobber has unique impression adjustment wedges that are highly desirable—Ed.) Contact Mr. Ashcraft for details.



Nancy Huckaby has for sale two Chandler & Price presses, a 10x15 and a 12x18; 25 fonts of type, and an Oswego 33 paper cutter. The material has been in storage since 1978. Contact Ms. Huckaby at P.O. Box 1012, Iowa Park, Texas 76367; tel. 817/592-4073 or 214/620-2033 for information.

Wilson J. Barto (17 Austin Road, Yardley, PA 19067) has for sale a Nolan proof press with a 15x30 bed, including metal stand and ink plate.