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Carroll T. Harris

CONVERSATIONS ON TYPE AND PRINTING, 1967

An Interview Conducted by  
Ruth Teiser

Copy No. 1







Carroll T. Harris  
ca. 1955

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## FOREWORD

## Books and Printing in the San Francisco Bay Area

The art and business of printing in the San Francisco Bay Area are significant in the history of printing in the United States and have been an integral part of the cultural development of California. This series of interviews with people who have been participants in and observers of the recent history of San Francisco Bay Area printing stems from a 1958 interview by Francis P. Farquhar with Edward DeWitt Taylor. It has been carried forward in the interest of recording details of the movement and analyzing factors in its development.

The Regional Oral History Office was established to tape record autobiographical interviews with persons prominent in recent California history. The Office is under the direction of Willa K. Baum, and under the administration of the Director of The Bancroft Library. Ruth Teiser is project director for the books and printing series.





BOOKS AND PRINTING IN THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA*Interviews Completed by June 1976*

- Dorothy & Lewis Allen, *Book Printing with the Handpress* 1968 (68 pp.)
- Brother Antoninus, *Brother Antoninus: Poet, Printer, and Religious* 1966 (97 pp.)
- Mallette Dean, *Artist and Printer* 1970 (112 pp.)
- Edwin Grabhorn, *Recollections of the Grabhorn Press* 1968 (114 pp.)
- Jane Grabhorn, *The Colt Press* 1966 (43 pp.)
- Robert Grabhorn, *Fine Printing and the Grabhorn Press* 1968 (129 pp.)
- Sherwood & Katharine Grover, *The Grabhorn Press and the Grace Hoper Press* 1972 (94 pp.)
- Carroll T. Harris, *Conversations on Type and Printing, 1967* 1976 (209 pp.)
- James D. Hart, *Fine Printers of the San Francisco Bay Area* 1969 (95 pp.)
- Warren R. Howell, *Two San Francisco Bookmen* 1967 (73 pp.)
- Haywood Hunt, *Recollections of San Francisco Printers* 1967 (53 pp.)
- Lawton Kennedy, *A Life in Printing* 1968 (211 pp.)
- Oscar Lewis, *Literary San Francisco* 1965 (151 pp.)
- David Magee, *Bookselling and Creating Books* 1969 (92 pp.)
- Walter Mann, *Photoengraving, 1910-1969* 1973 (90 pp.)
- Bernhard Schmidt, Herman Diedrichs, Max Schmidt, Jr. *The Schmidt Lithograph Company, Volume I* 1968 (238 pp.)
- Lorenz Schmidt, Ernest Wuthmann, Stewart Norris, *The Schmidt Lithograph Company, Volume II* 1969 (157 pp.)
- Albert Sperisen, *San Francisco Printers, 1925-1965* 1966 (91 pp.)
- Jack W. Stauffacher, *A Printed Word Has Its Own Measure* 1969 (107 pp.)
- Edward DeWitt Taylor, *Supplement to Francis P. Farquhar interview* 1960 (45 pp.)
- Adrian Wilson, *Printing and Book Designing* 1966 (108 pp.)



## INTERVIEW HISTORY

Carroll T. Harris occupied a pivotal position in the world of fine printing in San Francisco, for it was he who brought to Northern California many of the type faces used by the printers of fine press books as well as advertising and general commercial work of distinction. He became part of that world when John Henry Nash was its star and at a time when the fame of the Grabhorns, the Taylor brothers, the Kennedys, and other contributors to the tradition was rising. And he remained an integral part of it for more than a half century.

At first somewhat reticent about being interviewed, Colonel Harris finally in the spring of 1967 accepted the invitation of the Regional Oral History Office. He had been acquainted for many years with the interviewer in her capacity as a writer for printing industry magazines and for the book section of the San Francisco Chronicle. The interviews were held in Colonel Harris' office at Mackenzie and Harris, 659 Folsom Street, San Francisco, where he was surrounded by books, pictures and other memorabilia occasionally referred to in the interview.

There were nine interview sessions, held in the late mornings on April 25, May 1, May 4, May 8, May 11, May 16, May 25, June 22, and June 29, 1967. At the conclusion Colonel Harris indicated that he intended to seal the interview for some years.

In July 1969, the transcript, with a few repetitions deleted but little other alteration, was sent to Colonel Harris. He returned it the following spring with a few deletions and corrections, and some additions.

Early in 1974 a request was made to Colonel Harris to reconsider the sealing of the interview. However, following the move of his firm to a new location at 460 Bryant Street and his residence from Atherton to San Francisco that spring, Colonel Harris suffered a rather lengthy illness. The following year, having considerably recovered, he agreed to reconsider his decision, and Mrs. Helen Lee, a key employee and shareholder in Mackenzie & Harris, read the corrected transcript aloud to him. He then agreed that, with the deletion of one minor fact, the interview could be released.



Final editorial work was underway when, on August 18, 1975, Colonel Harris died. Shortly before, on July 31, the firm of Mackenzie & Harris had ceased to exist. On August 20, under Othmar Peters, its successor, Mackenzie-Harris Corporation, resumed the functions the firm had developed over the sixty years since George Mackenzie established it.

Ruth Teiser  
Interviewer-Editor

10 April 1976  
Regional Oral History Office  
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University of California at Berkeley



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# CARROLL T. HARRIS

1891-1975

CARROLL T. HARRIS, 1891-1975. Homage to a man who for over half a century contributed notably to the art of printing in San Francisco. Born in Harper's Ferry, West Virginia in 1891, Carroll T. Harris was the son of a Methodist Episcopal clergyman who had in his younger days been a machinist in a job press manufactory. Whether or not his father's early occupation had any effect upon young Carroll, his large library definitely did, for the son became interested in books as a youth. A good student, he studied mathematics and engineering at the Baltimore Polytechnic Institute, then taught there for a year after his graduation in 1910. He had intended to continue his studies at a university, but a chance meeting with J. Maury Dove started him in 1911 upon his lifelong career.

Dove was president of the Lanston Monotype Company. Harris met him in Baltimore at the home of mutual friends, and when Dove asked if he would be interested in a job with his firm, the young man did not know what it was. He went to Philadelphia to visit its headquarters, apparently liked what he saw, and on August 1, 1911, started to work. He learned to operate the keyboard and the caster, then to tear down the machines and build them up again. Having mastered the basics, he was put through a variety of jobs including reading proof on the classic work, *The Monotype System*, just then being published.

At the end of two years he was transferred to the company's Boston office, where he worked first as a clerk, then as a salesman, and became acquainted with a wide variety of printing plants, from newspapers to presses specializing in books of taste and quality. Here his interest in fine printing began, and here he began a lifetime study of type faces.

Here too he met, by chance, a man he was later to know well in San Francisco. Henry Taylor was attending the Harvard School of Business, and young Harris was delegated by his company to give him information for a thesis he was writing on the comparative cost of hand composition and Monotype composition. In spite of Taylor's widely



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Miller.



disseminated conclusion that hand composition was less expensive, Harris did not lose his job.

He did leave it, however. He had been a member of a military cadet company in Baltimore, and the week after the United States entered the first World War, Carroll Harris enlisted as a private in the Army Engineers. A sergeant by the time he was sent overseas, he was commissioned a second lieutenant in the field in France.

Returning to the Monotype Company after the war, he spent four months in its New York office before J. Maury Dove sent him to San Francisco to be second in command at the Monotype Company of California. He arrived in the city in September 1919, and in the next two years he made friends for both his firm and himself among the leading printers. He came to know John Henry Nash and his work, on Haywood Hunt's recommendation introduced himself to the newly arrived Grabhorn brothers, and became a friend of both Henry and Edward DeWitt Taylor before being called back to his company's Boston office.

Although in the next few years Harris cemented friendships with such famed eastern men as Frederic W. Goudy, William Edwin Rudge, Frederic Warde, Sol Hess and Bruce Rogers, and advanced to the position of assistant sales manager of the Monotype Company, "the life and spirit" of San Francisco retained a persistent hold upon him, he later recalled. Finally in 1923 he began corresponding with George W. Mackenzie, whom he had met when Mackenzie was in charge of the Monotype department of the Lynn, Massachusetts, *Telegram*, and known later in San Francisco where Mackenzie had established the first Monotype trade composition plant in the city. At the end of 1923 Harris gave up his position with the Monotype Company and returned to San Francisco. On January 1, 1924, he formally became a shareholder in Mackenzie's firm, then called the Monotype Composition Company. Two years later it became Mackenzie & Harris.

George Mackenzie had come to San Francisco initially to operate the Lanston Monotype exhibit in the Machinery Palace at the Panama Pacific International Exposition of 1915. After the fair closed he bought the keyboard and accessory equipment he had been demonstrating and started a successful small business concentrating principally upon railroad tariffs and other tabular work. Harris, convinced that the Monotype system was capable of work of high quality—



advertising and book work in particular—shifted the firm's emphasis over the next few years. He entered the advertising field by capturing the account of one of the city's firms of highest prestige, Gump's. And he soon was working with Nash, the Grabhorns, the Taylor brothers, Lawton and Alfred B. Kennedy, James and Cecil Johnson, and other printers he admired, setting type for them on his firm's machines and by hand, and also selling them types cast in its foundry.

Sometimes responding to, more often anticipating their needs and interests, he order matrices for new type faces from the eastern United States and Europe as well. He was the first to bring to San Francisco Italian Old Style, designed by his friend Frederic Goudy who often visited him. And he was the first to bring to the United States two types the matrices for which came from England: Centaur (with its italic Arrighi) designed by two other friends, Bruce Rogers and Frederic Warde, and the re-cut version of the seventeenth century Dutch Van Dijck. These and others were and remain important contributions to the fine printing community of the San Francisco area, and other printers far beyond often called upon Mackenzie & Harris for its types and composition. Notably among them has been Leonard Baskin of the Gehenna Press in Massachusetts, but they have also included publishers of work-a-day technical and encyclopedic books who sent orders across the continent because of the large range of types and facilities and the high quality of the work.

Carroll Harris' career was interrupted a second time by military service when, as a reserve officer, he was called to active duty in World War II. He served for five years, most of the time at the San Francisco Port of Embarkation, but he devoted all his energies to his Army duties, relegating the operation of the company to George Mackenzie and others. Following Mackenzie's death in 1944 he turned his attention to the business only long enough to attend to its reordering and to arrange to purchase Mackenzie's shares in it. At the war's end he emerged as Colonel Harris, a title he retained after his return to civilian life in 1946.

If the company's service to the graphic arts community was a source of pride to Colonel Harris, so too were its employees, a number of whom owned shares and carried considerable responsibility. Those whom he credited with important roles in its development were the late Starr Dunham and Helen Robinson, who with Mackenzie had



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carried on during the war, and three who continued to share responsibility, Lester Lloyd, Helen Lee and Frank Stoll. All shared Harris' ideals and also his desire to work with the young printers of the community to continue its tradition of fine printing.

A Francophile, Carroll Harris was married in 1921 to a young Frenchwoman then living in San Francisco, Marie Alexandrine Lange, and they went often to France through the years. It was an ironic tragedy that their only son was killed there in active service in World War II. In the spring of 1947 they journeyed to Europe to visit his grave, and Colonel Harris, to turn his thoughts toward the future, went to see a number of France's leading printers. He returned to the United States with the idea for what became, two years later, a landmark exhibit of recent French printing, bookbinding, and book illustration. Called *The French Art of the Book*, it was assembled under his leadership and brought to San Francisco where it attracted more visitors to the California Palace of the Legion of Honor than any previous exhibit. The French government honored him by naming him to the Legion of Honor.

In the years following the second World War, Colonel Harris took an active role in such organizations as the Grolier Club, the American Institute of Graphic Arts (which named him a Fellow), and the Roxburghe Club which he served two years as Master of the Press. To the Book Club of California, which he joined in the early 1940's, he contributed his efforts as an officer, a board member and a committee member. In addition, the high standards he had created for his firm resulted in the fine typography of many Book Club publications. These, together with hundreds of others set in type by Mackenzie & Harris, stand as a fitting memorial.

RUTH TEISER



Colonel Carroll Harris with Mrs. Helen Lee in his office. 1975

Photograph by Robert Miller.



Mackenzie & Harris Logo







I COL. CARROLL T. HARRIS  
(Interview 1--April 25, 1967)

### Early Years

Harris: My father was a Methodist minister in the Baltimore Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. His name was William Harris. He was born in Baltimore of English parents and went to college at Carlisle, Pennsylvania. He married Lida W. Timanus, who was born in Baltimore. Her family went back to the American Revolution. That's an odd name. It happens to be my middle name, Timanus. My grandmother was a Miss Carroll and that's my first name. So I have the family name.

I was born in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, because my father was the pastor at a church there. Methodists went from place to place and stayed two, three years, and then moved. My mother had a favorite uncle whose name was Ethelbert Shipley. When I was born I was named Ethelbert Shipley. Can you imagine going through life with a name like that? Fortunately my mother's oldest brother died about six weeks after I was born, so they passed up the idea of attaching Ethelbert to me, and I became Carroll Timanus, which was his name. A sister born two years later got the name of Ethelberta.

Teiser: When were you born?

Harris: I was born December 11, 1891.

Teiser: Do you have many brothers and sisters?

Harris: I had an older brother, who died when he was twenty; a younger brother, fourteen years younger than I am; and four sisters. We were seven in the family. Two sisters and my brother are still living.





Harris: My people eventually settled, after my father retired, in and around Washington. I have a sister that lives in Lynchburg, Virginia. Another sister lives in Washington, D.C., and my brother lives in Florida.

There's a funny thing in the family background. Maybe these things point to something. My father first learned the machinist trade, and he worked for a company in Baltimore that made "Dorman" job presses. Then he got what is known in religious circles as "the call" to be a minister (I don't know what it is, but you get something from up above). Then he went to Dickinson College, at Carlisle, Pennsylvania, and studied to be a minister.

Teiser: Did he continue interest in presses at all?

Harris: No. But he was an intellectual and had a big library. I got my love of the contents of books at a very, very early age. I remember once my father told me (I couldn't have been more than twelve or fourteen), he said, "Son, read everything that comes in front of you, good, bad, and indifferent. Then you can judge the good from the bad."

Teiser: That was pretty liberal, wasn't it?

Harris: He was a liberal.

Teiser: Your schooling, then, was--?

Harris: Schooling was in public schools in various little towns around Baltimore, in the state of Maryland. I went to high school at Laurel, which is halfway between Washington and Baltimore. They had sort of a little military outfit there. I was pretty young at the time, but I wore a uniform and drilled. I guess that gave me my first desire, some day, to be in the military. I always liked to wear a uniform and march up and down. I thought I was doing something.

We moved to Baltimore when I was fourteen, in the spring of 1908--no, 1907. I was fifteen years old. In that fall I entered the Baltimore Polytechnic Institute, which was a combination of an advanced high school and a junior college where they emphasized mathematics and engineering. I graduated from there in 1910. Each year they would take two of the students out of the graduating class, either because they parted



Harris: their hair the right way or something, and would give them the position as assistant instructor for the following year. This job helped to pave the way for something else they wanted to do. I was one that was selected, so I taught there for the year. I was eighteen when I graduated. I taught there the following year. My plans, at the time, were to go to the University of Pennsylvania, where in two years I could have gotten my degree as a mechanical engineer. That's the direction I thought I was headed.

In the meantime, a man who had a great deal of influence on my life talked to me. That was the spring of 1911. I used to see him at some friends' house in Baltimore, where he would stop from time to time. This man lived in Washington. His name was J. Maury Dove. He asked me what I had planned to do and I told him. He said, "Perhaps you would like to come with the Monotype Company." Well, I didn't know what the Monotype was and told him I didn't. He knew of my working experiences during four summer periods. I had worked for a building contractor a couple of summers; I was employed in a machine shop two summers. He said, "Well, come over and see us."

So he invited me to come over to Philadelphia and see the Monotype. The Monotype factory was at Thirteenth and Callow Hill streets then. He was the president of the Lanston Monotype Company. In fact, he was the man who raised the money to finance the inventor, Tolbert Lanston.

Well, I was quite excited when I went over, spent a couple of days and saw this factory. So I figured, "I think I'd like to come to this company." He was a very considerate man. He said, "You'd better go home and see your folks." (They were then living in West Virginia.) "How about starting in about the first of August?" I agreed.

This is an interesting thing: when I started to work with him I didn't know what I was going to do or what I was going to earn. I just said, "Yes." That's the way things were done in those days.

So, I came to work on the first of August, 1911, with the Lanston Monotype Company and was put in their school, where I learned to operate the keyboard and, as a mechanic, to tear it down and build it up. Then





Harris: I had the same sort of instruction on the Monotype caster. That took about six months training, after which I was an instructor in that school for three or four months. Then I was assigned to the technical publication department of the Monotype Company as a sort of a messenger boy and assistant to the head of this section. They were then getting out that monumental technical book on the Monotype known as The Monotype System. I read proof on that and ran to the printer with corrections, et cetera, et cetera. But I was in a position where I could see and learn a lot about the technique of the Monotype.

I kept that job until the spring of 1913 when I reached a small crisis in my life. I had become acquainted with a man who lived in Philadelphia who was connected with the Department of Agriculture. He offered me a civil service position with the Department of Agriculture as a sort of ingenious mechanic who would devise testing equipment for packing and shipping agricultural products. It was a very attractive offer and I didn't know what to do. I didn't quite like the work I was doing with the Monotype Company, mainly because my boss used to dress me down every morning, whether I needed it or not.

Teiser: [Laughter] On principle?

Harris: On principle. So I went to Mr. Dove and I told him quite frankly what the offer was, and asked him for advice, not as my boss but as my friend. He said, "Well, it's strange. I have a report on you, and we have other plans for you. I won't tell you until you make up your mind what you want to do. But," he says, "here's the letter, and the report."

I said, "I want to write to my father."

Teiser: Was the report one showing that you were working very satisfactorily?

Harris: Oh, yes. It was very flattering, I think. Must've been. I wrote my father and he wrote back a short letter and said, "It's your life, you have to make your own decisions. I'm sure, the way you've outlined this, you'll make the right decision." Then I went to Mr. Dove, informing him that I wanted to remain with the Monotype Company, and he said, "We plan to send you to Boston as the office man up there in the



Harris: branch office. We think it's time for you to go into another type of activity with the company." So I went up to Boston--

Teiser: May I interrupt you here with a question? How large was the Monotype Company at this time?

Harris: It was quite an important company. Their net worth was about six million dollars, which was a lot at that time. I would say that their employees then numbered four or five hundred people. It was considered a very large company.

#### To Boston with the Monotype Company

Harris: This was 1913. I was twenty-one. So I went to Boston. The manager of the Boston district was Mr. John Lewis. I succeeded another man who was transferred up to Canada. The first day I was on my own, the buzzer at my desk rang. That meant I should go in Mr. Lewis' office. He said, "Bring your book in and take dictation."

I said, "I'm very sorry, but I can't even operate a typewriter, much less take dictation."

He said, "That's involved with your job. You better go out and hire a stenographer." Which I did very hastily and got somebody in there. And then there wasn't too much for me to do because the man who had preceded me had been a male clerk and stenographer. I was getting a lot of money then--the salary was \$25 a week. That was considered quite good for a fellow twenty-one years old.

I would get calls from various customers. I seemed to develop a desire that I'd like to see these men I was talking to on the phone. The Monotype was very active in Boston, all the New England states. They were doing a big business there. So I asked Mr. Lewis one day--I said, "If I keep my work up in the office, would it be all right for me to call and get acquainted with the customers, because then I think I could serve them better?"

And he said, "Well, that's a very good idea."





Harris: He said, "In fact, nobody's ever done that in your job before."

I said, "Well, that's fine." So I got acquainted with all the customers and got to know them. One man I met was a Mr. Dunn who owned a plant called the Spartan Press. I think he gave me two very good lessons. One, he was extremely interested in type. The various type faces up to that time, to me, were like a mystic maze. I said, "How do you learn? You seem to know all the type faces. How do you do it?"

And I remember as though it were yesterday. He said, "You get one face (the best one would be Caslon) and you learn that so you know it every place you see it. And then, after you learn that well enough, you take another face and you see where it varied from Caslon and what its characteristics are that are different from Caslon." Then he explained to me the difference between the old style, the moderns, the antiques, et cetera.

I used to see him very frequently and he coached me in my desire and ability to learn about type faces, which has been one of my loves ever since . . . well, that's well over half a century ago and I am still just as interested in type faces.

Another lesson he taught me, which was a personal one--I came from what was called the South, and I had very definite ideas about chivalry and the color of a person's skin. I'm ashamed of it now. One day after lunch he said, "I want you to meet a friend of mine." And he took me to the New England branch of the Miehle Printing Press Company and took me in to meet the New England manager. As I walked in, this man was a Negro with a skin as black as that telephone. I shook hands with him, sat down, talked. I guess I was a little strained. [Laughter] I'd never done that before.

As we left I said to him, "That was an awful thing you did to me."

He said, "I did it purposefully. Just think how much better he has to be to hold that job than you or me." And I think that was the beginning of my being able to completely eradicate from my makeup any prejudice against any race or religion.

THE STATE OF TEXAS, COUNTY OF DALLAS, this 1st day of May, 1900.

JOHN W. BROWN, Sheriff of the County of Dallas, Texas, do hereby certify that the within and foregoing is a true and correct copy of the original as the same appears in the records of the County of Dallas, Texas.

JOHN W. BROWN, Sheriff of the County of Dallas, Texas.

Witness my hand and the seal of the County of Dallas, Texas, at Dallas, Texas, this 1st day of May, 1900.

JOHN W. BROWN, Sheriff of the County of Dallas, Texas.

At my office in Dallas, Texas, this 1st day of May, 1900.

JOHN W. BROWN, Sheriff of the County of Dallas, Texas.

Teiser: That's interesting.

Harris: Is this the kind of stuff you want?

Teiser: Yes.

Harris: Then there was another incident I can remember, about 1914, perhaps. This would be--no this would be 1913, late in 1913, after I'd gotten permission to call on the trade and I could get out of the office without telling anybody where I was going and have a little free time to browse around and learn things. I thought, "If a fellow could sell a Monotype he would have really reached the climax in his life." I didn't know whether I could sell or not. But we had two files in the office; we had the active file of prospects, and the inactive. These were people that had been called upon and appeared not to be interested and never would buy a machine. So I picked one of these cards that looked like a convenient place to try out my new desire. The printer was located in Melrose, which is outside of Boston about like Burlingame is to San Francisco. I could make the visit by taking an afternoon train and go there and back without incurring any particular expense or notice on the part of the "boss." This was a secret project of mine.

I walked into this plant, the Melrose Messenger, and introduced myself to the proprietor, who also was the only employee. He had a Simplex typesetting machine. The Simplex machines were made of two drums. The upper drum was the reservoir for the type and the nicks were something like the nicks on the Linotype matrix. As the drum turned around each piece of type would fall into its proper channel. Then the operator, when he hit a key, released a piece of type; if he hit an a a piece of type would drop out of the a channel on the lower part of the drum. These machines, when they got worn to the point where the two drums moved over each other would get rounded. Then the drums would shear the type, and it would fly out of the machine onto the floor. When I arrived at this man's plant he was getting out his weekly edition and he was a little bit late and he was having trouble with his machine, and there was a hatful of broken type on the floor and he was completely exasperated.

He said, "I'm too busy to talk, for you see, I'm having trouble."





Harris: I said, "Yes, but I have a lot of time on my hands. Maybe there's something I can do around there to help you."

He said, "Yeah. You can stack up those papers." And he gave me a few chores and I worked around there the remainder of the day. Finally he got his papers off the press. Then I helped to deliver them over to the post office. And, oh, I didn't get away from there 'till quite late in the evening, all the time talking about the Monotype. And I could see some interest. Of course I wasn't an experienced salesman but I figured I had a deal. I took the late night train back to Boston. Before leaving I made an appointment to see him the following week. And just on the chance that I might make a sale, I drew up a contract, all ready for a signature. And believe it or not, he signed it on the second trip.

It was close to four thousand dollars worth of sales. And I dramatized this. I just dropped it on the boss's desk the next morning. Said nothing about it. And he rang his buzzer.

He said, "Who helped you with this?"

I said, "Nobody, sir."

He said, "Hire somebody to do the work you do in the office. Now I'm going to make a salesman out of you." This was the thing that opened up an entirely new field to me. I was no longer a clerk or an office man. I was going to be an outside man.

Teiser: Who was your boss then?

Harris: Lewis still. He was the finest salesman I've ever known. He could sell ice to Eskimos. He was that sort of man, and he taught me the technique of selling--the timing of when you put the pressure on, when you know you have it made and then quit talking and get the signature and get out.

In the fall of 1914, as a result of the war in Europe, the Monotype Company received notice cancelling all English orders. This was a terrible blow to the American Monotype Company. Half its volume of business was gone. In those days the bulk of the Monotype machines and parts for the European market were made in America and were shipped over to England.



Harris: So I was making \$25 a week, and the first notice I got of this blow that all Monotype employees were cut ten percent. Two weeks later we got another notice that we were cut another fifteen percent. That made a total of twenty-five percent and left me with a little over \$17 a week to live on. I had financial obligations to meet. This was a terrible ordeal for a few months, until Monotype management devised a system whereby the people on the sales force would be on a bonus. They had to sell a certain amount to cover their salary and then above that they got a commission which increased in percentage as the total volume of the employee's sales rose, sort of like income tax does: the higher the income the higher the percentage to pay.

Now, I had, I suppose, an unfair advantage over everyone else. Because I opened the mail every morning, I got all the tips. So I went to town. This new thing was calculated every three months and then we'd get a bonus check. The first three months I not only restored my cut in pay but almost doubled my salary. As I say, I had the advantages. I tried harder, just like some people who rent cars do. I got a very suave letter from the sales manager, Mr. Wilfred Bancroft, that he knew I'd worked hard and so forth and so on, but--and he sent me the check for my bonus--but it was kind of unfair to the other salesmen for me to be in a position of being on a commission. So therefore they had decided, in their great wisdom, to restore my cut and increase my salary to \$40 a week. [Laughter]

#### World War I Army Service

Harris: Then I stayed with them until April 13, 1917, when I enlisted in the Army. I started out one morning. The war had been on a week and I wasn't in it. Something had to be done. So I left the office, walked across the Boston Common, and read all the signs: the Marines, the Navy, et cetera. I didn't care for the Navy because--this is a point I left out--during the last three years I was at the Polytechnic Institute I was in the Naval Reserve. I lied about my age and got in a couple of years before I should. They used to go on summer cruises. I didn't like the Navy. The sign that appealed to me most was "Join the Army Engineers." So I went over and enlisted and came





Harris: back to the office and told the new manager, who was Mr. Richard Beresford, that I had enlisted.

He said, "You don't have to be in such a hurry, do you?"

I said, "I don't want this thing to get over before I'm in it." As you remember war was declared April 6. I enlisted on Friday, April 13. We had training the rest of that spring and summer, in Boston. We took a course in military engineering at Wentworth Institute, which was a technical school in Boston. I was then a few months past twenty-five, and most of the fellows were much younger than I was. The outfit I joined had been the First Corps Cadets, Boston, which was the oldest military organization in America. That was changed into the Hundred and First Engineers. At the time I went in you had to be approved by the membership to get in. I mean it was very silk-stocking stuff, mostly for parades. But they had a fine bunch of people. Not many engineers. Because of that I soon found myself an instructor in map-making and map drawing, which I learned quickly from some books that I was able to get.

My promotion was quite rapid. As I say, I was older, and had a little more experience. So within a matter of a couple of months, I was what they call promoted through all the steps up to sergeant first class, who was supposed to be some kind of an engineer.

We went overseas in September of 1917, a convoy that went up to Halifax, then crossed. We landed in Liverpool and spent a week or ten days in England, landed at Le Havre and went out to an area in the Haute Marne district and built cantonments for the American soldiers who were to follow, from September to January of 1918.

Then we went up to the front and were brigaded with the French on the famous Chemin des Dames sector. This was a comparatively quiet sector. I mean there were no attacks across the lines, but there'd be artillery fire, particularly, that the engineers had to watch out for because we were fixing roads and putting up barbed wire. So we had our first baptism of fire. We lost a few men, not many. I think in our whole regiment we didn't lose



Harris: more than four or five in the six weeks.

Then we went down to the Toul sector, northwest of Nancy. Though a sergeant, I was then in command of a platoon and had some very interesting construction work to do. We had learned, by that time, to go in the side of a hill and build rooms. In fact on this sector I had charge of building a complete area underground that would house the headquarters of a division. We learned how to mine, to put in shoring, and construction of observation posts and camouflage, et cetera.

I had a very strange experience in that. There was a fellow, well-known artist in the East whom I'd known as a young man, by the name of Leslie Thrasher. He used to make covers for the Saturday Evening Post. One night, while on the Toul sector, I was ordered to go up and meet a sergeant from the camouflage section who would instruct me how to camouflage for an observation post we were going to build in plain sight of the enemy. We met at a certain crossroads at midnight. It was dark and we each had the password. This fellow came to me and said, "Is this Carroll Harris?"

I said, "It's Leslie Thrasher, isn't it?" So we were together for several weeks while we did this job. This kind of anecdote I tell you because in the making of a man, the people he's known, the experiences he's had, help to guide the course he pursues.

Our outfit was transferred from the Toul sector into the Marne in June, 1918. Our division went into Belleau Wood, relieved the Marines. The First Division containing two regiments of Marines had stopped the advance of the enemy. Then we, the Twenty-sixth Division, took over. That was what my regiment was, a part of the Twenty-sixth "Yankee" Division. We had one sector in there. We were right in the Belleau Wood. I had the good fortune, or misfortune, of being in the first counter-attack of the day of July 18th, when we started to push the enemy back. In fact, I had thirty engineers and we preceeded the infantry; we cut the barbed wire and blew up the enemy dugouts. In this activity I was really lucky. Of these thirty men three were killed and twelve wounded within an hour, and I wasn't touched. That's the way it is.





Harris: Toward the end of that phase of the battle I was recommended for a commission in the field and was then sent to a school down near Chaumont. After a short course I came out as a second lieutenant, commissioned in the field. (You know how they used to do it; the ranking officer touched the top of your head with his sword. What nonsense.)

I was transferred to the Thirty-fifth Division, met them in the Argonne. Afterwards we moved and took over a sector in Verdun. I was the engineer officer with a batallion of infantry between the Fort Vaux and Fort Tavannes.

Teiser: Verdun, did you say?

Harris: Verdun, yes. These are two famous places. They were quiet sectors then. By quiet I mean nobody was trying to take part of their line away from each other, but they were shooting all the time, particularly artillery. Then, at the time of the armistice we were getting in position in front of Metz to make the attack on the 15th, and the Armistice was the 11th.

That was the end of my career as far as being in any dangerous activity. The end of the year I was sent to a school, God knows why, and spent two months in a school at Chatillon sur Seine. Our instructors taught us how to do all the things we'd been doing for months at the front, but that's the way of the Army. Except, I think, always when you go to school you learn something.

We were stationed in little towns in France waiting to come back to America. Our regiment, before leaving France, was stationed just outside of Brest. We sailed for home in May, 1919. Then I returned to civilian life.

#### Return to Monotype: California and the East

Harris: After a short vacation I resumed my connection with the Monotype Company as the assistant manager of the New York district. In September following that September 1919 I got a telephone call from Philadelphia from Mr. Dove, the president of the company.



Harris: He said, "I want you to go to California."

That was a Thursday morning. I said, "When, sir?"

He said, "Close up your affairs tomorrow, be over here Monday, and you'll leave for the Coast the end of next week." That's the way they did it in those days. I went to Washington and said goodbye to my family and left for San Francisco, arriving here about the 5th or 6th of September. My trip across the continent was on the Overland Limited, which used to get in about 5 o'clock in the evening. The moment I saw the skyline of San Francisco from the ferry, I fell in love with this city. At that time the Monotype Company had a separate corporation here on the Coast, and I was number two with the organization.

Teiser: What was it called?

Harris: Monotype Company of California. They had a big office here, in the Rialto Building. They had a branch office in Los Angeles, and one up in Seattle.

Teiser: Who was the manager at that time?

Harris: Frank Bowie. At the beginning of 1921, when I'd been here almost two years, I got a letter that there wasn't room enough in this district for two people such as Mr. Bowie and myself because we both had certain qualifications, I guess, and they had another thing they wanted me to do, and would I please be back in the office the last week in April.

In the meantime I had met a young lady, Mademoiselle Marie Alexandrine Lange. I didn't want to leave her out here. She was born in France. I met her here a year previously in San Francisco. So a week before my time of departure I convinced her that we should get married right away; and we went East on our honeymoon.

When I landed in Philadelphia I went in to see Mr. Dove. He said, "I had a position all worked out for you but you've spoiled it by getting married.

And I asked him, "Why?"

He said, "We were going to make a district running from Denver to St. Louis, carve out a new





Harris: district, and you were to be the manager of it. You'd be away from home about ninety percent of the time, and that's not fair to a young man who's just gotten married. So," he said, "we really haven't anything for you here now, but we'll give you a desk out in the typographic department, and you make a job for yourself."

Well, pretty soon things worked out. I don't know. Maybe he thought I should've consulted him about getting married. But I was the co-manager of the typographic department with Sol Hess, the type designer for the Monotype Company.

Teiser: What did the typographic department do?

Harris: They had charge of the design and making of all the matrices. And they operated an experimental printing plant.

In about six months I really had a job. I was in charge of the general sales office. I had this experimental printing plant. I divorced myself from the typographic department. I was really where the action was.

I first was assistant to the sales manager. Then a little while later I was assistant sales manager of the whole company. This was in the year 1922, after I'd been back there about a year. Then I was thirty-one years old. Always somebody was telling me that I was too young to have advanced so far, which disturbed me. This wouldn't come from the top side but would come from different people who were twenty-five or thirty years older than I was and had about the same rank that I had.

I was longing for California. And I wanted to be in a smaller organization where there'd be, perhaps, less of this feeling of "You're moving too fast," or "You're too big for your britches." So I wrote Mr. Mackenzie, who had a company in San Francisco, the Monotype Composition Company he called it. Mr. Mackenzie was from Washington, D.C. He learned the trade of a printer in Washington, then learned to be a Monotype operator, and he was a good one. He was a very fine keyboard operator.

Teiser: What was his first name?



Harris: George W. Mackenzie. He was formerly with Lanston Monotype Company, a man who took charge of new installations. I had met him in Boston previous to 1917.

In those days there was quite a rivalry between the people who were selling the slug machines and Monotype machines. In fact, if I may stop, I'll tell you what the attitude was when I was in Boston as I remember it. Your competitor was a dirty crook and he should be in jail for what he was doing. [Laughter] I mean that was the way you trained to be a salesman.

Teiser: Did you have any competitors other than Linotype salesmen? What other slug machines were there?

Harris: The other one was the Intertype, just coming in. But the real competition was the Linotype. I remember one afternoon in Boston I saw the district manager of the Linotype Company. I recognized him. He was a Mr. Archer. And I thought to myself, "I'll see what he's up to." So I followed him, I tailed him all afternoon. He didn't know me; I knew him. And I made notes of all the places he went and how long he stayed, just like a detective would. [Laughter] I came back and wrote this all on a piece of paper and gave it to the manager. He said, "You did a very fine day's work." [Laughter] You see competition was a little different.

I remember one quote--this is a little bit rough--but the Linotype people were trying to get the Lynn Telegram to throw out the Monotype, because it was a bad thing for the prestige of the Linotype to have Monotypes in a daily newspaper. Some kind of shenanigans went on and Mr. Dove came up to look into it. I met Mr. Dove, took him out to Lynn and brought him back to catch the train for Philadelphia. And as he left he said, "Carroll, I'm going to put that son-of-a-bitch in jail, that president of the Linotype Company, where he ought to've been years ago." [Laughter] Here's the head of two big companies; that was the feeling they had. Well, needless to say, they didn't either of them deserve to go. But it was a good spirit, to get enthused.

Well, to get back to Mr. Mackenzie. I had met him at the Lynn Telegram where he was in charge of the Monotype department. Then I got much better acquainted with him the two years I was here in San Francisco.



Harris: He had the first trade composition plant with Monotype in San Francisco. He was preceded by two or three other plants that had all Linotypes. He came out to the 1915 Fair.\* At the end of the Fair in December 1915, he started this company down at First and Mission, the northwest corner.

Teiser: Did you say that he had operated the Monotype at the Fair?

Harris: Yes. He was in charge of the Monotype exhibit at the 1915 Fair.

Teiser: What did they have there, do you know?

Harris: They had two keyboards and two casters, I think. They had a pretty good exhibit.

Teiser: How did they put on exhibits that would interest the general public?

Harris: Oh, this machine that you put cold metal in that heats up and pages of type come out, was a fantastic thing.

Teiser: Did they pull proofs?

Harris: Oh, yes. They had it set up like it was a little print shop, with a proof press.

Teiser: Are there any examples of that printing left, I wonder?

Harris: I don't think so. I think we've got some of the machines around here. They've been rebuilt many times.

Mackenzie started with very little capital, but his business had developed. He'd done very well.

Teiser: Did he use those two machines, then?

Harris: Yes. He bought those machines. You see, they were here; he got them at a special price and no freight to pay. He saw there was a need for a Monotype trade plant. But he always thought that the machine primarily was for tabular work. That was the kind of work he went after, rate books, railroad tariff, et cetera, which it does do better than any other machine.

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\* The Panama Pacific International Exposition.





Harris: During my two years at the sales department in Philadelphia, I talked with many people and I got more and more the feeling that somebody someplace ought to promote a trade plant--I wasn't alone in this--but that some place out here somebody ought to have a trade plant where you did fine work, advertising composition. And just plain, straight matter for books could be done better on a Monotype than on anything else.

Teiser: That was not the general feeling at that time?

Harris: No. A few people knew how to do it, but not many.

So, I, by correspondence, made an arrangement that I would like to go in with Mr. Mackenzie. And he needed a salesman more than anything. We made a deal where the company would be incorporated and I would put in what cash I had.

As a matter of fact we'd been married two and a half years, had a son born; hadn't any money left when we finished our honeymoon and didn't get much wages from the Monotype Company. My wife never worked. But you know, at the end of that two and a half years I had \$2,500 in cash to put in this business. So we really had borne down on saving. That's what I used to buy my first block of stock in Mackenzie & Harris and came out here and joined Mackenzie. In January, 1924, the company was incorporated.\*

Now I think we should go back. Should we go back and take the influences that affected me at the Monotype, recollections of that?

Teiser: Yes. I don't think that the history of the Monotype Company has been recorded very much, has it?

Harris: The only thing that has been recorded of any consequence is an article in the English Monotype Recorder which was written by Beatrice Warde.

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\*See also pp. 37-38.





Goudy, Kittredge, Rogers and Rudge

Harris: I think I'd better take two parts. Let's take the people and events that influenced me in the Monotype Company. And then at another time I'll go back and tell all I remember about the Monotype Company, its early parts.

When I got back to Philadelphia in 1921 I was making this job for myself; it gave me a terrific opportunity to meet people who were worthwhile in printing. Frederic Goudy was a legend to me before that. I knew the Monotype Company when I was up in Boston had the Goudy 38E, which is Goudy Light. That's one of Goudy's early faces available on the Monotype machine. In the meantime, and about the time I went back to Philadelphia, Goudy had been employed in an advisory capacity to come to the Monotype Company two or three days each week to advise about and superintend all their typographic work. They bought the rights to make Kennerley from him. Following that, Goudy Garamont No. 248E, Goudy Italian Old Style, Goudy Text, all the gamut of faces he did for them.

If there's anything that I can be thankful for in my life it's the people who I have associated with and who've been so helpful to me: it's just a richness of experiences and gifts of themselves to me that I have had that have influenced me greatly. One of the people was Mr. Goudy. I met him shortly after I went back to Philadelphia in 1921. We seemed to get along from the very beginning.

When he'd come over each week, he'd go in to see the president or general manager, and then he'd come over to my desk and we'd talk. With trepidation I invited him to come out to our house one evening for dinner. He stayed until very late. The next time his wife was with him, Bertha Goudy; both of them came. In the course of a few months, whenever either of them or both of them came to Philadelphia, they stayed at our little apartment. I used to sit up until three and four o'clock in the morning asking him questions, which he would answer, about the history of type and printing and the whys and wherefors of the history of printing.

Teiser: He was by then established?

Faint, illegible text, possibly bleed-through from the reverse side of the page. The text is arranged in several lines and appears to be a list or a set of instructions, but the characters are too light to transcribe accurately.

Harris: Oh, yes, he had a big reputation. Then when we came back to the Coast in 1924, he came here at least once a year, and he always stayed at our home, so that I was able to learn from him things that you'd have to go a long time in some educational institution to pick up.

Teiser: Let me interrupt you to ask what he looked like.

Harris: He was short, a little heavy set, rather--I must have some pictures of him.

Teiser: Was he dark?

Harris: No, he was more sandy-haired. Hair brushed back, sort of light. Light, not heavy, graying.

Teiser: What was his manner? Aggressive? Mild?

Harris: He was mild, but determined. Very determined, but very mild about it. He was gentle; he was quite gentle. He had a very keen sense of humor. The twist of a phrase or something; very keen sense of humor. He told, and liked to hear, stories that were a little off color. He had a great admiration for females. Up until he was way in his eighties he was a girl watcher--which is a good sign, I think, if people can keep that up. He naturally developed an egotism as he grew older because he got one reception and honor after another. Sometimes, even though we liked him, he amused us. He came back like Sarah Bernhardt; every year this was his last time. So we gave him a round of dinners and parties, and everything, and then he would be back the next year just the same.

I have an etching of him made by an artist here, Alexander Stern, in 1938. It's in our living room right above the easy chair where he used to sit. He liked the good things of life, too. He liked good food; he liked not much in the way of a drink, just an aperitif before a meal. He was quite different from Bruce Rogers. Bruce Rogers was more of an aesthetic person. Goudy could get down to the level of anyone--a mechanic, and take his tools and work with him. Goudy, you know, cut most of his own matrices. He loved to be among the people in the shop.

Another person that influenced me in Philadelphia was William A. Kittredge. When I went there he was the art director for the Franklin Printing Company.





Harris: They were doing better and better work all the time. He was in charge of creative design at that fine yet large printing plant. He was a very clever person, clever salesman. He knew all the artists. He knew artists all over the East and Middle West. If he had a book or a brochure or a series of advertisements (you know in some of these big companies in the East, they'd give a big concern the whole advertising program for a year, direct mail), he knew what artists to get, knew them well, and could get them to come and help him. Kittredge was an entrepreneur, but he couldn't do much himself. He couldn't make much of a layout, but he was an organizer. The Franklin Printing Company being a good customer of Monotype, I always was meeting people so I got well acquainted with Bill Kittredge.

Then he consulted and told me about his offer from the Lakeside Press, which was about--that was about 1925 that he got a letter from Mr. [R. R.] Donnelley to come to see him in Chicago. He went out there and Mr. Donnelley said, "We want you to come with us." Bill Kittredge was then making, I think, about \$5,000 a year at the Franklin Printing Company. That was a lot of money then. Donnelley offered him \$10,000 a year to start and Donnelley said, "You're to set up a separate kind of printing design and control in our big plant. We'll call work under your control 'Kittredge supervised printing.' As this increases you'll get sort of a bonus on the way this thing grows."

So he started very small. He had been recommended to Donnelley by the Rosa brothers. They were famous artists at that time. So he accepted it. He went out there and set up a department with a few people in it. Years later, in 1934, I paid a long visit there and went all through it. It was a department with perhaps twenty artists and all sorts of service people and layout people and everything you can imagine.

This was the clever way they did it. The general quality of the Donnelley commercial plant was good. But the salesmen would tell about this man Kittredge: "Now he sort of puts the icing on the cake. He will supervise everything of yours; he's a man of reputation." Kittredge was writing a great deal for trade papers and so forth, and he did have a big reputation. "Now this will cost you five percent more,



Harris: but it'll be worth it." The salesmen got an extra commission on that work.

It was strange that every year more and more work was pushed over to be Kittredge-supervised. And they certainly increased the quality of the work from the plant. Then Mr. Donnelley--I remember Kittredge telling me that Mr. Donnelley said, "Mr. Kittredge, we are well-known as a big plant, and do good commercial work. But if one of your books or big jobs makes people say, 'Donnelley is now doing fine printing,' you will have earned your whole year's pay." That was something to shoot at.

Kittredge visited us out here, and we got to know him and exchanged things. If I got anything from him it was, "If you do something better you can sell it." So many people in all lines of printing seem afraid to do something a little better and get a little bit more for it. They are afraid the customer won't stand for that. I think I learned the opposite from Kittredge.

Another person that I met, of course, was Bruce Rogers. At this time Rogers was with Rudge, William Edwin Rudge, Mount Vernon, New York. An assistant to Rogers was a young man by the name of Frederic Warde. He came down to go to the Monotype school, while I was there. I got acquainted with him. He used to come out frequently to have dinner with us in our home.

At that time the Monotype Company embarked on getting out a series of monographs. The title of this series was Monotype, A Journal of Composing Room Efficiency. In connection with my job as assistant sales manager I also bought all the printing and advertising for the Monotype Company, and ran their little private printing plant which had Miehle presses and Monotypes and job presses and everything. I had charge of the buying of all these monographs. And I still have a complete file of them. We would pick various fine printers and let each design and print the whole issue. Rogers and Rudge did quite a number of them. This afforded me a fine chance to get acquainted with Rogers. He would come down, and I was the go-between between the company and the Rudge company. Mr. Rudge would work with me.





Harris: I learned a great deal about the idea of design from Rogers. I remember once I asked him, "Mr. Rogers, what is the rule in mixing types?"

He said, "There is no rule. You can mix any types. If you have good taste the result will be successful. If you have bad taste it'll be unsuccessful. Just that simple." [Laughter]

As you know, later on he designed this beautiful Centaur broadside of ours, Mackenzie & Harris. I went to see him back in Connecticut. We discussed the whole thing. And I had a very dear friendship with him over a long period of years.

Teiser: Did he travel about very much?

Harris: Not too much. He was in Boston when I was there. And I used to call at the University Press. But I never met him then. I wasn't quite in the class of meeting people like him. I called on [D. B.] Updike once, and I think he wasn't interested. I'm not sure how I even got into his office.

Teiser: What was Rogers like physically?

Harris: He was a slightly-built person. Sandy hair. Very much like a professor, or maybe almost a poet. He did everything with a lighter touch than Goudy. Take Centaur: Goudy never designed a type quite as delicate and light as Rogers did. I would say Rogers had a finer sense of delicacy than Goudy. Goudy you could compare with William Morris more, and Rogers--I'm trying to think--you just compare Rogers with Rogers, I guess. He was, of course, an ingenious man. This is Bruce Rogers. [Pointing to framed picture.]

Teiser: What a delightful painting.

Harris: There's a funny story about that painting. When they had this Rogers exhibit at the Book Club,\* Al Sperisen got that. You know, Rogers was living up in Connecticut, at Danbury. Across the hill from him was an artist, a famous artist. The Upjohn Company engaged this artist to paint a typical doctor to promote their drugs, to put in windows and things all over the country. He came over to see Rogers. He said, "How'd you like to pose as a doctor?" Rogers had a good sense of humor and said, "Be delighted." [Laughter] They

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\* Book Club of California

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Harris: had two sizes of prints of the painting in color. When the Book Club show was over in San Francisco, I paid for the frame and got this. It was done in 1933. If you come over here, you can see "B.R." He's initialed this "B.R."

Teiser: Oh, Rogers is not writing a prescription; he's writing his initials!

Harris: Yes, he put "B.R." on it. [Laughter]

### Monotype and the Taylor Brothers

Harris: Now, may I tell you a little story? We talked about this Monotype, A Journal of Composing Room Efficiency. I was always getting crazy ideas, and one day I went into Mr. Harvey Best, who was executive vice-president of the Monotype Company during these last years I was with them. I said, "Wouldn't it be a fine thing to get Henry Taylor to write an article for the Monotype magazine and have Rogers design it and Rudge print it? Then we would tie up the East and the West and big names, so forth."

Teiser: Was Henry Taylor that well-known in the East then?

Harris: Oh, yes, yes. He was quite well-known. I met Henry Taylor in the fall of--well, I wouldn't say what year. Maybe it was the fall of 1913, because he was at the Harvard School of Business. I got a letter from Philadelphia, from Wilfred Bancroft, who was the sales manager, asking me to get in touch with this young man and give him all assistance possible in the information he was collecting for the writing of a thesis, which I did forthwith and got acquainted with Henry Taylor. His project was to write a thesis on the comparative cost of composition. He later graduated from the Harvard School of Business. He was coming back with his brother.\* His brother was already in business here. He took the slug machine, the Monotype, and hand composition, and he made a thorough analysis. And guess which he came up with as the cheapest for composition! Guess!

Teiser: Hand composition?

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\* Edward DeWitt Taylor.



Harris: Yes! [Laughter]

Teiser: I thought I was making a joke.

Harris: No! He came up with hand composition. And in later years I can think maybe he had something. Well, anyway, it all figured out that way.

Teiser: So the Monotype Company didn't reprint his thesis.

Harris: No. It made them very angry. And Wilfred Bancroft foolishly wrote a letter to Henry and told him he didn't know what he was talking about. So there was great bitterness between the Monotype Company and Taylor. I tell you this because you can see how I wanted to get them together. Great bitterness. When I came to the Coast for the Monotype Company, no Monotype salesman was allowed in Taylor and Taylor's plant. If he sent a card in, they said, "We don't want to talk to you." It was that bitter. The Taylors were very determined people, and sensitive.

Well, when I came west--as I told you, I came out with the Monotype Company--one of my assignments was to make friends with the Taylors. (And I can just about tell you that, and then we'll call it a day.)

I came with a letter of introduction to Francis Todhunter, the artist, from some friends of his who lived in Port Washington, Long Island, where I was living the summer after I got back from the war. This is again somebody helping me, you see. All my life this has gone on. The first weekend I was here, nothing to do, I called up the Todhunters. They were living on Culebra Terrace here in San Francisco. I went out to see them and presented the letter of introduction. They sort of took me in and told me any weekend or any evening I didn't know what to do, come out, have dinner and that was sort of like another home because this letter I had was from a very dear friend of theirs in New York.

One day Todhunter called me up and said, "Come on over for lunch." He had Ed Taylor there, the older brother for lunch, for no reason at all except they were good friends. This happened two or three times. At no time did Todhunter say, "This man Harris is from such-and-such a company." I was just a friend or something. So, after a while, when I knew Todhunter





Harris: better and had met Taylor two or three times, I then explained to Todhunter what my mission was: that I had to make friends between the Monotype Company and the Taylors. So I said, "I'll tell you what I'd like you to do. I'd like you to give a dinner party for twelve. You're the ostensible host, but I'll lift the tab afterwards. Let's have it at the Red Paint. That was the old Red Paint, not the later one, but the old one where they had sawdust on the floor and everything. And I said, "Among the twelve I want you to have Mr. and Mrs. Edward Taylor."

So we invited the Taylors, and I think Moore Achenbach was probably there; there was a whole bunch of people. Most of them are dead now. I was the young person. Mrs. Taylor took quite a shine to me and discovered that I was single and right away wanted to introduce me around to girls. And I didn't like to be introduced. I liked to pick my own. [Laughter] Anyhow, we had a big evening and we wound up two or three restaurants after that (it lasted until almost morning). And we got well-acquainted. That was the purpose of it.

Then in a matter of three or four weeks afterwards, not with any connection, one day I went over to Taylor and Taylor's and sent my card in to Mr. Ed Taylor: I wanted to call on him. He came out looking at this card and me. He said, "You work for that damn company?"

I said, "Yes."

He said, "Come on in here." So that broke the ice, and I accomplished my mission. [Laughter]

Now, I'll tell you the rest of the story about getting together the East and West on the Monotype magazine. Henry wrote an article but we didn't pick his subject. Rogers agreed to doing this project. And Rudge was to print it. And Taylor wrote an article entitled, "How to Improve the Design and Quality of Printing." I've got a copy of it here somewhere. He wrote this long article laying down innumerable rules and regulations of what to do and what not to do. He laid down all these very, very definite rules. You don't do this and you don't do that. You don't mix type, you don't do so-and-so. The manuscript came East. I sent it up to Rudge and





Harris: he came down on the next train. He said, "Rogers read it and he said the man's a damn fool. He won't touch it."

Then I was in the soup. And we got our forces together and worked on Rogers and said after all it would be embarrassing. He said, "Okay, I'll do it. But you can't put my imprint on it." In designing this pamphlet, every rule that Henry Taylor laid down was violated by Rogers. [Laughter] And it's one of the most interesting and famous things I think Rogers ever did. He didn't have to put his imprint on it. But toward the end we asked again. He said, "All right. If I'm going to prostitute myself, it's got to be for a price. If you want my name on it, it'll cost an extra \$1,000."

Mr. Best, my boss, wasn't throwing money away. He said, "Well, now talk yourself out of that one." So it went without his imprint. I'll show you this, next trip in here. I'm getting kind of hoarse.

Teiser: That's a wonderful story. It's a good place to stop. Is it a very big booklet?

Harris: Wait 'til you see it. Now everybody's dead, connected with it. I can talk about it. I had it here on my desk. I think I might have loaned it to someone.

Teiser: You know, if we can in these interviews we like to have illustrative material, and I wondered if it were too big a thing to include a copy of.

Harris: You can make a xerox of it. Because this story, if you read that and then see what he did--when I point it out to you it's just too funny for words. And Taylor played it straight and when he received his copies he never mentioned anything at all. But it was a little bit stiff, his letter. He saw it. He got the point. [Laughter]

Teiser: Would you discuss the pamphlet in some detail in the next interview session?

Harris: Yes.

Teiser: Good.



## II

(Interview 2--May 1, 1967)

Teiser: Can you account for San Francisco's becoming a center of fine printing?

Harris: The fine printers, the service people, (I mean people like ourselves and Art Fay, who printed Nash's books and so forth), and then the buyers. Now all this stuff is based on those three elements of people. And what came first, the chicken or the egg, I don't know.

Teiser: Some people have suggested that if it had not been for Nash \* creating an atmosphere and a market, potential buyers, that these other people would have had a very much harder time. Or maybe San Francisco would never have become a center. Do you subscribe to that at all?

Harris: Well, he had a lot to do with it. He was a great salesman. But this will all come out in the interview when we talk about these people who sell these things. I'll try to analyze the contribution that various ones made.

Teiser: Good.

Harris: Now you wanted me to--Is this thing on now? \*\*

Teiser: It's on.

Harris: We were talking about the period in Philadelphia, I think. That's where we were talking the other day, wasn't it? My period in Philadelphia?

Teiser: Yes.

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\*John Henry Nash.

\*\*The tape recorder.



Harris: And of course these are the things, in that period, that influenced me in my struggle to amount to something, more than anything else. I was more mature and I was studying things more actively, and I had gotten married and I naturally wanted to get ahead, and I was interested intensely in what I was doing.

Now we go back to this pamphlet.\* Remember, I said I happened to be the lucky person to represent the Monotype when we were buying these magnificent issues--sometimes monthly, sometimes two or three months between--of Monotype, A Journal of Composing Room Efficiency. And I was dealing with such people as Norman T. A. Munder. Munder was from Munder Thompson Company in Baltimore; he was a noted fine printer. The Eddy Press Company in Pittsburg. And William E. Rudge of Mount Vernon, New York. Franklin Printing Company in Philadelphia. There were others, but not near as important as they were. Which gave me a chance to meet the people that were designing fine printing in the East and the people that were executing it.

Now this story about Mr. Taylor writing something that Mr. Rogers did not exactly approve of--I think this one paragraph, which I shall read, will tell you what I'm referring to. He says:

"Good taste and fitness also prohibit all forms of stunt printing: overelaborated rule and border schemes, things in themselves instead of incidents in the composition, all blistering color combinations and all discordant decorations, which for want of a better term may be classed with the Cupids and Bunyans that one of our humorists discovered in the ornament of a certain New York house. For the printer, also, all such are as foreign to good taste and fitness as the cast iron age of decoration was to architecture."

I believe that was the paragraph that infuriated Rogers. So we have the title where the word "Monotype" is in Cloister Text, and the subhead, "A Journal of Composing Room Efficiency," is in Cochin Light Italic.

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\* Containing the article by Henry Taylor referred to on p. 25. The correct title is "The Problem of Bettering the Quality of Printing." It appeared in the March-April 1922 issue of the publication; the copy to which Colonel Harris referred is now in The Kemble Collections, California Historical Society. Copy also available in The Bancroft Library.





Harris: The volume number is in a cartouche of very decorative arranged ornaments from which was suspended an oval made with rule which Rogers bent with his own hands enclosing a picture of a Monotype machine. Then the type there is Scotch Roman. Then the three lines at the bottom: two in Cochin Italic and one in Cloister Text. Then that's surrounded by a plain rule plus a border. But in the main decorative thing in the middle, the two things that hold a draped sort of inverted fleur-de-lis--not quite a fleur-de-lis--are the masks such as you usually see at the side of a stage. "All the world is a stage," seems to be implied. It puts a humorous touch to the whole thing.

Then you get inside. The title page is really elaborate. It has the main line in a shaded type similar to Card Mercantile or one of the old faces that look like engraving. This is a type that really looks like it was engraved, and shaded within the heavy strokes of the letter. The subheads, the name of the Monotype Company, the volume number, and the date of publication are in Law Italic, very ornamental capitals, all capitals, with curlicues on the ends. Then an elaborate scheme of arrows within the main border, and little things at the corner on the outside, kind of a rosette, such as you see on a bronze plaque when it's fastened to a building to cover up the screw underneath. [Laughter]

The facing page is smaller but it's just as elaborately decorated, the type being one line of Cloister Text and the balance in Cochin Italic. Imagine putting together Cochin, which is an old-style face, with Law Italic and Scotch, which are modern faces! Mr. Taylor, I am sure, would never have done that. This goes on and on with the same freedom of use of whatever type Mr. Rogers thought looked well. Facing the first page of the text is a box surrounded by arrows formed with a circle at the top, something like a niche in the wall. Hanging is the word, "Note," surrounded by an ornament. It looks like a fancy sign. All through the book, you see. Of course in the main text pages there's not much room for decoration.

Then, when Taylor's article was completed and another was in there following it, "Technical Training and Printing Management"--the top of that looks like a fancy valence over a beautiful draped window.



Harris: [Laughter] And the same thing over the article "Ethics and Esthetics" by Frederic W. Goudy. (You see, we really had big people in this. Mr. Goudy wrote an article for it.) Well, I don't know how to describe this. It's a series of chains in a twisted border that looks like a rope hanging from an oval. And all of these ovals, of rule, were made personally by Mr. Rogers. He would have an iron pipe held in a vise, and he would put at one end a Bunsen burner, which would heat it up almost to a red heat. He would first cut a template, something that he would mold it against. I think he made those out of wood. And he'd start to bend this rule, and he would hold the rule on the pipe close enough to raise the temperature of the metal in the rule so he could bend it without breaking it. It was very ingenious the way he did it.

And the back cover. It says, "Monotype printed by W. E. Rudge." Everybody in the printing world knew that Rogers did everything like this. And of course his hand prints are all over it, every page. That was probably the most courteous and most effective answer he could give to Henry Taylor's positive statement of how to do such a thing. But then we mustn't be too critical of Henry Taylor, because his ideal was Daniel Berkeley Updike. Everything he did he made look as though Mr. Updike would have approved of it. He was far afield from the things that Rogers did and the things that Nash did.\*

### Learning About Printing and Type

Harris: Now we go on to the period in Philadelphia. This was a time when the printing trade magazines were entirely different from what they are today. Let's take The Printing Art. You've probably never heard of The Printing Art.

It was printed at the University Press in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The editor for many years was a man by the name of Lewis W. Gandy. The burden of the

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\*See also Edward DeWitt Taylor's untitled interview in this series completed in 1958.



Harris: articles in Printing Art was not on how to do printing more cheaply or more quickly, but how to do it more beautifully. People from all over the country sent examples of their work, and he would analyse them and show them in color or black and white, whichever they had been originally.

That was the same case with The Inland Printer. Although The Inland Printer carried a lot of advertising, the frontispiece was usually designed by some typographer who donated it so that someone could see what he did. Then there would be articles about different printers and plants all over the country and how they did these things, what type faces they used, et cetera, et cetera.

I was under the influence, or was acquainted with, these people that were getting out these trade papers, and also read them avidly. It had a great influence on me, always searching to do something better. There were some other papers, like Printing and the Typothetae Bulletin. The United Typothetae of America was the national organization of employing printers, and they got out a bulletin. They were more for the efficiency of things than the beauty because the members were, of course, big plants.

I'd like to go back to the nearly four years I spent in Boston, from May 1913 until I went to France in the early fall of 1917. At that time at Norwood, Massachusetts, there was the Plimpton Press and the Norwood Press, two large concerns doing book work. Their main effort in composition was Monotype machines; they both had very large batteries of Monotype machines.

Teiser: What was a large battery? How many?

Harris: They would have about twelve or fifteen casters and an equal number of keyboards. That was a lot. Originally they had gone from hand composition, and these big plants, many of them, chose the Monotype rather than the Linotype, because they wanted to duplicate, as far as possible, the kind of book they'd done by hand setting, and the Monotype naturally was a big economy.

Then in Cambridge there was the University Press and the Riverside Press, and lots of concerns much





Harris: smaller, but all in a realm of transformation from hand composition to the Monotype. And here I was, a young man calling on these people, became acquainted with them in their plants, discussed with them new equipment, new type faces, et cetera. And I can't imagine a better education for me for the years to follow than these several years I had in Boston and under the influence of--as I told you before, where I first got the idea of studying type faces, which I continued right along. I didn't have any money to buy books on type faces, but I would get gifts and samples of specimen books, et cetera. And I still have all the first things I ever started to collect. I have never sold any.

Teiser: Do you have a large collection?

Harris: [Opens book cases.] This is all about type. The real rare ones I have at home. These are all foreign types, foreign foundries.

Teiser: Oh, my word!

Harris: Some here are books we've done. But these are all about type down here. I find it very difficult to catalogue and file type specimens. Books, bibliographies are easy. I should've collected those along with my collection of fine printing. But you can't catalogue and be able to put your finger on books where you'll see the origin of the first showing of the type by such-and-such a foundry. There's no substitute for the human memory, and I was blessed (I think I inherited this from my mother) with a photographic memory so that I can remember thousands of type faces and study it and it'll start a train of thought. And then I know where it originally was done, who designed it, et cetera, which has been very helpful to me.

Teiser: You were speaking of Boston.

Harris: I just wanted to get into the story the fact that this had a great influence. It was a great place to be educated. And, this is apart from the main subject of our interview, but I got some very good lessons in business procedures and in what to do and not to do--because the Monotype Company was one of the most beautifully run large organizations I have ever seen, in those days. The top man was the real leader, J. Maury Dove. Next to him was J. Sellers Bancroft, a



- Harris: very eminent engineer. He is the man that made the Monotype feasible.
- Teiser: Mechanically?
- Harris: Mechanically. This is a good place to get into that.

### History of the Monotype Company

- Harris: Tolbert Lanston, the inventor of the Monotype, I never met. He was almost ready to die at the time I went with the Monotype Company, very bad health. But he was an inventor. He was the chief clerk of the pension office in Washington, a high-ranking government employee. He lived across the street from J. Maury Dove, who was a young man coming up. J. Maury Dove's first business was a coal business, the largest in that part of the country, retailer. And later hotels; he owned three or four large hotels. One of the early inventions of Lanston was the door that you sometimes see made out of a sheet of air that blows from the top and keeps the flies out.
- Teiser: Do they call it an "air curtain?"
- Harris: Something like that. He was the inventor of that. I mean he had all sorts of inventions; he was a queer duck, I guess. He was just inventing. At the time he was dickering around with that typesetting machine practically everybody was doing it--Mergenthaler, and then there was another machine that Mark Twain lost all his fortune on, up in northern New York state.

Tolbert Lanston devised a machine which was, first, a cold metal type-making machine. A strip of metal would go into the machine and a piece would be clipped off the right size, say for a capital A, and then a die would come down and that cold metal would be forced into the die to form the letter. Well obviously you'd have to use very soft metal, maybe pure lead, for that, and it wasn't practical. So the next point of progress was to make a hot metal machine which would cast letters according to certain sizes which were proper for the letter. For instance a lower case i would be on a narrower body than a cap M.



Harris:

But there was no provision for justification. So they came out onto a strip, and later on the compositor would pick up the words that had been cast and assembled and put them in a stick and justify them by hand. This is pretty close to the Simplex machine which I mentioned, where I sold my first Monotype, except that for the Simplex they bought the type already made. But all the Simplex did was to assemble the words, and then they'd be justified by hand.

The first hot metal Monotype had this problem of automatic justification. So Mr. Dove searched for somebody to make the solution. He travelled all over. I understand he made a trip to Europe. He saw people in various parts of the eastern United States, where manufacturing was done. And he found the man right in Philadelphia. Mr. Bancroft, J. Sellers Bancroft, had been general manager of the W. A. Sellers Company, manufacturers of lathes and all sorts of precision machines used in machine shops. He was ready for retirement. This Monotype thing intrigued him; and he solved justification by the use of wedges, two wedges that move over and the mold blade comes back against the wedges and they automatically made the letter the proper size. Or at least they put the blade of the mold in a position that would cast a narrow letter for a lower case i and a wide one for a cap M. So he temporarily came with the Monotype Company.

Mr. Dove had not intended to be a Monotype man. But he got interested in this thing, got a lot of his friends to put money in it, and about 1895 it was in such bad financial condition that he was asked by his friends if he would take over the business management of the company and put it on its feet, which he did. He stayed with the Monotype Company until he died in 1924. Mr. Bancroft, who was formerly retired, stayed with the Monotype Company until he died, about 1920 or 1921.

Another man that had a great deal to do with the early days of the Monotype Company was Wilfred Bancroft. He was a graduate of Massachusetts Institute of Technology and was the sales manager of Lanston Monotype, a man of tremendous ability and enthusiasm. The other man was Mr. Joel Clemmer, who was the treasurer.

I like to talk about these men because I knew them all, almost like a son. I knew them so well that







Harris: sometimes other employees thought I was related to one or two of them, and that didn't help me a bit.

I like to think of one incident when I say the discipline that you got helped a young man to get a good training. At the time I was in Boston the Monotype Company was suing the Ludlow Company for infringement of patent rights on the making of the Elrod machine. (Incidentally, they won the suit because the Monotype Company had a basic patent on the making of strip material where you cast a segment, push it out of the mold, and then cast another one which welds to it. That's the way we make rule and leads and slugs on the Monotype stripcaster.)

In the middle of this suit three very important men--I suppose they carried canes and had mustaches and wore a square-topped hat--came into the Boston office. I was the only one there at the time, and I was really very impressed by them. They asked me questions: the names of the directors of the Monotype Company, the officers, and all sorts of things like that. I thought they must be all right because they looked so all right that I answered their questions. They thanked me and left. I had sense enough to write a full report of these people and their names to the president, Mr. Dove, and tell him they'd been in there and what they'd asked me and what I replied. Well, it appears they were the lawyers for the officers of the company that the Monotype Company was suing. And whenever I think of this I can see the letter, just like I read it yesterday, which I got from Mr. Dove: "Dear Carroll, I've read your report with great interest. The information you gave is distributed only by officers of this corporation, a status you have not yet reached, and I am sure you will be so guided in the future." [Laughter]

These things that you think about-- All my life since then when anybody's that's strange comes in looking for information about myself, or anyone else, I clam up.

Now, to get back to the period in Philadelphia.

Teiser: Do you mind if I shoot a few pictures while you're talking?

Harris: No, that's all right.

Faint, illegible text at the top of the page, possibly a header or title.

Third block of faint, illegible text in the lower middle section.

Final block of faint, illegible text at the bottom of the page.

Harris: The people at the Monotype Company in the last two and a half years that I was there were some of the most skillful mechanics and skillful service people that I have ever seen in any company, and certainly not in more recent years. They had mold makers that were some of the finest mechanics. They could make these molds by hand (a good deal of the work was done by hand) which would cast type to a limit of accuracy of two ten-thousandths of an inch. I was constantly in touch with these people because one of my jobs was to take visiting firemen, VIP's, through the plant to the big factory and explain to them the things we were doing. We had a man that could cut punches for making matrices by hand--Mr. Biehler--almost a lost art. These were for special characters. If somebody wanted a special character, a trademark or a thing like that, he could cut it by hand onto a piece of metal, of course using a regular rotary cutter like you use in engraving. But a great deal of this work was done by hand.

So I had two influences. I got a deeper understanding of the ability of the Monotype to cast and set type, which to me, then and now, is the finest way to compose type. I knew all the possibilities of the machine, the little things that you can do that you can't write in a book. And also I was influenced by these great people such as Mr. Rogers, Mr. Goudy, and we mustn't forget Bertha Goudy. (I got to know her very well. She spent many, many days in my home.) And it seemed to me there was a great deal of enthusiasm and zeal to transform to the Monotype machine the same skill and artistry that heretofore could only be done by hand composition. This has had a most lasting effect upon me.

#### Return to San Francisco

Harris: Now I think we might talk about what I had in mind to come to San Francisco.

Teiser: Yes!

Harris: In the first place, I became somewhat discouraged with the little, petty things that happen in a big organization. Maybe I was a little too much of an



Harris: idealist on that score; but I had, by some stroke of good fortune, achieved a position in the company that normally a man twenty years older than me would have and I was frequently reminded of it, by one means or another--not by the people who put me in that position, but people who were on a level with me. Then there was, at that time, a great deal of talk about the expansion of the trade composition plant business. This was just beginning to be understood. Up to that time--and unfortunately still, with some places and some concerns--the trade plant was just a cheap way to get out composition as fast as you can. In those days hardly any trade plants did any more than the machine composition, just the drudgery. It was so plain to me that if people with the proper training and the proper imagination would get into the proper area that they could develop the trade plant further than had ever been done before. And I was fortunate in knowing Mr. Mackenzie, who was certainly an expert keyboard operator and in 1915 had the courage to start a Monotype composition plant here in San Francisco. So, by correspondence, over a period of a year or so, we arranged a deal whereby I was to leave the Monotype Company and would come out and join him as a junior partner in the business. This took place on the first of January in 1924.

I left the Monotype Company. My immediate boss, the sales manager, was quite upset. But not Mr. Best, Harvey Best, then the executive vice-president. (He later became president, after the death of Mr. Dove.) I think he understood what I was doing better than Mr. Morgan, sales manager of the Lanston Company. After all, I was his number one assistant, with the title of assistant sales manager, running the sales department and lots of other things involving many details. He didn't know what I was going to do. I just dropped my resignation on his desk one evening.

He came out the next morning. He said, "You can't do this to me because I got you a promotion, yesterday. It just went through."

I said, "I knew that you were working on it, and I knew it would be coming this time; but my decision was made a long time ago."

Then Mr. Best sent for me. He said, "What are you going to do?"





Harris: I couldn't tell him anything but the truth. And I told him I was coming to San Francisco and going into business with George Mackenzie.

Well, he says, "You know, I have a son, and I hope when he's your age he has courage to do the same thing you're doing. Because you're only thirty-two years old. If it works out you'll be happier than in anything else you could do, to be one of the main persons in a small business. If it doesn't work out, you're young enough to get back in step. And there'll always be a position equal to the one you have here waiting for you if you ever decide to come back."

So that was the way I left the Monotype Company, and came out here. We were over at 560 Mission Street.

Now I think I should put a little note here about who I had known in San Francisco, which in a way affected my decision to come to this area.

Teiser: I wanted to ask you, and I think this fits in with that, something about the whole state of the printing industry in San Francisco when you first knew it.

Harris: It was wide open. There was one Monotype trade plant; there were several Linotype plants.

Teiser: The one Monotype plant belonged to Mackenzie?

Harris: Mackenzie. Which he called The Monotype Composition Company, which had been in business since 1915--the end of the Fair. And I was quite familiar with this plant because in the two years or so that I was here on the Coast, 1919 to 1921, I had sold a great deal of equipment to Mr. Mackenzie and I knew intimately about his plant, and I thought I knew his problem. We complemented each other. I ran the business end, he ran the manufacturing end. Sales and so forth was my part of the business.

Now I'll go back and show you that I really was acquainted with the field here. Starting back in 1919, September, when I came to California with the Monotype Company--late that fall I needed some letterheads for myself. I always liked to have nice personal letterheads printed, with my address on them. I used to be quite a letter writer in those days. Someone suggested that if I wanted a letterhead that was really good I



Harris: should go to Haywood Hunt. He was then with the Kennedyten Bosch Company. They were located at the Carmen Johnson Building on Sansome Street, where the Federal Reserve Bank is at present. I went up and saw Mr. Hunt. That was the first time I met him. I gave him my order. He seemed quite pleased, and we chatted for a while. I told him what I was doing here. And he did print some very beautiful letterheads set in Caslon. Just my name and address.

So I used to drop in and see him from time to time. One day, which was either December of 1919 or January of 1920, he said, "There're some people, a couple of fellows, just came to town that you ought to meet because you're interested in the things that they do." He said, "Their name is Grabhorn, and they've got a place on Kearny Street." I think it was 39 or 49; it was in that block. So I went down and got acquainted with the Grabhorns. And I used to drop in there from time to time. I believe that the Grabhorns came to San Francisco in December of 1919.\* So they hadn't been in business many weeks. The following year they printed a Christmas card for me, and I wish I had a copy of it.

Teiser: Do they have it?

Harris: No, they don't have it.

They were getting out a little publication called The Printing Press. Occasionally they would get it out, and they always gave me a copy.

Teiser: What was your first impression of them?

Harris: Well, just nice friendly fellows that were doing things very interestingly, and to me they seemed different from anyone I had ever known before. Two or three items that are very, very rare Grabhorns they gave me. They were a little more like pamphlets than books.

\*See also: Robert Grabhorn, Fine Printing and the Grabhorn Press, and Edwin Grabhorn, Recollections of the Grabhorn Press, interviews in this series completed in 1968.



Teiser: You speak of "they." Did you talk to both of them?

Harris: Both of them. I got acquainted with both of them, very well.

Teiser: Did they seem to work together closely, or were they quite individual?

Harris: At that period I would say it was an older and a younger brother where they fit in just as closely as two people could, very, very closely to each other. I think you'll find out, in a book written about the Grabhorns by Gregg Anderson\* where he spoke of his years at the Grabhorn Press, where he said, "If Bob is away, Ed goes to pieces; if Ed's away, the plant goes to pieces," or some sort of play on words like that. That really did fit. They consulted with each other: "What do you think of this?" and "What do you think of that?" They worked together.

Teiser: I was interested in this just now because I've been interviewing Bob and Jane also. Jane was interesting about analyzing this relationship.\*\*

Harris: I think if it would be proper in this interview I could analyze why the thing finally broke up.

Teiser: Why do you think it did?

Harris: Well, you have three talented people together, three prima donnas. Then there was a period, recently, with another one. So you've got four.

Teiser: Who was the fourth?

Harris: Irma.\*\*\* You see, you have too many people of talent together. And it happens whether they're musicians,

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\*Recollections of the Grabhorn Press, privately printed, 1935.

\*\*See "Comment by Jane Grabhorn on the Grabhorn Brothers" in Robert Grabhorn, Fine Printing and the Grabhorn Press, ibid.

\*\*\*  
The third Mrs. Edwin Grabhorn.





Harris: they are painters, or anything. In my years of hearing the great printers I knew, the only two that I knew that didn't villify each other were Rogers and Goudy. But the rest of them were always talking about the other doesn't know anything, and what is he doing, and this and that, and so forth.

I'm trying to build up the fact that even before I came out here in business I was starting to get acquainted and that I was acquainted with the Taylors.

Teiser: You said you knew Haywood Hunt at that time. What was his position in the city?

Harris: The Kennedy-ten Bosch Company was one of the medium-size, very good printers, of which there were a number in San Francisco. He was the foreman, I guess, of the composing room. Maybe he might have been superintendent of the plant.

Teiser: Both, I think.\*

Harris: Yes, probably both. It wasn't too large, it was a medium-size plant.

Teiser: He was an outstanding man in the printing industry here, though, wasn't he?

Harris: That's right. He was. But I doubt if he would have ever made a good executive in a large plant. He had to do most of the things himself. That's so often true of fine printing, that the man who can do these things himself frequently can't impart it to other people or supervise other people to do it. That's something that's come into our business and I think we've got the answer to it.

Teiser: Oh?

Harris: Which is maybe one part of our success.

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\* See also: Haywood Hunt, Recollections of San Francisco Printers, an interview in this series completed in 1967.



Monotype Trade Composition in San Francisco

- Harris: So, I came back to California and put every nickel I had into this little business. We started to get ourselves out of doing railroad tariffs or catalogues for hardware companies, all that stuff--which was about all that the Monotype was used for out here, except these fine printers. It used to disturb me frequently: we would have a tariff rush where we would put on twenty-five or thirty extra men, maybe for a month; then when the tariff was over we'd lay them off and go out and get new customers. Because while the tariff was in we couldn't service any of our regular customers.
- Teiser: Was this Southern Pacific?
- Harris: Yes. S. P. freight tariffs. We kept about 5,000 pages of these tariffs standing in type!
- Teiser: When you first came into it, how big a business was this firm?
- Harris: The business, in dollar volume, was about one eighth what it is now.
- Teiser: How many machines?
- Harris: Oh, about a fifth what we have now. We had about four casters and three keyboards, and no foundry equipment at all--just a trade plant house to do composition on the galley, not made up into pages, with the exception of tariffs, which, of course, we made up into pages.

In order to build up our volume we went out after advertising typography. And we really broke into something on that. In order to launch the fact that we were going to do advertising we bought the Goudy Garamond type face from 6 to 36 point. We had no type in the shop bigger than 36 point, of any kind. We had Kennerley already, and 337 Caslon--that's a copy of the original Caslon--and type suitable for just commercial stuff, tariffs, and general commercial work.

In those days I used to do a great deal of lay-out work myself. I laid out a broadside showing the new Garamond which we had bought, and I had it printed by Arthur Fay at the Trade Pressroom. Arthur Fay was



Harris: doing the presswork at that time for John Henry Nash. This broadside was a very creditable job. And on the back in small type it said "Monotype Composition Company," (we didn't change the name to Mackenzie & Harris until about two years later). "Typesetters for printers, publishers, and advertising agencies." We didn't have any advertising then, but that was what we were shooting at. The next day I went into Taylor's and Ed Taylor-- "Come over here," he said. He had this broadside crumpled in his hand and folded so the only part that showed was that little box. He said, "What do you mean by this? Advertising business does not belong to you. That belongs to us printers." In those days Kennedy-ten Bosch, Taylor and Taylor, and the Metropolitan Press (which was Hartley Everett Jackson) were the people that did the printing for and the typesetting for practically all the agencies in town. The biggest one then was McCann-Erickson.

I spent about an hour with Mr. Taylor explaining to him that advertising agencies and advertising companies--or companies that did a lot of advertising--could go to the paper houses and buy their paper, based on quantity, just as cheap as the printer could; they could buy their photoengravings perhaps at a better rate than the printer because they bought more of them. And the same way with electrotypes. Why wasn't it logical for us, who were going to build up a typesetting business, to sell our product to them just the same way?

He said, "No. Only through us."

And I said, "Well, Mr. Taylor, will you guarantee to keep our plant busy?"

"Why, of course not!"

And I said, "Well, I'm afraid that's what we're going to do." It was a period of a year or two that the Taylors were very cold to us because of that. But they finally got used to it. So then, after a year or so of my being here, we had work from the Grabhorn Press, who never made any kicks about anything. As for Taylor and Taylor, and John Henry Nash, we began to get all of the type composition that they bought, other than what they hand set in their own plant. It was really a privilege and a great influence on us, because we were constantly adding type faces and before we put in the matrices for a new type face I





Harris: always consulted these three to see how well they liked it. Then I would go to some other people, maybe some advertising agencies, art directors, and people. But mostly those three printers; "Can you use this type?" and "What would you use it for?" So all through the years we were influenced about it.

I'll give you an example of that. Cowan's bibliography of the history of California was first done by Nash about the time the Book Club of California was organized.\* And I believe that was the first book they got out. It's now a very rare and expensive book. In 1933 the three-volume edition (you've seen that, haven't you?) of Cowan's bibliography was re-issued--much enlarged over the first edition. Nash again was the printer. He had the manuscript, and we discussed it. And he decided he'd like to put it in Centaur. So we bought three composition sizes of Centaur to do that book for Nash. Most people thought it was hand set. And I'm sure Mr. Nash didn't tell them differently. If they said it was hand set he'd let them keep on thinking it. But that was quite a large job for us, and we plunged into that. We didn't complete the Centaur up to all sizes until about 1946, just before we got out this Centaur broadside\*\*; that's when we put all sizes of it in our shop.

#### Nash, the Taylors and the Grabhorns

Teiser: Can you describe Nash personally?

Harris: Oh, easily, easily. He was such a positive man that things stuck out, and the description sounds like a caricature in a way. So, if you don't mind, I'll discuss Mr. Nash.

Teiser: Please do.

Harris: He couldn't stand Mackenzie. He liked me. We, both of us, I think were pleasant as could be. It may be that

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\*Robert E. Cowan, A Bibliography of the History of California and the Pacific West, 1510-1906, published by The Book Club of California in 1914. The second, enlarged edition was published in 1933 by Nash himself.

\*\* See pp. 92-95.



Harris: he knew that I, back East, had known a lot of people that he had rather a high regard for. So I was considered fine with him. He always would tell me, "Now I just want to help you along." Called me by my first name. And the routine was something like this. He would have a manuscript. He did a lot of work for schools, such as Miss Branson's school and Anna Head's school and places like that, the catalogues. They were beautifully printed jobs. Or there might be a book for someone. He would call up, "See me right away." I would go over and, of course, first meet Miss [Nell] O'Day. She was his secretary and she'd go in and would call him out of the shop. He'd come out and say, "I've got this manuscript. They want me to do it and I don't want to do it 'cause I haven't got the time, and they probably want it cheap. Now, you could probably use the composition, couldn't you?"

I said, "We always can."

Mind you, this happened time after time. He'd say, "Well, see what you can do, because you might want to use it for a filler or something, and I want to help you out."

So we'd come back and we'd figure it very carefully. And we would figure it to do it the way he would want it done, which was not cheap. It was a little more than the ordinary because we tell our operators in the shop, even to this day, "This must be a Grabhorn, or a Nash, or a Taylor, type of composition." They all know what that means. That means close to hand composition, or better than hand composition; that's the way it has to be set.

So I would prepare the estimate and deliver it to Mr. Nash. He would make me think that he had to consult with his customer. Then he'd say, "That's fine, that's fine. You just take the manuscript back and get going." Now that gives you one phase of him.

Teiser: Did you ever deal with Mr. Joseph FauntLeRoy?

Harris: Oh, yes, always. I knew him very well indeed. He reminds me of another story. We'll just pick that up when I've finished describing Mr. Nash.

Here's another anecdote about Mr. Nash. At the time that he decided to close up his business here



Harris: (I think he had had a slight stroke or something--which was a warning to him--and he was going up to Oregon to take it easy) he owned us maybe \$800 or \$900. It wasn't past due more than a month or so. And he wrote a letter and said that he had decided to close up his business and he owed a few bills. He stated that in order to pay them right away he'd have to borrow the money; and if we wanted to take twenty-five percent off the bill he could borrow the money and pay it right away.

I wrote Mr. Nash a letter about as follows:  
"Dear Mr. Nash, after all these years I would never press you for payment of any kind, now or next year or the year after. If it's ever convenient to pay this bill, pay it; if not, we'll forget about it." You know, he paid up in full within a year.

Now Mr. Fay, whom he owed maybe four or five thousand dollars and was a sort of a nervous fellow when it came to money, accepted his offer and took a cut, and got a check for it right away. They were in the Zellerbach building; they called it the John Henry Nash Building, over at the corner of Sansome and Clay.

Teiser: That was built by Zellerbach, wasn't it?

Harris: It was built by Zellerbach, but they called it the John Henry Nash Building. Fay and Nash were coming down on the elevator. Fay, who was on the floor below Nash (Nash had the top floor and Fay had the floor below that) they both got on the elevator just before lunch and Nash spoke to Fay. They knew each other very well because Fay had been doing Nash's work for years. And he said, "I want to show you something, Art." So when they got out of the elevator they walked up the street about a half block. "I want you to see my new car." Nash had just bought a new Cadillac. 'Til the day of his death Fay said that he helped to pay for that Cadillac. [Laughter]

In order to serve the Grabhorns, the Taylors, and Nash, I had to go back to that lesson I learned when I talked too much in that office in Boston. Because in terms of knowing what the others were doing, the fellow with the most questions was Nash. Second was the Taylors; and the third were Grabhorns, they didn't care much. But I made it a rule never to





Harris: carry any tales from one shop to the other. In fact, I've never done it in my business life--of what this fellow's doing, how well he's doing, or anything. But you know that Nash, for a time, was with the Taylors. You knew that, didn't you? The initials of that, Taylor, Nash and Taylor, is TNT. And it was full of TNT the whole time he was there. [Laughter] And it blew up and he got out. He would ask me later about this-and-that-and-so-forth, and I would never know. "I haven't seen him lately." I'd just evade it that way. And if the Taylors said, "You ever see Nash?" I'd say, "Oh, hardly ever," and pass it off.

For all the years, as long as they were in business our company maintained friendly relations with them. Of course we've done many, many, many books for all three of these fine printers. That was the main influence on the selection of type and the kind of equipment we had because we were able to satisfy them. It made us take a broader view of our business, because we found out if we had a face that was unusual, such as the Centaur or the Van Dijck, it attracted business from a long way off. We built this business up around, I think, two things: the way our people do work and the variety of type faces we have. This sounds strange, and it almost sounds like we're from Los Angeles and bragging, but we have the largest selection of Monotype matrices that any plant in the world has ever had. We're not the largest plant, but we have the largest selection of matrices. That way we've drawn work from far-off places. Take the Centaur, for instance. If you have nerve enough to do this it almost makes them exclusive. It cost us perhaps, oh, \$15,000 to put in the Centaur matrices, because you have to have special equipment; they were all made in England. Then we spent around \$4,000 to have that broadside printed, plus the \$750 I gave to Rogers to design it.

Teiser: Who printed it?

Harris: Taylor and Taylor. And Bob Grabhorn wrote the text.

Teiser: I didn't know that. He's a very modest man.

Harris: Yes, extremely so. Today it would cost more than double to buy the matrices; I mean the price on them. So if anyone wanted to equip himself with all those sizes of Centaur that we have on that broadside he would be in the realm of \$25,000, perhaps, plus the



Harris: expense of stocking it and telling people about it. We just advertised it for years and used it for years, so many people think we have an exclusive on it. We don't have an exclusive on it except that we got there first and got the worm. And so that's the way it's gone.

May I say that because we did work for Grabhorn and because we did work for Taylor and because we did work for Nash, we gradually did work for practically all of the fine printers, smaller ones, that were offshoots of the "big three" or came here from other places. The Kennedys over in Oakland, Alfred Kennedy and Lawton Kennedy we've done work for; we haven't done all the work for them, but we have served them with ~~the~~ things they wanted which they could find here. With Grabhorns, with Jane Grabhorn and the Colt Press\* and the Jumbo Press when the books that she did were not hand set, we set all of them. We did the work for the Windsor Press; not too much, their life was not too long here. For Johnck and Seeger when it was Johnck, Beran, and Kibbee, when we first came here--John Johnck, Chris Beran, and Wallace Kibbee--and his brother who became an actor\*\* was the salesman.

Teiser: What was John Henry Nash like personally?

Harris: John Henry Nash was a two-fisted man in his talk. He talked fast and vigorously. He was a two-fisted drinker, and a large eater of fine food. He was a very expensive man. He wasn't particularly modest. He would recount to me (you see, I was on the inner circle with him; he'd tell me things) what Mr. Hearst said when he took the book, like when he did the Phoebe Hearst book; that was hand set. He told Mr. Hearst\*\*\* the book would be \$45,000. Mr. Hearst said, "How on earth can you stay in business and sell things so cheaply?" [Laughter] He loved to tell stories. He'd tell me about Clark\*\*\*\* the same way.

Teiser: Do you think that was true?

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\* See Jane Grabhorn, The Colt Press, an interview in this series completed in 1966.

\*\*Guy Kibbee.

\*\*\*William Randolph Hearst.

\*\*\*\*Nash printed for the Clark brothers, Charles and William Andrews, Jr.



Harris: I don't know whether it was or not, but it sounded fine.

Teiser: Did you have anything to do with the Clark catalogues?

Harris: No, they were all hand set.\*

But we can dwell for a minute on Nash's setup. He had an ability himself to set type and make rule schemes. He was a superb mechanic. I think most of his stuff was maybe not copied, but pretty close to being copied. Of course his great ideal was William Morris. Many of his things looked like William Morris did it. He bought, in Europe on his various trips, these very elaborate wide borders and things that they made mostly in German type foundries, some English. He'd bring these things back, and they were quite unusual and different from what other printers had in their shops. The three big concerns: Nash was maybe the William Morris of San Francisco. The Taylors were the Updikes of San Francisco. And Grabhorn, well I think he was in a class by himself; because the sense of design that they have, and the innovations are something that have seldom been seen in this century anywhere. Little things. For instance, I can remember a book (I don't recall which book it is, although I have it) but it's a small book we did for the Grabhorns, and he was searching for something else. This will illustrate how I sort of fit into the picture of these people.

Ed sent for me, and we worked around. He said, "I want to set this in Caslon, but the caps are too big." I suggested that we take--I think the book was set in 11 point Caslon--I said, "We can run the 14 point small caps in the same die case with the 11 point lower case, and it won't look like Caslon at all. It'll look like something maybe preceding that."

He said, "Let's see it." So we tried it out. It worked fine, and everybody wondered what the new type face was. The color was about right. You see, the small capitals are wider in design than the capitals. In other words, if you would take a 12-point

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\* For data on Nash, his customers, and his work, see Robert D. Harlan, John Henry Nash, University of California Press, 1970.





Harris: small cap and blow it up to the height of a 12-point cap, it would be much wider. It's a different proportion. It was the right color, and it let the ascending part of the letters stand up above, and it gave quite a unique combination.

We've done all sorts of things. We would take a type, maybe, and he'd say, "It seems so loose."

I'd say, "We can cut down a quarter of a point on each letter on the Monotype. It won't affect the design in doing this, and it'll make it fit closer together.

I think we did this on several occasions. We would take 16-point Centaur and run it on a 14-point body. It would come so close together it gave it a sort of medieval appearance. He'd sock it into the paper and make it heavier; the Centaur is inclined to be light and delicate. In all these things we were learning what we could do, and he was learning what we could do for him with the Monotype machine. This went on for years and years and years.

Now, to get back to Mr. Nash, he was a great party giver. He had his shop. He had no presses at all; he had a proof press. The presswork was done by the Trade Pressroom, Arthur Fay, Senior, now dead, on Miehle presses.\* Mr. FauntLeRoy carried out the meticulous inspection of the work that was done for Nash. When the forms went on the press FauntLeRoy moved down to the floor below and stood by the press until the job was printed, and inspected sheets--well, at least every hundred sheets and probably oftener than that. Nash would do the fancy border work, fitting of initials, and so forth. The make-up of the type pages was usually done by FauntLeRoy. Sometimes there'd be a helper in there. It was a shop.

Mr. FauntLeRoy was a self-effacing, cultured, gentle man, associated with a man that could swear like a trooper. Nash could really wax profane in his language.

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\*Others also did presswork for Nash. See Harlan, ibid., p. 38.



Teiser: And Mr. FauntLeRoy couldn't.

Harris: No, no. Did you ever know him?

Teiser: Yes, I met him.

Harris: He was a very quiet sort of a person.

Some noted person would come to town and Nash'd give a party. Maybe we'd meet down in his library, which was next to the shop. He liked to brag about his books, and he had some very marvelous books in his collection. He had a Pigouchet Book of Hours. I wish I could have afforded one. He paid \$1,200 for it. He used to say, "I'm sure that book will be worth \$5,000."--more today, for it was a perfect copy.

You see, working with these people I was still educating myself in books and printing. In those days, more than now, the good people--good mechanics and people connected with printing--were going to the past for ideas of what was done and how printing got to the point where it was, and not doing so much about getting a camera to substitute for type. Nobody thought anything but type. It had to be type. And most printing was letterpress, that is, printing direct from type forms.

So the trio that made the Nash shop consisted of Nash, FauntLeRoy and Art Fay, the pressman.

Teiser: I think Lawton Kennedy did some of the press work, didn't he?

Harris: Could've been, yes. He was there some of the time, that's true. You will get that in your interview with Lawton, how much of that work he did.\*

Now the difference between the three leaders, the "greats" here, is apparent. The Taylors were scholarly. That is, Henry was scholarly and Ed was self-educated and had become scholarly; not as

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\* See also: Joseph FauntLeRoy, John Henry Nash, Printer (Oakland: Westgate Press, 1948), and Lawton Kennedy, A Life in Printing, an interview in this series completed in 1967.



Harris: scholarly as Henry was. Ed Taylor started as a boy, printing a little weekly. His first partner was a man by the name of Stanley.\* That split up, and then he took in Henry, his younger brother.

The Grabhorns did everything themselves, everything. In not exactly a primitive way, but a simple way. No cylinder presses. They had Colt's Armory presses. Ed was certainly one of the great innovators. His method of putting colors on illustrations-- while Valenti Angelo was there it started. Angelo wrote an article and claimed credit for it, and I wrote him and corrected him. He sure apologized for that.

Teiser: Was this with blocks?

Harris: Wood blocks or linoleum blocks, or something with a piece of cloth on it, or all that. It's just ingenious what they did. They would get the Meriden Gravure Company of Meriden, Connecticut to make the key plates, frequently, in their colortype process, or something similar to it.

#### Mackenzie & Harris' Book and Advertising Work

Harris: Incidentally, we did a book for American Gravure last year.

Teiser: You did?

Harris: Yes.

Teiser: What kind of book was that?

Harris: It was for a New York publisher, designed by Leonard Baskin. He's a "great" back East now. The subject, I think, is poisonous plants. Illustrated. I haven't met Mr. Baskin, although we do a considerable amount of work for the plant in western Massachusetts called the Gehenna Press of Northampton. We ship the type to them back there, and they print it, and I guess sell it for old metal. He's the owner and, besides teaches at Smith College.

He's teaching; and he's running this fine truly

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\* D.S. Stanley





Harris: private press. They just, last year, did a book on Mosher, the famous printer of Maine, did a bibliography on him.\* We set it here.

Mr. Baskin told somebody a few months ago, and it came back to us, that if you wanted good typesetting you had to send to San Francisco. [Laughter] Next time I go to New York I'm going to look him up.

I should tell you about how we got into the advertising business, advertising composition. I'd been here a few months, and we had to get into that. So I studied newspaper advertising, retail stores. And I thought I would pick Gump's; that was a good place to hang your name onto. I did my homework pretty well on that. I found out Mrs. Eleanor Finch was the advertising manager. And I studied their ads for several weeks, got quite familiar with them. I went up and sent my card in. This lovely lady--she was past middle age, but a very cultured woman--asked me to come in. I, in my nicest manners, said, "Mrs. Finch, I've been studying your ads for several weeks, and I don't think the typography is suitable for Gump's."

She said, "I don't think so either. I agree with you."

And I said, "I thought maybe I could talk to you about our setting them."

She said, "Well, we tried that once. And it was too cumbersome because I had to have a conference when I prepared the copy and another conference with the first proof, and another with the second. And then a conference with the bill. And I haven't time for that."

Well, I thought up a new one. I said, "Well, we don't work that way." [Laughter] "We find out in the beginning what you want. You'll never see me. But maybe once a month I'll drop in and see if you're feeling all right, if you're happy. You put a call in

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\* Burton L. Hatch, A Check List of the Publications of Thomas Bird Mosher, 1966.



Harris: and the boy picks up the copy, and we'll do the best we can by it, and you get a bill. There'll be no conferences." And I said, "The bill will be easy because we are going to give you a column inch rate." I said, "But we must study a file of your ads for a year, the sizes you run and the type of thing you have, in order to determine the cost to you per column inch."

She said, "I'd like that; it'd be interesting."

So I came out with a big portfolio. And we took all the ads for a year and divided it by the number of column inches. And I'll tell what the rate was: twenty-five cents a column inch! This was in 1924.

She said, "I'd like to start right now but I have to discuss this with Mr. Gump." After I got back to the office she called. She said, "Send up for the first piece of copy." And we had that account for about twelve or fifteen years. We survived two or three of her successors. She retired and died. But it was fine. Some of them we lost our shirt on, the next one we made it up on, you see?

Teiser: Yes.

Harris: That started us in the ad composition business. We found we needed a little bit larger than 36 point. So we bought, I think, some large Caslon, maybe 48 point.

Then the next one I knocked off was Ransohoff's, across the street. We did that for several years. I believe for that one they'd have sale ads, so we bought Cloister Bold. Cloister was the A.T.F.\* type that Nash used so much, and it had a very good bold face. We bought Cloister Bold and Cloister Bold Italic from American Type Founders Company up to 60 point. Then we thought we had it made! We could set sale ads in large type.

Teiser: There was a period in San Francisco when some newspaper ads were quite distinguished typographically.

Harris: Well, we had something to do with that. This is going to be a little longer story. Maybe we can start the next one about when we started to sell imported type. You didn't know about that feature of our career, did you?

\*  
American Type Founders.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO  
DIVISION OF THE PHYSICAL SCIENCES  
DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY  
5708 SOUTH CAMPUS DRIVE  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60637  
TEL: 773-936-3700  
FAX: 773-936-3701  
WWW: WWW.CHEM.UCHICAGO.EDU

Teiser: No.

Harris: Let's start the next one [there]. We're pretty close to the end.





## III

(Interview 3--May 4, 1967)

Nash and His Associates

Harris: I think I ought to give you a little further description of what Nash looked like.

Teiser: Yes, please do.

Harris: He was a stocky man, not as tall as I am. I should say he was--

Teiser: How tall are you?

Harris: Six feet. He would be maybe two or three inches shorter than I am and a little heavier build. A man so full of energy that when he talked he moved about so vigorously you'd think he was holding himself back. And he talked with gushes of language.

And when he got angry he was very profane and could really finish people off in describing them. And he had very strong likes and dislikes. Quite different from Goudy, who was gentler and kindlier and more forgiving in his makeup than Nash. For instance, at one time Samuel Farquhar was writing a weekly review of printing, or a review of fine books for the Chronicle. He had a column. He wrote about a book that Nash had just finished, and he wasn't very flattering about some parts of the way it was done. And Nash almost blew the top off the building when he read it the next day. I think I was in his office a day or two afterwards. He called Farquhar everything, and said he was incompetent to judge such work as he (Nash) did, and that he should be fired. That gives you the type. Naturally, in the feeling (I don't exactly want to say "feeling"



Harris: but the lack of love and kisses between them) the most aggressive was Mr. Nash. I believe the Taylors would sort of be aloof from the whole thing. That was more their attitude. And Ed Grabhorn didn't really care.

There was an interesting anecdote. Henry Lewis Bullen, as you know, was the head of the library at the American Type foundry in Jersey City. Incidentally, his secretary for a number of years was Beatrice Warde. Before she married Frederic Warde she was with Henry Lewis Bullen, and that's probably where she gained much of her information which made her so famous later. He made a trip out here. Then there was some correspondence between him and someone else. I believe it was with Farquhar. He made this judgment. He said California printing was like California women and California fruit: good to look upon, but if you bit into them they had no substance to them. Of course Nash, in a rather ribald way, asked people how many women old man Bullen had bitten into. [Laughter] This sort of gives you an idea of Nash's ability at repartee.

Aside from Nash's skill and good taste to set a page of type and miter rules and put together orders and reach almost perfection in that part of the work and then insist on perfection in the presswork, he was the greatest salesman of fine printing that I've ever known. He knew how to dramatize it. The story of what he had proposed to do at the end of his life, and had gotten fairly far along on the plans, was the printing of the Vulgate Bible.

Teiser: Yes.

Harris: You've heard of that, haven't you? This project?

Teiser: Tell about it though.

Harris: Mrs. [Edward L.] Doheny, then a widow, had sponsored some things that he had done. She was supposed to be the one to underwrite this. He was going to print one thousand copies at one thousand dollars each. It was to be a million dollar project. All to be hand set. He described it: the type would be taken out to the cathedral and the Archbishop would bless it before he started to set it. [Laughter] It would be edited by some of the Fathers, I think at the University



Harris: of San Francisco. It was going to be something that wealthy people like Mrs. Doheny could give to various cathedrals and churches throughout the English-speaking world. I wish he'd been able to go through with this because it would have been something. But about the time he had his plans pretty well completed in his own mind the "pitch" to Mrs. Doheny failed. Then Nash had a stroke and the whole thing, of course, fell through. Can you imagine a better way to dramatize an edition of the Bible? I'm sure Gutenberg didn't have anything as well mapped out as that.

Teiser: When would that have been? In the Depression?

Harris: Yes, that was about the time. He didn't have the money to do it himself. Then of course, after his stroke his health began to fail.

Nash was a great entertainer. He gave luncheons and dinners. He was a very active member of the Family Club. He would give these luncheons and dinners up there, and they were fabulous. During Prohibition there would always be plenty of liquor and lots of good food and lots of stories. It was an exciting experience. I was fortunate on many occasions to be invited to these things. Sometimes he would have them in his library, which was adjacent to the shop.

Teiser: Those are the ones I'd heard about.

Harris: But the Family Club, it was so funny--perhaps it would give you an idea. Before this letter, the letter that was written about California printing, Mr. Bullen was there. And he was the guest of honor. This is not a Nash story, but it's a funny story. Mr. Bullen had some new upper teeth. As he would talk he would push them back in place. One of the guests, a Mr. Eastman, who was head of the Spring Valley Water Company\*, was there, and he interrupted and said, "I beg your pardon, Mr. Bullen, are you trying to whistle, or are you having some trouble with your teeth?" [Laughter] And it almost broke up--I think that story illustrates the lusty kind of entertainment that we would have in those days.

Teiser: Yes. This was all men?

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\*Samuel P. Eastman







Harris: All men; all men, so the stories could be of any kind.

Teiser: Before you leave Nash, something ought to be on the record about Miss Nell O'Day.

Harris: I knew Miss O'Day very well. She was the sister of Ed O'Day, the writer, who afterwards was the editor of the Recorder newspaper for many years. Miss O'Day and Miss Hartmann were the two women in the office there. Miss O'Day was a slight, small woman--about your build. Very sweet, very pleasant. She was the librarian. Miss [Mae] Hartmann was the bookkeeper and credit manager, and she seemed to run the office. Miss O'Day was purely the librarian. I could say that she would be the perfect type of person to act as a foil for Mr. Nash, who would sometimes get excited. She kept the waters pretty well calmed in a quiet gentle way.

Teiser: That's fine. That's just what I wanted.

Harris: FauntLeRoy, of course, he wrote the book about being with Mr. Nash.\* He was an able printer, of the old school. This is extremely interesting. The Taylors had a similar man, Dan Buckley.

Teiser: Oh, I met Buckley. Wasn't he with Taylor and Taylor until only a few years ago?

Harris: Yes. But he was comparable to FauntLeRoy. I don't know where FauntLeRoy learned to be a printer. Buckley came from Massachusetts, western Massachusetts, one of the fine old plants out in Greenfield or some place out there. Buckley was a compositor and was the shop foreman or superintendent for Taylor and Taylor.

But FauntLeRoy knew what Mr. Nash wanted and knew perfection and saw the job completely through. Now Mr. Nash might set the style pages and the title pages, and so forth. But the make-up of the book and the carrying the thing through was FauntLeRoy's. A very, very quiet, lovable person. And things were pretty exciting around there sometimes, but he seemed never to lose his head or be ruffled by anything.

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\* John Henry Nash, Printer, op. cit.



### Taylor and Taylor

**Teiser:** Perhaps I should ask you something about the Taylor and Taylor firm then, the people in it, since you knew them so well.

**Harris:** I think I told you that Ed Taylor had started as a young boy, to be a printer.

**Teiser:** Yes.

**Harris:** He got out some kind of a little four-page or a two-page paper. Taylor's father was Edward Robeson Taylor, who was the mayor of San Francisco--this was before I came here, this is a historical fact--he was after Abe Reuf's time. The citizens of San Francisco and the supervisors picked the outstanding citizen to clean up San Francisco and be the mayor, and that was the father of the two Taylor boys. He was a doctor, an M.D.; he was a writer of verse; he was a man of great importance in the appreciation of the arts. I don't know anything about the mother except she was a descendant of Leland Stanford,\* so there's some Stanford blood in the Taylors.

Ed Taylor in his youth was an actor on the vaudeville stage. His first name was Ned--I don't recall the last name he used, but he was an actor. He met his wife, I think she was a dancing girl from down in the South someplace;\* She liked to forget those days and she became quite the grand lady as she got older. In fact, I almost broke up a dinner party at their house one night. My wife and I were invited. She acted as "majorette domo." There must've been twenty-four people for this formal dinner, black tie. As they came in she introduced them to all the assembled guests. And when I came in she said, "This is Mr. and Mrs. Harris, Mr. and Mrs. Carroll Harris. Mr. Harris is descended from Charles Carroll of Carrollton, who signed the Declaration of Independence."

I said, "Yes, Mrs. Taylor, but you forgot to mention, with the 'bar sinister.' There were two sets of Carrolls in Maryland but the rich as well as the poor descendants were all in the same boat for it seems that the old fellow never married." [Laughter]

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\*A niece. See also Kenneth M. Johnson, The Life and Times of Edward Robeson Taylor. San Francisco: Book Club of California, 1968.

\*\*Her maiden name was Marie Griffith.





Harris: I can tell you an awful funny story (and they're all dead) about this, too, about Ed Taylor. Shall I put it in?

Teiser: Sure, put it in.

Harris: In their later years the Taylors built a very, very large colonial house in St. Francis Wood. At that time Mrs. Taylor's sister, who was a widow, lived with them. My wife and I got quite well acquainted with her for we knew the Taylors very well. We'd sometimes take Mrs. Taylor's sister out on a trip for a picnic or something. Frequently Mrs. Taylor, Mrs. Edward Taylor, had said to us: "This house may be big, but there's a reason." That intrigued me. So one day, when her sister was with us on a picnic, I said, "What is the reason that the house is so big?"

She told us the following story. In his early married days Mr. Taylor was interested in the opposite sex--he had a roving eye, let's say. Mrs. Taylor caught him once, and there was a big blowup. She made a deal with him: that if she ever caught him again, the house they were planning to build would become a foot larger each way. And when it was finally built it was one of the largest houses in St. Francis Wood. [Laughter] Whenever she, in front of him, would say, "There's a reason for this house being so big," he would sort of smirk and look the other way.

Henry Taylor was a bachelor, lived at the Bohemian Club for many years. He died a fairly young man. He had an operation for appendicitis. He was to return home from the hospital in about two days and that night he died of an embolism, blood clot. Very strange, because his brother, Ed, had seen him just about an hour before. He was in fine spirits, sitting up and talking.

Teiser: Did they get along well?

Harris: Apparently they did, until after he died. Strangely I saw the will; Ed Taylor showed it to me. He was quite upset. Henry left all his money to his niece. He said his interest in the business had to be bought for cash within a certain time and that went into the estate of the niece. It made Ed very angry.





Teiser: It put him in a spot, didn't it?

Harris: Yes. He had started the business and had taken Henry into it. There was a statement (I read that) in the will, that he wanted the world to understand that for the design and quality of the printing that had given Taylor and Taylor their reputation he was entirely responsible. That's a terrible legacy to saddle on his brother.

So all these years when they would be so friendly, I guess there was something under the surface. It might have been Henry didn't like Mrs. Taylor. He only went there at Christmas or Thanksgiving Day or something when it was a family gathering. He had made some remarks to me that he didn't care to go there too often.

I think I can take on, then, the history of Taylor and Taylor.\* Jim Elliot, Mr. James W. Elliot, came with them as a young man as a salesman somewhere in the 'twenties--I'm not sure--or early 'thirties. He had an advertising background back of him, had worked for McCann-Erickson at one time. I don't believe he had any financial interest in the business at the time Ed was active in the business. But at the time Ed Taylor decided to retire, which was after World War II (two or three years) Jim Elliot bought the business. I think he had a substantial amount of cash as a down payment, and the rest on terms. He took in with him Mr. Robert Washbish, who came from Chicago, was a very able artist and designer of printing and had very fine experience back there. They stayed together until they decided to liquidate the business. This, I think, should be in the record, because a company of the reputation that they had who suddenly decides to quit . . .

In the first place, Jim Elliot, through investments and through his success in running Taylor and Taylor--because he carried on the tradition of the fine printing just the same as they had before--had accumulated enough so he didn't need to work any more. And they were confronted with the thing that many companies have been confronted with, the wide use of offset. They were letterpress printers. They had some lucrative jobs, big jobs. In fact they only had about twelve customers. They printed the Standard Oil Bulletin, which had always a large circulation,

\*  
The papers of Taylor and Taylor are on deposit in The Kemble Collections at the California Historical Society.



**Harris:** went to all the stockholders in Standard Oil Company of California and I think to many of their employees. Then they had another one that went to all the employees, called the Standard Oiler. These were monthly magazines. The Standard Oil Bulletin was in four colors for the illustrations. I think maybe fifty or seventy-five thousand copies of each of them. Then they did the California Packing Company and the PG&E annual reports, which were very elaborate. They had that kind of work.

With the wider use of offset, some competition got in; and maybe a change in the purchasing department policy of some of these companies. By doing this sort of work by offset it made the prices of Taylor and Taylor look tremendously high. Jim Elliot told me that at his age (he was then in his fifties) he didn't propose to spend maybe up to a quarter of a million dollars to put the necessary equipment in to do the kind of offset printing that could be comparable to their letterpress printing, so he decided to sell out. And he sold out at a very good price.\*

**Teiser:** I remember once, during what must have been that period of wondering, he told me that he was thinking about going into long-run book work, not necessarily fine book work.

**Harris:** When I get back on the track of Mackenzie & Harris, I'll tell you about how, about the same time all this idea of doing book work in San Francisco was discussed, we did something about it.

### Ed Grabhorn

**Harris:** Certainly the Grabhorns have been written about and described.

**Teiser:** Much has been written, but there's so much about them that hasn't been said.

**Harris:** Well, Ed married--he had been married. I never knew his first wife. They were divorced some time in the 'twenties. I think Ed was still located up on Powell Street. From the address on Kearny the next location he had was in the Ray Coyle Building on the hill on

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\* See also the interview with Edward DeWitt Taylor by Francis P. Farquhar, Regional Oral History Office, 1958.





Harris: the east side of Powell between Sutter and Bush. Ray Coyle was an architect and he had the main part of that building, and Ed had the first floor. He was located there at that time of his divorce. He was a bachelor, or a grass widower for oh, I guess seven or eight years before he married the second time. In fact, he was down on Commercial Street renting the place there when he married the second time. He married a daughter of Dr. J. W. Robertson, famous physician here. Dr. Robertson and Dr. Podesta founded the big sanitarium for people with mental ills, over at Livermore. Dr. Robertson, who was a collector of Poe, had one of the best private collections in America. He had written a book, I think it was called A Psychopathic Study of Edgar Allen Poe. They met when he was ready to have his book on Sir Francis Drake printed, on whether or not he landed in San Francisco Bay or at Drake's Bay. I remember Ed telling me about this man that he didn't know at all came in one day and said, "Where are your steam presses? I want a book printed." [Laughter]

This thing went on for a long, long time. We set the book and reset it because, after it was in type, Dr. Robertson decided to rewrite it. I think he did that a couple of times. So it was very costly. The book is available. You have, no doubt, a copy in the Bancroft Library.\* We set it in 337 Caslon with Cloister Text. Excerpts from documents and things to be quoted were in the Cloister Text. At the time the book was about to be completed Ed married the daughter, Marjorie Robertson.

This is really a good anecdote. One day Ed called me--no. I have to go back before this to tell you the first story because they go together. The day that Ed and his first wife had decided to get a divorce.

Teiser: What was her first name?

Harris: Florence, I think. Ed spoke of her as "Flo." He was out at our house for dinner. And Ed is such a charming lovable fellow; all his life he's been that way. He brought some kind of gadget for my wife, a necklace or something. I don't know. He must've seen it at Gump's. During dinner he was telling us, he said, "You know, I had a conference with Flo today and all the arrangements are made about the divorce, et cetera. And I

\* John W. Robertson, Francis Drake and Other Early Explorers Along the Pacific Coast. San Francisco, 1927.





Harris: took her out and put her on the cable car. And as she stepped up, I noticed her legs. I'd never noticed 'em before and I almost changed my mind." [Laughter]

So! Now, then, I'll tell you. One day I got a call from him and he said, "I'm going to get married, this weekend."

I said, "Well, that's good. Who are you going to marry?"

He said, "I'm going to marry Marjorie Robertson." He said, "I don't know any ministers, and you're a minister's son. Maybe you know someone."

"Well," I said, "I'll tell you. There's a minister I do happen to know. He's a member of the American Legion, the same post that I belong to. Maybe I can get him to marry you. Where do you want to be married and when?"

So he told me. I called this minister and told him I had a friend that wanted to be married. I could hear him kind of getting excited because that's the moonlighting extra income of a minister, a wedding. I said, "There's just one thing I want to tell you. He's been married before. But I can assure you he was the innocent party in the divorce."

He says, "Brother Harris, I'll take your word for it." [Laughter] So they were married. I think they just went out to the minister's house. I was not a witness.

About twenty or twenty-five years later (this was at a wedding anniversary of Ted Lilienthal and his wife given at the little theater out in the Marina--the Lilienthals had arranged for a puppet show) I was talking to Marjorie and I said, "Did you know that I got the minister for your wedding when you and Ed were married?"

She said, "You know, I never knew whether that wedding was legal or not. I want to tell you all these years we've been so happy that I didn't really care if it was legal." Now, wasn't that a tribute to him? Their daughter is the artist, Mary. They had just one child. Marjorie died of cancer not so many years, three or four years ago.



Teiser: Then he remarried, to his present wife.

Harris: The widow of Dr. Somebody\*--Irma. I've only met her once, I don't know her very well.

### The San Francisco Fine Printing Tradition

Harris: Now what do you want to start on? I think we've got enough anecdotes about the three principal printers. We talked, in my last interview, about what started fine printing here. I have some very definite ideas on that. I believe the first one, at least who publicized fine printing, was John Henry Nash. And he was certainly the first of the three main ones that we've talked about--the roots of the whole thing that people began to hear of. I believe Mr. Nash was born up in Toronto. He came down here I don't know what year.

Teiser: Did you call him "Mr. Nash?"

Harris: I never called him by his first name, never. The Taylors I called them by their first names, and the Grabhorns. But I always spoke to him as "Mr. Nash." That doesn't mean anything because it takes me a long, long time to call anybody by his first name. That's my eastern background.

I think Nash was first with Paul Elder. He had some kind of a little shop. Then he went in for himself. But there was an environment here for fine printing, just like San Francisco has had the environment for fine restaurants--probably more good wine per capita drunk in San Francisco than any other city in America. And it is a pleasant place to do things, and printing was either the first or second industry here for many years. It was a place for fine printers because there were patrons of fine printing, patrons of the arts here that made it possible for these people to do things that were above and beyond the ordinary, and have somebody buy them. Then, later,

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\* Dr. Samuel Engel.



Harris: the binders, such as Tony Cardoza of Cardoza bindery,\* and other binderies--but that was certainly the best one there was in this part of the world--could bind them. And people like ourselves to furnish type and typesetting. There were one or two very good Linotype shops and ours for Monotype that could give these people exactly what they wanted.

Teiser: What were the good Linotype shops?

Harris: Halle-Cordes would be number one. Next would be [A. C.] Gollan. And as far as book work, you'd stop right there, I would think. And ourselves on the Monotype.

But this bunch of people who were the patrons of it. The first one I ought to talk about is Albert Bender. He was born in Dublin, son of a rabbi; came to this country I guess as a very young man; settled in San Francisco; was an insurance broker, but he became interested in art and artists. His hand was always in his pocket to help keep the thing going. Others, perhaps later, Herbert Rothschild, Oscar Sutro, Mrs. Florence Walter (that's Mrs. John I. Walter) who collected Grabhorns and has one of the best collections in existence. She, as you probably know, at middle age or past, learned to be a book-binder. Her work is comparable to some of the finest stuff that's been done in France in the last twenty-five years. Mrs. Ellie Heller--Elinor Heller, whose husband was E. H. Heller. She has, I guess, a complete collection of all Grabhorns.

Teiser: Is that right!

Harris: Yes.

Teiser: Oh, she worked on the Grabhorn bibliography.

Harris: She and David Magee wrote it. That's the first. The second one I think David and Dorothy Magee did. There've been two Grabhorn bibliographies.

Teiser: Yes.

Harris: She underwrote and helped to compile the first one.

You have to include some of the book dealers, the antiquarian book dealers such as John Howell and his son Warren Howell, David Magee, Newbegin, Paul

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\*The T.J. Cardoza Company; Tony J. Cardoza was president.





Harris: Elder of course. And the people such as Morgan Gunst who organized the Book Club of California. That, as an institution, or as a group of people, has done more to develop fine printing than any other influence. They made work for some of them, to help them along and to get them started. Then, in not as great a way, but to help the volume of work that maybe is not up to the finest of fine printing, but certainly in the category would be the California Historical Society, which had most of their books printed here. Of course, they did a lot to help Lawton Kennedy. He has done most of the things that they've done. And a man like Carl Wheat, very active in these organizations.

Let's mention another one, the Roxburghe Club, which was organized some time in the 'thirties. Wheat was one of the members. The Book Club, the Roxburghe Club, the Historical Society: the same people--and if they were men they belonged to E Clampus Vitus. This thing in San Francisco was the same group of people always doing something about it. Make notes and I'll tell you later on about the French book show.

Now, naturally, if there are buyers and if there are fine printers, there are bound to spring up these service people that would do the things for them that they want. It wouldn't be necessarily the volume to keep them going, but it would be the things they'd love to do most. I'm sure that all of us have done work at cost, for less than cost, to help to get the thing done. I've done it many times. I've done it for the Grabhorns and for different people. These people have only got so much money. I'd say, "Well, name your price. It ought to be done." I don't feel that I was giving gifts. We were developing ourselves. We were helping to sustain an industry and a reputation which we have here. And I'm sure Tony Cardoza was the same way. He loved to do a fine binding. He did lots of binding. And they now, to get back to these fine printers--the offshoots of them were smaller beginning one-man shops, such as Valenti Angelo's. He worked for years with the Grabhorns. And Arlen Philpott. Bill [Sherwood B.] Grover was the pressman for Grabhorns. Now he has a press of his own, the Grace Hoper Press. The Grovers, Sherwood and his wife, Katharine, are doing a book right now for Lewis Osborne, all hand set.\*

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\*The Taming of the Shrew. The presswork was done by Grabhorn-Hoyem. It was published in Palo Alto by Lewis Osborne in 1967. See also Sherwood and Katharine Grover, The Grabhorn Press and The Grace Hoper Press, an interview in this series completed in 1972.



Harris: And I'm sure that Lewis Allen first was one of the patrons, then as a hobby started to print. He and his wife--Lewis and Dorothy Allen--do a lot of things now. That's their whole occupation, printing.

Teiser: I am going to interview them.

Harris: You should, yes. I think you should interview Warren Howell and David Magee, too.

Teiser: I have interviewed Warren.

Harris: Oh, you have. And David Magee, he's back.

Teiser: I haven't interviewed David Magee yet, but I will.\*

Harris: Oh! An early influence here, too, was Porter Garnett. I don't know whether Porter Garnett came from California or not. In the later years of his life he lived up in Napa County. He used to come out here from the East every year. For many years, you know, he was head of the Laboratory Press in Pittsburg, which is the school of printing at the Carnegie Institute of Technology. Always you would find him at the Grabhorn Press or at Taylor and Taylor. This was a little world of its own in San Francisco: the fine printers, the people that bought from them, the people that would go in and pass the time of day.

Teiser: What was Porter Garnett like?

Harris: I never knew him very well. I may have met him three or four times. He was a slender, rather short person. Looked like he might be an Eastern, oh, a doctor, or a professional man of some kind. Quiet.

Now of course, the Colt Press and the Jumbo Press of Jane Grabhorn were offshoots of the Grabhorn Press.

Teiser: Wilder Bentley I keep hearing mentioned with great respect. Did you know him?

Harris: Yes, I knew him. He bought a lot of type here. I don't think we ever set any type for him, but as

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\*Lewis and Dorothy Allen and David Magee were later interviewed in this series. Warren Howell had been interviewed the previous year.





Harris: typefounders we sold him a lot of type. He called that the Archetype Press, or something.

Teiser: Yes. The Archetype Press.

Harris: It's in that little book I gave you.\* He was in Berkeley.

Teiser: I don't think he's still printing, is he?

Harris: No, I don't believe so. And the same thing with Brother Antoninus. Of course, he came here after the war, about the same time that Greenwood Press started up. Brother Antoninus worked with--who was the first one he worked with, I don't remember. I think he was with Wilder Bentley, wasn't he? He was over in Berkeley.

Teiser: I've interviewed him. It seems to me he worked very briefly with Wilder Bentley.

Harris: And his name was Everson then.

Teiser: Yes, William Everson. And he said he worked a little with James Hart.

Harris: Doctor Hart. Brother Antoninus and Adrian Wilson worked together, too.\*\*It's regrettable that Adrian has had these two open-heart surgery operations which have cut down on his physical ability to do things, because there's sort of a similarity in the things he does--not in their personalities at all but in his type of thing--to the books of Bruce Rogers. I have worked from his layouts and have seen them and they are a refined kind of a layout and design. It's very much like Rogers.

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David Magee, Fine Printing and Bookbinding from San Francisco and Its Environs, San Francisco: [Grollier Club], 1961, p. 7.

\*\*At Waldport. See Adrian Wilson, Printing and Book Design, an interview in this series completed in 1966.





Contributions to the Tradition

Harris: And I would think he might have been influenced by Rogers.

Of course, that's a subject that I've been very much interested in all my life in connection with printing: to trace what started this type designer to design a certain type. To give you an example, about the time of the Depression, Lutetia type came in from the Enschede Foundry in Haarlem, Holland. If you want to see a good use of it, the Scarlet Letter that the Grabhorns did is hand set in Lutetia. Shortly after that became used, there was Deepdene by Goudy. And I said to him, "Is that your substitute for Lutetia?" He said, "Ye-e-es."

Now when you look at the two faces, you see that they're not copies; but from a design standpoint they're similar. They have the same feeling. Many times when somebody would say, "I'd like this set in Lutetia," I'd say, "But you don't want it hand set?" "No." And then we would set a sample of Deepdene and the page effect would be about the same. This is an interesting thing. It's just like women's styles, you know. Somebody starts something, and then they come out with something new but it's still in the mode of the period.

Teiser: Has any westerner ever designed a type?

Harris: The only one I know was a fellow in Los Angeles by the name of Gillies; his face was called Gillies Gothic. Have you ever seen this face before?

Teiser: No.

Harris: That was designed for Bauer Typefoundry some time in the 'twenties by Gillies. I forget his first name. He was a commercial artist down in Los Angeles. That was the first type he designed. It was the result of a letter he had developed over the years, in hand lettering. It had quite a run for a while and he got a swell head. He decided to go to New York. Going to New York I told him I thought he ought to meet Goudy. I gave him a letter of introduction and he went out to see Goudy, who lived up on the Hudson. And the next time I saw Goudy he said, "That fellow's a damn fool. He came out and tried to tell me how to design type." [Laughter] And you know, that's the last we



Harris: ever heard of this chap. I suppose he's still living and maybe he's making a living. But that's the only type that I've ever heard that he designed. That's the only one I know of that's ever been designed here on the Coast.

Teiser: Do you still use it?

Harris: No. We have it, but it's out of style now. It was just a novelty type for advertising.

Teiser: I keep interrupting you because you suggest things that I would like to ask you.

Harris: I wish you would do that.

Teiser: I'm very much interested in your interpretation of why San Francisco became a printing center, and I suppose you had a good deal to do with it yourself.

Harris: Yes. I have a book right here that will show you the things that nobody else could do. Are you familiar with this book of Carl Wheat's?

Teiser: Oh, yes. Mapping the Transmississippi West.

Harris: Carl Wheat wrote this book. Five volumes. His hobby, besides Californiana, rare Americana, fine printing, was maps. That was his main hobby. He had Grabhorn design and print volume one. This is volume one. This was printed at the Grabhorn Press. But a book of this size--and there were six volumes\*--a book of this size would be beyond the capacity of a press such as the Grabhorn Press to set, make up, and print any more than one, because there were a thousand copies printed. So we made it up into pages.

Teiser: Ordinarily do you supply type in galleys?

Harris: Sometimes. For these fine printers usually we supply in galleys and they make it up. But this one we made up into pages, under Grabhorn's instruction. This is all machine set, this large type. That's Van Dijck, a type which, at the time I bought it, I consulted not only with the people here, but with Rogers. This was designed by Jan van Krimpen, the Dutch designer. That is, he designed the key letters and key shapes, and supervised the drawings of the others, for the

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\*Five, technically, but the last was in two separately bound sections.





Harris: English Monotype Company. When I was searching for a new face, a good book face, I talked to people here. And I also wrote to Rogers. He said at the time, "That is not only a good face, but I think the finest book face available on any machine any place in the world." So we bought it. This whole book in 16-point type is all machine set.

Now here's a combination of a lover of printing, historian, wealthy lawyer, man that's been president of and he was a fellow of the California Historical Society, president of the Book Club, Master of the Press of the Roxburghe Club, and everything. And he creates this job and has it done here. Grabhorn did the presswork on the first one.

Teiser: What was the history of the subsequent volumes of that?

Harris: We set and made them all up. The next four were printed at Taylor and Taylor. The last became two volumes.

Teiser: Why did they go from the Grabhorns to Taylor and Taylor?

Harris: Because Grabhorn couldn't handle it. He just simply couldn't handle it, physically. This was upsetting to handle this much. It was too big a job for them. Maybe if it had been two hundred copies, but a thousand copies was too much.

So the next three volumes were done by Taylor and Taylor. The pages were taken out for the Grabhorns to look at, and so forth.

Teiser: The Grabhorns conferred on it?

Harris: Well, a little bit. Not too much. That was done by Elliot, who would talk to them. But the style was followed the same as the other two.

Teiser: You made up the pages there too?

Harris: We made up the pages, yes. On that whole six volumes, we did the whole thing here in our shop. When the fifth volume came about, Carl was--well, he just barely made it. He died shortly after that was published, a few weeks later. As in each case, he asked me to engineer the mechanics of getting it out for him. I was the one that was instrumental in putting





Harris: it in Taylor and Taylor. But we were held responsible to Carl that there was a continuity. But then, when the fifth volume--which has two volumes, fifth and sixth--came along Taylor and Taylor had gone out of business. Fortunately, the pressman who had worked at Taylor and Taylor was working for the James Printing Company here on Third Street, a very small plant. And they had exactly the same kind of press that had been used by Taylor and Taylor.

Teiser: Who was the pressman? Do you remember his name?

Harris: Oh, he had a German name and I don't remember. In fact, I'm not sure I want to remember his name. He was a very contemptible sort of person, hard to get along with. He was always, over there at Taylors' too. He came over when we were ready to print and started to tell me how we should wrap up the pages and deliver them so that the type wouldn't be "off its feet." I told him that these were not the first pages of type we'd ever wrapped up, and if he watched out for the presswork as carefully as he was trying to watch out for what we did it would be a good job. [Laughter] So the last two books in the set, which was the sixth volume, part one and two, were printed by the James Printing Company.

Just in passing we've talked about the main fine printers and about the wonderful offshoots of that. The complete list of those of importance is in that book I gave you last week.\* But don't forget, too, that among the big printers here in the old days were people who did extraordinarily good work as compared to those in other cities. The standards were higher for some reason.

Teiser: Of ordinary commercial printing?

Harris: Well, let's take the H. S. Crocker Company. Even now, if you look at this book, Alamos--have you seen this, that the Grabhorns printed?

Teiser: I saw it in the De Young Museum, yes. This is the photograph book, Alamos, by Richard J. Elkus.

Harris: Yes. It was hand set in Goudy Modern from our type-foundry. The illustrations were printed from half-tone plates by Crocker.

\*David Magee. Fine Printing and Bookbinding, op. cit.



Harris: But I want to show you a plate from this. Come over here in this light and look at the folds in that shawl on the old Mexican woman. I doubt if there are a dozen people in America who could print anything better, or maybe not as well as that's done. This is printed by letterpress, and then a varnish over it gives it that appearance of a fine photographic print.

Teiser: This is by H. S. Crocker?

Harris: Crocker Union, yes. They did the printing of this. It's the old H. S. Crocker. Of course, I don't think-- yes! They call it H. S. Crocker. That's the letterpress department of the Crocker Union Company.

Teiser: I was about to ask if Walter Mann had done the photoengraving, and I see it says "Walter J. Mann Company."

Harris: Yes.

Teiser: I suppose something should be said about photoengravers.

Harris: You're absolutely right. Such concerns as Walter Mann and the one that used to do all the plates for Taylor and Taylor, Graphic Arts Engraving Company. That's what I talked about earlier. These service people, to meet the standards of these fine printers, developed techniques and abilities that you don't find ordinarily in big cities, or any place.

Teiser: Do you think this extends even down to that cheap Chinese photoengraving firm here? Do you think they're better than cheap photoengraving firms elsewhere?

Harris: If you're going to compare mediocrity, why they're all bad. [Laughter]

And then Sterling Engraving Company was among those concerns. All these people were tops, absolutely tops, these old-time engravers. The American Engraving Company was another which also had a fine, very fine electrotype plant. Hoffschneider Brothers was another electrotyper. I'm trying to think of some others. But all of them had good craftsmen and did fine work because they had to do work that satisfied these very meticulous fine printers.





"Carl Irving Wheat As I Knew Him"

Harris: I want to give you a copy of this monograph, which was my contribution to the remembrances of Carl Wheat that were done after his death last year.\* I knew him many years, liked him, admired him, knew what he stood for. An equally good friend of his was George Harding, the author of this monograph.

At the memorial service various people spoke-- Francis Farquhar, Charlie Camp, Wheat's two sons, Albert Shumate. And the tone of the whole thing was "Carl Wheat as I knew him," or "as I remember him." That was the tone of the thing. Harding said that he was too moved by Wheat's death, that he didn't feel equal to delivering a eulogy any more than I could've stood up and made a talk. It was too emotional an occasion. So right after the funeral I asked George Harding if he would write what he would have said. He's retired but he's a busy man. He dropped everything and he spent a month in preparing this. It's a beautifully written thing and it summarizes more about Carl Wheat than anything I have ever read before.\*\* So then I asked Mallette Dean to print 350 copies of this, which we've set in Goudy 30. Appropriate, isn't it? That's the last type Goudy designed. He named it "Goudy 30."

We got a list of people from Helen Wheat that she wanted it sent to. And I sent one to each member of the Roxburghe Club and to other people who knew Carl. We made sure not to duplicate because it is a precious thing. You'll note at the end that it was sponsored by me. I would not allow anyone else to participate in the expense or anything.

Teiser: Who designed it?

Harris: Mallette Dean. And I would not let him do it as a cheap job. He did it as a fine piece of printing. And I have never been connected with anything like this that has brought so many letters. Oh, there must have been a hundred and fifty letters from people

\*See also pp. 72-74 for a discussion of Carl Wheat's book, Mapping the Transmississippi West.

\*\*George L. Harding, Carl Irving Wheat As I Knew Him (San Francisco: Privately published by Carroll T. Harris), 1966. See also p. 189.





Harris: that got them, which we put together in a book and gave to Helen Wheat along with a bound copy; we had nine copies bound by Mallette Dean's wife which were for--I don't remember--the family, myself, and George Harding, and two of the people in this shop that did the work.

But look at this. Now here's an artist, Mallette Dean, who's an outgrowth of the Grabhorn Press. It exemplifies what I'm talking about. Besides being a fine artist he is also a fine printer. This is done just the way Mallette Dean wanted to do it. As you look at that initial, it's about the view you'd get if you were at Carl Wheat's living room, up in Westridge looking over the hills. Then when you come to the end, look at this little decoration. This is the wheat straw, Wheat, you see. But isn't this an exquisite thing?

Teiser: Beautiful.

Harris: If we hadn't been doing work for people like Carl Wheat, we couldn't have done all those fine Sierra Club books. Are you familiar with them?

Teiser: Yes, I am.

Harris: They're all set in this shop--of which I am the principal owner.

Teiser: Oh, are they! I didn't realize that.



## IV

(Interview 4--May 8, 1967)

The Grabhorn Press and Some Employees

Harris: I think I told you I had an anecdote of Ed Grabhorn which sort of illustrates the sort of a person--

Teiser: When you asked him to put in a cost system?

Harris: Yes. After the Depression had started, things were getting pretty tough, for everybody. I knew that one of his problems was "making both ends meet." I was in to see him very often and was so closely associated with the things he was doing. I knew that he never kept track of the time on anything, or the cost of the paper, or anything else. He more or less put a price on something; he figured that's what it was worth.

(This hasn't to do with the story, but it shows the standards he had. I know of one book that he had completed and was dissatisfied with. I don't remember the title of it. They had worked on it several months. He was so dissatisfied with it he put them under the paper cutter and cut them all in two and threw them all away and did the thing completely over. Well that showed the ideals of doing things as well as you can do them.)

But, anyhow, he kept no track of anything; and he was doing everything too cheaply, particularly in comparison to other people like Nash and Taylors, who were getting a proper price for the work they did. I went over to see Ed one afternoon. He was then on Commercial Street. I guess I spent an hour explaining to him how to put in a cost system, to keep in a simple way the time that the hand compositors spent on a job, the pressmen, and cost of the paper, wastage, and all these things. I told him I would be glad to



Harris: help him to set the thing up; I had some experience in this matter.

He listened, I noticed, very patiently. And when I got through, he said, "How old are you now?"

I told him. I think I was somewhere in my late thirties or forties.

He said, "How many people have you ever known in your life that starved to death?"

I said, "None."

He said, "Well what the hell are you worried about me for?" [Laughter]

Before we leave the Grabhorns, I'd like to point out some of the people that worked there and then amounted to a great deal afterwards. Helen Gentry is one. She was a number of years with the Grabhorns and then set up a little shop of her own and printed books there. Her brother, Bruce, worked with her. Her husband, David Greenhood (that was her married name) wrote that very excellent Chronology of the History of Printing, a small book. Have you ever seen it?

Teiser: No.

Harris: It's the handiest thing. I have mine at home. You can go down the dates, and all of the things of importance that happened since Gutenberg are listed there.

After they left here they went to New York, and she became associated with the Wolff Company. And Bruce and she both made a good name for themselves--she in doing child's books, the thing she did here, miniature books. She designed many of them for publishers back East. But you've got to attribute to these people their interest--or at least their finish--to having been with the Grabhorns.

Another one would be Gregg Anderson, who was at the Grabhorn Press for two or three years and then went down and joined up with Ward Ritchie, the Anderson-Ritchie Press.\* He, as you probably know, was

\*Anderson, Ritchie & Simon.





Harris: killed. He was a lieutenant in the Army and was killed the first day of the landing on Normandy Beach.

Samuel Farquhar and the University of California Press

Harris: Before we get back onto the track and talk about our own little company here, I have mentioned Sam Farquhar who was in the group of people that belonged to the Roxburghe Club, the Book Club, the Historical Society, and I guess E Clampus Vitus. But there were that group of people that saw a great deal of each other and were interested in fine printing. He was made director of the University of California Press. I don't recall what year this was, but it would be some time in the 'twenties. And I never saw such a transformation take place in an institution as was effected under his being director. Preceding him was a Mr. [Joseph W.] Flinn. Mr. Flinn was an old-time printer whose idea of a title page was such as you see in a law book. And all of the printing that was done at the University at that time was in that category.

Sam worked at first without Tommasini, and later he brought Amadeo Tommasini into the picture as the plant superintendent. The two of them got the University of California Press, in the selection of the things they did and in the work they did at the press, comparable to some of the great presses in other parts of the United States. After Farquhar's death, the functions of publishing and production, which had both been under Farquhar, were separated. August Frugé, who was Farquhar's assistant, handling the publishing business, took over the publishing function. And a business manager was put over the business end of the press and Tommasini remained the superintendent and general manager of production and designing. Certainly the kind of books they did under Farquhar and Tommasini were different from anything else, and were comparable to the fine printing that was being done in the Bay Area. Take for instance the Larkin papers.\* We set the first five or six volumes. They were designed for Centaur. Then

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\*The ten volumes, The Larkin Papers, edited by George P. Hammond, were published at intervals beginning in 1951 and ending in 1964.



Harris: they ran out of money so they had to use a substitute face and do the rest of them at the press. But these are beautifully designed. And you take a collection of letters and try to make a beautiful page out of them! You probably are familiar with these books, aren't you?

Teiser: Yes, I am. They're--

Harris: Exquisite!

Teiser: Yes.

Harris: Beautifully done! Beautifully done. There were ten altogether. I have them all here. We set them until they didn't have the funds to go outside for the composition.

#### Development of Mackenzie & Harris

Harris: Now, if I may, I'd like to return to about 1924, when I came to Mackenzie & Harris. It was then the Monotype Composition Company. We started to do the things that Mr. Mackenzie and I had talked about in our correspondence, through the mails, and after I got here--to change a typesetting plant that merely did the drudgery of machine typesetting for printers to something which, in its own name, would create a reputation. I think I told you about our engaging in advertising. We went along well with that. Then the first thing that happened, that gave us a good business lesson, was that we bought a small plant in Oakland in 1925, and operated in that shop.

Teiser: Who had owned it before?

Harris: It was a captive plant of an advertising agency, Houlihan's agency, I believe it was. It had been formerly run by Ben Kennedy, as the manager. We operated this plant for three years, and we lost money every month but one, although we had more work than we could do. So we learned to our satisfaction that we couldn't have a branch plant with the kind of service that we were offering to the public. Because everything that the big plant in San Francisco had was expected in the small plant in Oakland. So that meant that we were bringing it across the bay

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Harris: and doing it over here and at great expense running this plant. In fact we did the Shopping News, the Oakland Shopping News, for the three years we had this plant. How we ever did it in that little plant I don't know, but we got it out. So we closed it up and sold it to Mr. K. L. Hamman. He was an advertising man who had a branch in Oakland and a branch over here. This experience taught us a lesson: to concentrate on our main shop and things that we knew how to do, and try to do them better.

Then about 1926 I read an article in the American Printer that a new concern\* had been formed to import type from Europe. The principals were Mr. Melbert B. Cary, Junior, as president; Frederic Goudy as vice-president; and Douglas McMurtrie, I believe, was treasurer--or also a vice-president. Previous to that, a little bit of European type had been sold to a few plants. The Grabhorn Press had a couple of faces. Nash had ornaments, at least, he bought in Europe. There had been a German who would go up and down the Coast about twice a year with some specimen books and would sell some type. But he didn't have any in stock, or had never built up a real business; and besides, all this type was cast on the Didot point system, which made it difficult for people to use. The Didot point system is based on the metric system and is used in Western Europe. All the type in Germany and France and the Netherlands was cast on the Didot point system. For instance, a 10-point Didot is about 10 1/4 points American; you couldn't use it. You can't mix such type in the same line with type cast on the American point system.

This announcement said that these people were going to import European types cast on the American point system. There had been a tremendous revival in the type foundries in Europe after the end of World War I and they were looking for new markets. They had some very, very outstanding type designers.

I wrote to Mr. Cary, or to this new company, for a specimen book. The specimen book came; it wasn't very much more than a pamphlet. I have a copy here some place. They had a face they called Narcissus, which was an in-line type not unlike Caslon in-line, but the heavy stroke was a little heavier. This came from the Klingspor type foundry in Offenbach am Maine. They showed two or three faces from a

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\* Continental Type Founders





Harris: foundry in Madrid, Richard Gans and Son. That was the important type foundry in Spain. And a face called Astree from Deberny et Peignot of Paris, the one and only foundry of any consequence in France at the time.

So then I wrote Mr. Cary and proposed to him that we be their agents for the eleven western states, exclusive agents, and referred to Mr. Goudy and Mr. McMurtrie, both of whom I knew very well. Almost by return mail I got an answer: they were willing to make us agents, and would we carry stocks, et cetera? By correspondence, in a matter of a few weeks, we had signed them up, on an odd sort of a contract. It took a year for anybody to cancel it on either side. That was one of my ideas; and I've used it since, because you can't have a satisfactory agency unless you're both happy. And anything that comes up that can't be settled in a year, you better separate anyhow.

So we started to sell this imported type. After things began to get going and we got stocks, then we imported some very popular and important type faces--for instance, the one called Eve, Eve Italic. This type was designed by Rudolph Koch. Mr. Cary, the head of this company, was a wealthy man, a dilettante in fine printing, and he was married to the daughter of H. M. Flagler--he married Mary Flagler. Flagler was the man who built the Florida East Coast Railway, so that sort of puts him. Melbert Cary's father was a New York attorney. Mr. Cary was active in the Grolier Club and interested in fine printing. Cary had a private press known as "The Press of the Woolly Whale."

As an illustration of how clever Cary was (because he renamed these types to fit the American market) the German name for Eve was Koch Antiqua. The italic would be Koch Antiqua Kursiv. The Eve bold would be Grosse Koch Antiqua, and so forth. Very hard for a salesman.

We brought these various types here and put in a big stock. And there was no trouble to sell them. Absolutely, it was fantastic. I made a trip to Los Angeles--by that time I'd started to make a trip about every three months to Los Angeles to sell the type we made, such as it was, in those days--but when I made my first trip with a set of specimens of this imported type I just couldn't believe my ears. I walked in to see some of those typographers down there, and they would say, "What have you got?" The first trip I made



Harris: with the new, imported types, in a matter of three days I had sold about five thousand dollars worth. That was as much type as Mackenzie & Harris would sell in six months of their own manufacture. I almost am ashamed to tell it: I jumped in the car and drove back, I was afraid somebody would cancel the orders. I just couldn't believe it.

Advertising people and printers all over the Coast were interested in these new types because American type had been in the doldrums, hadn't brought out anything new for a long time and everybody wanted something new.

Then the face that really startled us was Kabel. We got some advance showings of this type in light and bold. I went up to the advertising manager of the San Francisco Emporium and I said, "You've been talking about an exclusive type. Here's one that's almost exclusive; it's brand new." And they bought three thousand dollars worth of Kabel Bold and put it in each of the five newspapers in San Francisco, for them to set their ads, from 14 point to 84 point; it gave them a working amount of type.

This type became popular instantly, so that we had a waiting list. As we got a shipment from New York, our standing orders at the Continental Type Founders (that was the name of the importers): any Kabel that came in, send us all they could spare of any sizes they had. And we had a waiting list. Of course it would ruin any salesman if this went on too long because he would get soft.

We would call up different people: "We just got in some Kabel."

"Well, what can you spare?" And we'd tell them.

"All right, send it over."

This went on and on and on, so that we built up quite substantial sales of the various types. As I say, these were all on the American point system and were excellent in quality.

About the same time that Continental Type Founders was formed, Bauer Type Foundry, which was one of the largest type foundries in Germany at that time, and still, had picked as an agent out here the Norman F. Hall Company, printing machinery dealers. They're no





Harris: longer in existence. You can't sell type unless you have a feeling for it and there wasn't anybody in the Norman Hall Company, although it was a fine outfit, that had the slightest idea about type. Types were all alike to them; they were black or they were light face; that's about all the difference they knew.

That went on for a couple of years. One day a young German came in the office, introduced himself. His name was Wolfgang Schoenborn. He told me that he had been making a survey up and down the Coast as to why the Bauer people were not selling any type while Continental Type Founders were, and he thought he would like to interview me.

I said, "Well, it's quite obvious that you aren't and won't sell any type out here, to speak of."

He said, "Why?"

I said, "Because you don't have the right agent."

"Well," he said, "what can we do about that?"

I said, "Let us take on your line." Then the conversation was: they're competing. I said, "No, they are different designs, they are not competing. Just show them to people, and they'll pick the types on their merits." And I was able to convince Mr. Cary that it wouldn't interfere with our contract with them if we took on the Bauer Type Foundry line, which we did. And we did even better with that than we did with Continental.

This all went on until World War II started. Then the Bauer company folded up, or folded up temporarily. They had no stock. So we let our stock run out then and gave up the agency. Continental Type Founders stopped business about, oh, 1935 or 1935, after they had been in about ten years. Mr. Cary died suddenly and that broke the whole thing up.

But in the meantime the Monotype people had become busy. They had copied the Kabel type exactly, which they called Sans Serif. And we bought the matrices for that and started to make it in our foundry. Later they came out with a face which they called Twentieth Century, which was an exact copy of Futura, the best seller of the Bauer Type Foundry.





Harris: We had established ourselves in the eleven western states as standing for something different, so that it was an important thing in our business and in our reputation.

Teiser: The printing industry as a whole had profited by it, had it not?

Harris: They had profited and we had profited, and it had helped us gain an influence in this area. For instance, I remember that we got out about three copies of a little publication which we called Western Typography, which was just a house organ. One of these went to the Recorder Printing and Publishing Company. They sent for me, and they put in a thousand or fifteen hundred dollars worth, to start, of imported types. The buying public was demanding some faces that were different. So we were helping the local printer and also establishing ourselves as standing for something a little bit more than just typesetting on the galley in Cheltenham or something like that.

We weathered the Depression. I don't know how we did, except that when we made a few dollars both Mr. Mckenzie and I were the type of people that didn't declare it in dividends or raise our salaries; we kept pumping it back into the business. We had one thing that could have wrecked us except that we had established a line of credit at the bank, something that I don't think any typesetter up to that time had. But early in my career with this company--I had some training in how to handle finances through my various experiences with the Monotype Company--so I knew the people at the Wells Fargo Bank and established a line of credit. In other words, we could borrow on unsecured notes up to a certain amount, to buy equipment or to help us over tough spots. I think when we established it the line of credit was \$20,000. They told us we were entitled to more, but that was about all we needed. The only thing they had, Mr. Mackenzie and I had signed a continuing guarantee. That line of credit at the bank, at the present time, is many times that, but we don't use it any more. [Laughter] So it goes.



## Business Problems and World War II

Teiser: What was this blow?

Harris: This blow was a sad one. It had to do with railroad tariff. We did railroad tariff for the Progress Printing Corporation. We had five thousand or more pages standing. Our contract with them was that we would do, within the necessary time, any new or revised tariff pages, deliver them to them ready to print, and then have the pages returned to us. This sometimes ran into big business. We had one period when there were a great deal of new issues of tariff, where we built up, over a period of about a week, until we were getting out from eighty to a hundred pages per day from mat manuscript to completed pages, and that's a lot of work.

The only trouble with this business was--if it had been continuous we could have profited by it. But when the tariff came in we'd go down to the union halls and hire twenty or thirty men and have them come in. We paid no attention to our other customers and we lost a lot of customers. If we had a tariff rush for four to six weeks, then after it was all over we'd have to go back and make peace with some of our other, small customers--explain why we didn't do their work on time, or why we couldn't do it at the time we had this tariff in. The man who was the head of the Progress Printing Corporation ran his business on a different way. If he had a big profit for a couple of months, then he and his associate, who had a little interest in the company, would spend it. It was going to be Christmas every day of the year. We financed this for him by accepting monthly notes on which he paid the interest. We discounted them at the bank because we weren't big enough to finance to any extent, except with our bank credit.

One day we were called to a meeting by the attorney for the Zellerbach Paper Company. When we got there we learned that the Progress Printing Corporation was all out of money and we had the distinction of being designated as chairmen of the creditors' committee. That meant that our account was the largest. They owed us \$35,000. They owed Zellerbach Paper Company thirty; and they owed the





Harris: landlord, Mr. John Cahill, who owned the building at Sansome and Clay, \$16,000 for back rent. The rest of their debts didn't amount to more than about \$5,000.

Well, I'll tell you what saved us. We were not in a position to lose \$35,000 or any part of it, because it was during the Depression. This was about, oh, the middle 'thirties.

Mr. Mackenzie and I worked very well as a team. I would look at him and he would look at me, and something would transpire: "Let's get out of here and talk it over."

This meeting was held in the morning. Of course, the other two major creditors had lots of money, but we didn't. They thought the thing to do was to declare a moratorium and see if this man could get out of the hole he was in.

So we told them we'd like to think it over until after lunch, and made an appointment to see them at 1:30, resume the meeting. We walked up from the Mills Building, where this meeting was held, to the Wells Fargo Bank and went in to see vice-president Oliver Carlson and told him what had happened. He looked across the desk and smiled and he said, "Gentlemen, you've been doing business at this bank for a good many years and you never really needed a bank, but you need one today and you've got one. You go back to the meeting this afternoon; you can talk as big as the Zellerbach Paper Company because now it's the Wells Fargo Bank and you together. We will take your note for this whole amount and make these funds available; or the notes that come due, we'll cover them. And one day you will be able to pay this back. But in the meantime your credit will not be affected here."

That saved us. We took a net loss over a period of three or four years before we creditors finally sold that business to Sunset Press. But we took a net loss of \$25,000. I'm going to tell you how I got it back, later.

During the war years this business--

Oh, I'd better say this. I was ordered to active duty in the Army in July of 1941, before Pearl Harbor. I was in the reserve, had a rank as a major. Business





Harris: still hadn't resumed any healthy aspect. We were getting by, and that's about all. The law at the time was that they could order a reserve officer to active duty for a year. Then after I was in, that law was rescinded and I was in the Army during the Second World War until August of 1946. That's five years and a month.

Mr. Mackenzie ran the business, although his health was failing at the time I was ordered into the Army. I had an agreement from him--I was stationed a good deal of the time in the vicinity of the Bay Area--and I had an agreement with him that the company would not do any government business, any Army or Navy business, because I wanted to be, like Caesar's wife, above suspicion. Yes . . . we did two jobs toward the end of the war for a local installation that needed something, and there was no bill rendered for that. That was after Mr. Mackenzie's death.

Mr. Mackenzie died suddenly in July of 1944. This was the second shock I'd had because I'd lost my son the year before. He was killed in France, pilot on a plane. I didn't know exactly what to do. But I got a call from the Wells Fargo Bank to come down and see them. So I got off a few hours. I was stationed at that time on the general staff at the San Francisco Port of Embarkation. And they at the bank asked me what I was going to do with the business. They had been designated as trustees and executors of Mr. Mackenzie's estate.

I told them I wasn't going to do anything with it because it was mostly Mr. Mackenzie's business from the standpoint of stock ownership and I was in the Army and very busy.

They said, "Let's read the will." They read the will and Mr. Mackenzie had draped this business around my neck; nobody could buy stock unless I had the refusal of it at the same price offered, and nobody could buy stock unless I would approve of them. And as long as I lived and had an interest in the company I was to be the head of it. He left a widow; he had no children.

As I thought about this I also didn't feel happy on two possibilities. One was that maybe the bank would be the trustee of an estate and I would be running a business and that the bank would be able to



Harris: tell me what to do each day. Bankers are very good at banking but I don't think very good at running a manufacturing business, which also holds good as far as widows are concerned. This was all in the best of thought to Mrs. Mackenzie, but I just didn't think well of it. But I went into my possible resources. I had bought some stocks in the 'thirties in outside companies, and I had some savings and different things. So a month after his death I made an offer for the total amount of Mr. Mackenzie's stock. The trustees, over at the trust department of the bank, told me frankly when they got it that they, at that time, had had a chance to make a survey of the business, that the offer was fair and generous, and they approved it after they had an appraisal made of the plant.

Then Mrs. Mackenzie--which is too frequently the case with widows--had a much more inflated idea of the value of the company than my offer. So I advised her to get someone else, which she did. She got some attorney and appraiser of her own choice. And they gave her the same recommendation that the Wells Fargo Bank did. Which I'm glad she did. It cost her a few thousand dollars to get that opinion, but it made her feel that I had made a fair and just offer.

I made arrangements, which were provided for in his will, to buy this on the installment plan. When I took possession of his stock the following March, that was March of 1945, I had the cash for the whole thing. I had brought in a small group of key people and had made arrangements for them to raise money, to put in with me and help to pay for their stock on the installment plan.

It's made a very satisfactory arrangement. There have been two or three people who have died and their stock has been absorbed. As far as my running the business is concerned, there's no question who has the most stock--and it's way over half. But these people have a further incentive and are closer to me than they would be if they weren't stockholders. There are six people in the organization that own stock in the company.

Teiser: People who are employed here?

Harris: Employed here. And I don't want anybody from the outside ever to own it because we operate it somewhat as





Harris: a family.

So much for the corporate structure. Now I'll tell you how we got back that loss of \$25,000. I got out of the Army in 1946, that summer, and that fall I made up my mind that our future did not exist in the setting of railroad tariffs. It was a ruinous type of business. The railroads buy only on price. Sometimes we'd keep five hundred pages standing without cost to the railroad for three or four years. When it came up for reissue they'd send it back East to somebody who'd do it a little cheaper. So one day I went out to Mr. [Frank F.] Kilsby, who was the president of the Recorder Printing and Publishing Company. We were then doing the tariff for them because the Sunset Press had been bought by the Recorder in the interim. I almost jarred Mr. Kilsby out of his chair. I said, "I'm getting out of the tariff business."

"What do you mean?"

I said, "We're not going to do any more tariffs. Do you want to buy the pages, or what?"

Well, he was pretty shocked. He said, "You mean you're not going to do any more tariff?"

I said, "No. We're through."

He made me a ridiculous offer for the metal tied up in standing pages, not the current price of metal, but what we had paid for it originally. I said, "No, we'll forget the whole thing. Let's make it the first of December." (I think that was the first of November.) "You do your own tariff. You've got Monotype machines. And we will do something else."

Now a page of tariff weighed seventeen pounds. We had five thousand. That was 85,000 pounds of metal, which we had bought previous to the war at an average of ten cents a pound, which was \$8,500. That metal at that time was worth over thirty cents a pound. So I made a contract with a dealer who sold supplies to printers to transform this into Monotype rules, and he would pay me the current price of metal, which was over thirty cents a pound. So, you see, I had picked up \$17,000 right there. Then I got enough for casting that into rule to more than make up for





Harris: the difference of the twenty-five thousand that we had lost through the demise of the Progress Printing Corporation. So we got out of the tariff business, eventually, without being hurt too much.

Now we've got the structure of this company from the war up to the present time. But I've found out (I don't like to use this word, and I wonder what a substitute for "image" would be) you might say our high reputation for fine work and care was slightly tarnished during the war years because nobody had to do things well. And the direction of the business was more to get out the work that had to be done, than to maintain our old standard of quality.

So I had to, first, startle the people in the shop. I hadn't been back very long when I went over to the shipping desk one day. There were two fairly large jobs, three or four hundred dollars apiece, composition, ready to deliver. I looked in the envelope for the proofs. I called the superintendent over and I said this loud enough for a few people to hear me, and then eventually it went all over the shop. I said, "This is not the kind of work that Mackenzie & Harris built its reputation on in the past and it will not be the kind of work we will do in the future. Now will you please dump both of these jobs in front of me, and we'll do them over at our cost the way they should have been done." Well, that really got around pretty quick, through the whole shop. In fact the old-timers, some of them, came up and said, "Thank God things are going to be different." So we started.

That was the beginning of more supervision and care in things we did.

#### Centaur Broadside and "From Gutenberg to Grabhorn"

Harris: Then we decided to, by advertising in trade publications and particularly in direct mail, to give an entirely different aspect to this company. One of the first things we did is we sent out the Centaur broadside.

Teiser: What year was that?



Harris: That was in 1948. There's an interesting story about the text of that. I can tell it now. It fits into another part of this picture. I liked to get together, as you remember in the Taylor pamphlet,\* two or three different important people into one project because it really impresses people a great deal that this is a serious thing that's being done. So I induced Rogers to design a broadside. I knew him quite well; we used to correspond. He wrote me and said, "Anyone else I'd charge a thousand dollars, but for you I'll do it for \$750." I showed you the other day the rough he sent us.

By correspondence I had a promise from Beatrice Warde to write the text of it. I wanted her to help in this project because of the fact that it was Centaur, which first was cut in England (the matrices are still cut in England) -- to tie it together. She had a great reputation, and has a great reputation, under the name either of Beatrice Warde or Paul Beaujon. Her first writings were in the Fleurion under the name of Paul Beaujon, and she got her reputation as that. But she agreed to do it, and with great excitement.

My wife and I went to Europe in the early spring of 1947 for two or three reasons. I'd been in the Army. Except for a trip we'd made up in Canada in the summer of 1946, we hadn't been away much and we were burdened with sorrows, on account of our son; we wanted to go to Europe and see his grave. And I had information as to where his plane had fallen and I wanted to talk to the people.

I returned before my wife did and spent a week in London, and had an engagement to meet Beatrice Warde for lunch the first day I was there. She was just returning from the United States. Then the next day Stanley Morison and she had lunch with me. I had a photostat of this layout, and they both agreed that she would write the text for it, which would be the history of the type. I returned with that agreement. There was no talk of cost. I would have expected to pay her fee, and that would be done in accord with her wishes--but it wasn't a thing to talk over at the lunch table. But I came back with that agreement, and for several months I couldn't get an answer about it.

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\* See pp. 25-26 and 28-30.





Harris: She never sent me the copy. When I enquired when it would be ready she never answered my letters. We were really pushing to get this thing done, and Rogers was puzzled, too. Because he had known her for a long time and had a very favorable opinion of her. He and I corresponded, and he couldn't understand it. Then I got Bob Grabhorn to write it. Now I'm glad I did.

Teiser: How did you happen to get him? Had he done much writing?

Harris: Well, no, but he could do it, and he was pretty familiar with the story of Centaur. If you notice the text of the broadside, starting at the 6 point, read through that, then go across, to the next, you'll find it's a continuous story, the history of the type, without a break in it. If you notice, also, about that broadside, there isn't a hyphen in it. In all the whole thing! I take credit for that. For three weeks I stood over a stone with a hand compositor in our shop and we shifted words until we got perfect spacing. No hyphens.

Teiser: That's wonderful. Who was the man?

Harris: Jack Sims did the work. He's still with us. He's been with us for thirty years. That was such an important thing for us that it had to be perfect. That was mailed out. It was printed by Taylor and Taylor. It's on permanent paper, permanent ink. It should look just as well a hundred years from now as it does now.

Teiser: How many were printed?

Harris: We printed about I think 3,500. When one of these went to Chicago, the Art Director's Club of Chicago asked for three or four hundred to send to all their members in the Middle West. I mean it had just the reaction we wanted. For instance, the director of the University Press at Cambridge, England, wrote me and he said that when he received this he had it framed and he put it in his office so when he raises his head from his work he always looks at it. I mean it had that effect on a good many people.

Teiser: It is framed in many of the best places in San Francisco.

Harris: Yes. I've seen it listed already in antiquarian book-





Harris: sellers' catalogue, I think five or ten dollars or something like that. We have a few, but we don't give them out now except to special patrons.

At the same time we did that we started something else. Western Advertising, at the time, was a very fine magazine here in the West. We had a full-page ad every month. It's awfully hard to have something that's refreshing about type, or composition, each month. This was one of those inspirational things that come to you every now and then. One day I said to myself, "Wouldn't it be interesting if we could picture to our clients--our customers--and prospective customers--how much easier ancient printing would have been if they'd been able to deal with Mackenzie & Harris." This was a pixie kind of a thought. I talked it over with my associate, our vice-president, Mr. Starr Dunham, who was with us for around thirty years. He died five years ago. He said, "I know exactly the man to write it, Jimmy Garthwaite." That's W. B. Garthwaite. He's an advertising man and writer with just the sense of humor.

I think I picked the name of the series: "From Gutenberg to Grabhorn." Then we hired Mallette Dean to make the illustrations. We ran twenty-five of them, twenty-five months. Garthwaite would come in. I would have picked someone. From each country we'd pick somebody, not necessarily the first printer there, but somebody who was outstanding. For instance, in Spain we picked Ibarra. For Mexico we picked Juan Pablos, the first printer on the North American continent. I don't know whether you know it or not, but printing was introduced in Mexico City ninety-nine years before the first printing was done in the American colonies.

We'd try to get some scrap for the pictures. If not, we'd imagine how they looked. This opened up a whole field of correspondence with people. I corresponded with some people in Mexico City. There is no known picture, imaginary or otherwise, of Juan Pablos. So Mallette drew him on a burro riding across the desert with a big hat on and something to indicate he was a printer. The theme of these ads was--have you seen them?

Teiser: I've seen many of them, yes.



Harris: The theme was "The printer speaks out of the page." John Gutenberg tells what he did, in his quaint language, and winds up, perhaps, "Ah, but if I'd been able to send the drudgery of this work to Mackenzie & Harris I would have been able to accomplish a great deal more." Or something in that sense.

These things had a tremendous impact on people. I got lots and lots of calls to reproduce them. We reproduced the first six, had the Grabhorn Press do it as a keepsake. The rest of them, a couple of boys in our shop, on their own time, printed thirty or forty copies of them. We have the pages. They were just unbelievably good advertising.

We've consistently done good advertising, and every three to five years get out a complete new specimen book. In different specimen books we have a big problem. Our main specimen book covers only a one line specimen, a listing, and prices of types manufactured in our foundry. We send out about three thousand copies of this book per year. Fifteen thousand books last us five years. Then we have a condensed specimen book simply listing and showing one line and sizes available in our shop, of all types manufactured by us and many, many types of domestic and foreign origin in which we can furnish hand or machine composition. Our problem is that every book is out-of-date a short time after it is printed. As long as we conduct an active business we will continue to add to our various type faces.

We went seriously into the business of making type as well as doing composition. When I came back from the war, we had, so to speak, no stock of type on the shelf, and orders had been laying on the shipping desk for fourteen months unfilled. That's a hell of a way to run a type business. So we had to build up from that with an increasing business, and always stimulate our line with new faces, new matrices. I'll tell you the theory we used on matrices in a second. But today, with the type business--we sold as much type last month as we'd sell in a year up to 1945. So we made a substantial business out of it. We refined it; we made better type; we got better metal formulas of our own; better packaging, so that we don't have any breakage. We now carry about eighty tons of type in fonts in stock, about 160,000 pounds, at all times. We have on hand an array of type faces which is unbelievable.





Harris: We don't sell anybody else's fonts of type as dealers. If we decide to manufacture and sell fonts of a type series, we buy matrices for all sizes available. We include odd sizes like seven, nine and 11 points and we include all the point sizes that are available to 72 points. And we buy accented matrices for all the Latin languages, Scandinavian, German, at the time we buy the matrices.

Teiser: Where do you buy the matrices?

Harris: All through the Lanston Monotype Company. But a good many of our faces are made in England. These come from the English Monotype Corporation.

Besides it being a good business, this type end of our business, it's good for our composition shop because we have all this stuff available. If we, as we sometimes do from an advertising agency, get a prospectus that's set in 24-point type, maybe we'll use five hundred pounds of 24-point. We start a machine in the foundry making sorts as the hand compositors outside begin to set. So there is no limit; they can make as many pages as they want. And when it's all over we dump it and make it over again.

Teiser: How much of your type now, in the shop, is set by hand?

Harris: In dollar volume, I would say it's about fifty-fifty with machine composition. We don't see any lack of use of hand compositors. With the addition of more faces we naturally were able to do more book work. For instance, this fine press in western Massachusetts, the Gehenna Press. I think the thing that attracted them to us was the Van Dijck face, which was designed for the English Monotype Company by Jan van Krimpen. He was with the Enschede type foundry of Haarlem, Holland. He's the designer of Lutetia, Romulus, and Spectrum, and a lot of other well-known faces. Dead now.

I felt so good when Stanley Morison was here for a day about three or four years ago. I didn't have him for lunch because he had a date with a lady for lunch, but had him in the forenoon up at the French Club. As a strange habit he likes to drink mild white wine in the morning. We were talking type faces. I said, "I'm so happy we got the Van Dijck."

He said, "I can't understand why that face didn't





Harris: sell. Because it is the best face we [English Monotype] have." He said, "There are four people that have bought it. Somebody in Switzerland, yourselves, and two in England."

Then I urged him to get English Monotype to make this face in larger sizes. They made the matrices for up to 36, which we've had only a few months. Maybe that will help to sell it. But that attracted this press in New England to Mackenzie & Harris because it just was something that was so much better. That's the face that we used in the Carl Wheat books.

#### Western Book Work

Harris: The thing that is needed, and always has been needed here, in addition to the printers who do fine books, it seems to me, to support a good industry, would be just book work. It's out of the question for us to set cheap novels and purely straight matter and compete with plants like the Kingsport Press in Kingsport, Tennessee, where it's a non-union shop and tremendous plant; or the Colonial Press up in Massachusetts, right outside of Boston; plants like that.

But I made a survey in 1947, after I returned from Europe, and then I made another one, went back East about 1950, and visited New York and Boston and Philadelphia, and visited the heads of the principal publishers back there to see what could be done about getting book work on the West Coast. One of the things I discovered was that as far as technical books were concerned, there was a chance to do that sort of work. One of the first things I did when I came back was to press that project and get some to set at any price we could get them, just for the experience. Now we have a crew of people who can do technical book work as well as anybody in the country, and we do a great deal of it.

Teiser: For whom?

Harris: We do it for the University of California Press; we do it for textbook publishers, college textbook publishers, both back East and out here. We've done a great deal of work of this sort for W. H. Freeman



Harris: Company, Addison-Wesley, Cummings and others.

We had to prepare ourselves, and of course add a great deal to the special characters that are needed. Then I tried to do something, and certainly failed miserably, because I couldn't get any support. I tried to get the printers as a whole in this area to do something about the facilities other than typesetting. As far as typesetting is concerned, we are able to meet competition any place in the United States on difficult work and fine typography; but on cheap and shoddy work, no. The thing that was difficult was presswork and binding. The most pressing thing, and still is in a way, was binding facilities because it costs a fortune, or two or three fortunes, to set up even a small bindery with casemaking machines and casing-in machines, all this mechanization that you see in all the big book production plants. There was a bindery here for sale, the Keys Bindery. I sort of took an unofficial promise, or option, on that plant, then called a meeting of all the principal printers--there were about twelve of them--to have lunch in a private room at the Palace Hotel.

This was about 1947 or '48 or '49, and I presented to them that this thing is here. These two things, I said, we have to do: first, I said, we have to get facilities to do binding and then look at presswork and platemaking from the standpoint of book production rather than from the standpoint only of a small job, or advertising. I proposed that we form a company of interested people, who were at this luncheon, buy the Keys Bindery, and each of us fork up some money to make it modern plant.

I don't know . . . printers are funny people. I guess all kinds of people are funny people. I got the feeling among some of them, well, they wondered "What's this fellow going to get out of it?" The only person who gave me a good reaction to that meeting was--the next morning I had a telephone call from Mr. S. S. Kauffman, the head of the Crocker Union plant. He said, "I have already had a meeting of my directors. We've authorized the initial payment in this proposition of yours of \$20,000 from us. How many others have called you?"

I said, "You're the only one." And to this day the only one that was ready to go ahead with this was Mr. Kauffman. But it was out of the question for the





Harris: two of us to go alone.

Then, of course, we ran into something else. The fact that there is a big press in Sacramento which takes away from possible business of private concerns. The state plant.\* It's hard to get that work away from there or keep them from doing it unless that old law of 1895 or something is repealed. I even did work on that, went down and talked to the head of the P.T.A. I had assurance from the head of the teachers' association, Mr. Roy Cloud, now dead. He was ready to retire. He said, "I'll head up a movement to get the necessary signatures and the push behind this thing. Because it's really bad for the schools to have the books printed in Sacramento. If I could help to repeal this law and have it open to all publishers to do their books, even though they might have to have them done in California, it would be the crowning achievement of my life."

He explained to me the iniquity of the present law, which is that these adoptions by the state have to be with publishers who will allow the state to print them, and lease plates to them. And five or six of the leading publishers of textbooks refuse to do this because they don't have to do it, and have refused to turn over the plates of their copyrighted books to the state. So what happens? The school districts that are comparatively rich will take the books that they got for nothing from the state, and out of their own funds they will buy auxiliary books, which are the ones they want, from publishers, and put the books from the state on the shelf as reference books. So at that time we found out that the cost per capita of school books here was higher than any state in the union.

Teiser: Hasn't that law been modified, though?

Harris: Somewhat, it has been modified. But this was way back. This has been modified, and some of those publishers are now working with the state, and I think the state has modified its position a bit too. But we were trying to do something. I got back to my knitting, where I should have been all the time.

Teiser: I can't remember the name of the man who bought the Keys Bindery at that time.

Harris: That was John Rogers. Then he sold it to the Levison

\*  
Of the California State Department of Finance Printing Division, commonly referred to as the California State Printing Plant.





Harris: brothers, who bought Cardoza\*.

Teiser: Rogers had a big idea and lots of energy. He was going to do something with it.

Harris: Well, of course, he didn't know anything about binding. In all these technical businesses, you really--

Teiser: He made a good try, though.

Harris: He did, and he's a very nice fellow. He was at the mercy of somebody, and he couldn't make a go of it. He was very unhappy about it. And, too, I've seen this so often; if a fellow doesn't have to work--this sounds like a Communist, but I don't mean it that way--if he doesn't have to work he doesn't put the same thought into it as if he has to work in order to eat and take vacations and do the things he wants to do, so he gets in and does more about whatever his business is. And certainly that's been my case all my life, that I've felt I had to do things.

Teiser: Have you gone on doing book work with Cardoza?

Harris: No, we've just done it ourselves.

Teiser: It hasn't been affected by Cardoza's facilities?

Harris: No, not at all. Because most of the things they are doing, they are getting plates for from the East, anyhow. This is the biggest book we've ever gotten from the East.

Teiser: What is that?

Harris: Encyclopedia of U. S. Government Benefits.

Teiser: Would you start with that next time?

Harris: Yes, this would be a good thing.

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\*The Levison-owned company was named the Cardoza Bookbinding Company.



(Interview 5--May 11, 1967)

Investments and Eastern Book Work

Teiser: I have a note here to start with the book on U. S. government benefits. And also to ask you why you buy the accents.

Harris: Oh, you want to ask me that one first, why we always buy accents with type?

Teiser: Yes.

Harris: Well, the strange thing is that in a business such as ours, where there are so many people whom we deal with, from time to time and more frequently than you would imagine, people want to buy fonts of type with accents. Certain areas of the country where Spanish is used, down South, or Mexico. We also sell French accents and Scandinavian. I'm a great one to be prepared for anything that might come up, and so we decided, more than twenty years ago, never to buy a series of type again unless we bought all sizes for which the matrices had been made and the odd sizes, particularly necessary in book work: the 7, 9, and 11, and 13, and 16, and 22-point, if they are made, and 20-point in some. This is particularly true of doing book work and in fine work for advertising. Because of the fact that we decided always to buy the accents for the Latin languages, the Scandinavian and German, we frequently attract business here that we otherwise may not get. It's quite expensive. But it's like anything you do in buying equipment for a plant. If you have use for it at any time and have it, that may make up for the expense.

The main objection to something that's very expensive: do you have enough money to pay for it when you buy it? And we've fortunately been able to dig up enough money to pay for things for a good many years.



**Harris:** It's just like we buy all sorts of tools and presses and things to save steps in the shop. Let's take for example a saw. Nearly every printer has a saw within five or six feet of him. His avoidable steps are more expensive than the depreciation on the saw. The saw, for instance, might cost eight or nine hundred dollars, say a thousand dollars installed. It's depreciated often in ten years, so it's a hundred dollars a year, which is about two dollars a week to have that saw handy, and that might be saved in one day if a printer has a lot of sawing to do. Instead of walking halfway across the room, he walks just a few feet, and has it handy as his tool. And doesn't have to wait too, so that people won't be ganged up waiting for an inadequate amount of equipment.

Another thing about the expense of having lots of matrices: some people ask me, well, why do you have so many more matrices than anyone else, and how economically can you justify this? If we have a lot of Monotype machines, well, I--I speak of Monotype because that's my first love and my longest love--if we have a lot of Monotype machines pounding out composition all day long, for every revolution of the machine we're wearing out some matrices. Now we have a policy that as soon as a matrix shows the slightest wear, we replace it. If we have lots of different faces to select from, we're not wearing out any more matrices, but we're offering our clients or customers more varieties of type from which to select for the work they want done. And if you take it over a period of twenty or thirty years, and instead of constantly buying or replacing the same complete series, such as Garamond or something like that, if we buy some other face that will take part of that load off, we'd buy enough matrices to handle all these machines running and spread the load over different faces rather than all into three faces. Now in this way we differ greatly from Eastern shops, not trade shops, but Eastern shops who manufacture trade books. Mostly they have a very limited number of type faces for book work.

**Teiser:** The other side of having so many matrices is you have to pay the expenses of storing and maintaining--

**Harris:** Storage is of no consequence. A Monotype font of matrices is not any bigger than my hand. Two hundred and twenty-five in a case for one, and for the Monomatic, which I'll talk about later, we have three







Harris: hundred and twenty-four matrices. It's about as big as your hand. That does not involve any great problem of storage.

Teiser: Then you have the San Francisco inventory tax.

Harris: Yes, that we have to bear with.

Teiser: You have to pay tax on everything?

Harris: Everything we have, yes. But taxes are burdensome no matter where they come from, and if it isn't one place, it's another, and we have learned to live with these things.

Now, I was going to talk about this book, but before I do that I'll give you an example of how fonts of matrices bring business. An example is this plant at Northampton in western Massachusetts, which does fine printing. It is the private printing plant of Leonard Baskin, the noted wood engraver, etcher, illustrator and typographic designer. He is a professor at Smith College, where he teaches wood engraving and etching. Mr. Baskin started sending typesetting to us several years ago because we had Centaur, Van Dijck, and other fine types not available from typesetting plants in the East.

Teiser: What is the name of the press?

Harris: The Gehenna Press. We've done a lot of books for it.\* Most of them have been in Centaur, and we're the only trade plant in America that has Centaur matrices. There are a few plants, large plants, that have a few sizes of Centaur, like Donnelley's in Chicago.

Now here's an example: Yesterday morning we got a manuscript for a play written by Archibald MacLeish. Came in from that plant, with instructions to call them on the telephone, which we did, and they asked us to get it out as soon as possible, and ship the type to them by air express. We've done this for them several times, but this is really the tops. The job has got to be shipped, I don't know . . . it'll be several hundred pounds by air express. They need it. They want to start on it tomorrow, to print it. And it's something very important. We wouldn't get that if there were somebody within a hundred miles, or in Boston or someplace, with Centaur and could set type as well as we do. And they should be able to do

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\* See also pp. 52-53.



Harris: it. It would be natural that they'd go there for that, and send it out on a truck. But we've been getting work from these people now for quite a few years. It's extremely interesting.

Teiser: Do they print regular trade books?

Harris: No, they're limited editions, and really fine work. You can tell by the composition.

We've done all of this series, they call it the Format series, for the Sierra Club. We've done all but one. I think they issued altogether over twelve of them, and there are some more in the works right now. And they're all in Centaur. One reason that we would get it is because they like Centaur type, and the other one is, I think, they're given what they want when they want it, and of a quality to go with it.

Teiser: Who does the presswork for the Sierra Club?

Harris: It's done back in New York, most of it, and bound back there. Some of them have been printed at Crocker Union, by offset, but they've been bound in the East.

### Post-World War II Changes

Harris: Now I wanted to tell you about--I think I better preface it that, when I got out of the Army and came back here in 1946, it seemed that there were a million things we had to do to catch up.

Teiser: Who was in charge of the plant during that period after Mr. Mackenzie--

Harris: After Mr. Mackenzie died there were three people whom I delegated as a committee to run the business, and that was in 1944, two years before I got out of the Army: Lester Lloyd who's (and I'm glad of the opportunity to speak of him) now vice-president of the company. Lester Lloyd came here out of high school in 1926. And how did I happen to find him? All my life I've searched for talent, young, that you can train to do things the way you think they should be done. And we had had not such good luck with an





Harris: apprentice or two, so I called on the printing instructors of all the schools in the Bay Area. And a Mr. Clifford Marker, who was teaching at the Berkeley High, said, "I have a young man who's not only the best this year, but the best student we ever had here." And then I asked him to send him over, and we hired him. He was a gawky, long-legged, long-armed young fellow, and he's been here ever since. He's now and for many years has been superintendent of the plant.

Everybody knows him as the nicest and the most helpful fellow in the world. He wasn't the senior of the three; he was number two. At that time Mr. Starr Dunham was the vice-president of the company. He became that after Mr. Mackenzie died and I stepped up to number one. And it's odd how I happened to get Starr Dunham. In 1925 he was running the private printing plant for the Mercantile Trust Company, which afterwards contained the American Trust and now is merged with the Wells Fargo Bank. And this bright young man, who in his youth had been an actor in the Orpheum Circuit, was running this private plant, and a very personable fellow. We needed, I needed, some help. I was doing the selling, and I needed an understudy, so I said to him one day, "How would you like to work for us?" And he said, "Fine, when do I start?" So I said, "Well, you better give a week or two notice, and then start." So he came to work and was assistant to me handling the sales, and then took on greater activities, and did a great deal to develop work with advertising agencies. He had a natural ability to make friends and learned the business, and he stayed here until he died five years ago. He was number one of this trio, number two was Lester Lloyd, and number three was Miss Robinson (her name was really Mrs. Tom Mosier), and she was in charge of the office accounts, et cetera.

Teiser: What was her first name?

Harris: Helen, Helen Robinson. (We always called her by the name she had when she came to work for us.)

So I got a few hours free after I decided to buy the business and made the offer and was told that I had to do something about it. I was stationed in Fort Mason, so I could get off for a few hours. I came down, and I told them that I wanted them to run the business as a committee and I didn't think they'd have any trouble getting along with each other, they





Harris: all knew each other, and if they got a deadlock and didn't know what to do, I might spare a few minutes, but I wanted to keep myself entirely detached from any business activity while I was in the Army and stationed nearby. As it was I had a seven-day job at Fort Mason, the Headquarters of the San Francisco Port of Embarkation, from early in the morning until late at night. I didn't have any time for outside interests. See, I was in charge of one of the four operating G divisions of the fort. I was on the general staff. I was head of G2 (Intelligence and Security) and public relations and a lot of other things, so I was quite busy. The trio did an admirable job of keeping things going, and keeping the plant running, and of course I made arrangements for each of them to be able to buy some stock from that which I had bought from the Mackenzie estate.

Teiser: I interrupted you to ask you about them when you were telling the background of this book which you have--

Harris: We had two or three things to do when I got out, and between times I had thought a great deal about things we wanted to do, to build up a business which would have more permanence to it than it had had before, where it'd be a feast or a famine. And the only way you could do that would be to get a line of work that has more time allowed, and that is usually true of book work. You may have a big book that you've got in process for four or five months, so it keeps a certain part of the crew going, and if you have rush things, you can take them off of it for a little time to get out the rush work, and then go back on the main job. And so we had problems first of re-establishing the name for style and quality of our work that we had started to do before, and the problem number two was to expand the plant and add more new things, type faces and equipment to do the work we expected to follow our plans of expansion.

We organized our shop so that it could handle lots of jobs and not funnel them all through one person, which is so frequently the case in a small business like ours, where the foreman handles everything. Further we planned to build up sales of fonts of type produced in our type foundry. We had lots of problems before us in planning a new way of doing things and an organization which could carry out our



Harris: plans. We were able to get fine cooperation in this endeavor from practically all of our employees. And from them we received many good ideas.

We also started to divide our shop into small working groups, like a team, and I remember how we proposed this to our staff. We wanted to give our customers the personal service of a one-man print shop plus the facilities of a big plant. So this was developed, and now it's been in effect for almost twenty years. Large, regular accounts, are always handled by the same printer, and he's familiar with every detail of the accounts assigned to him. For instance, we've handled a big grocery chain's newspaper advertising for this part of the United States for over twenty-five years. The same man, Jack Sims, has been in charge of it all this time. He knows all the details for he has lived with it all these many years.

Teiser: You set those great big ads?

Harris: Every week, every week. For over twenty-five years. A couple of artists and the production manager can come down here and finish the things up in an office we provide for them when time is short in meeting deadlines.

So the shop's broken up into about twelve operating units. And each man has a telephone, and he has the liberty to call up the customers he services, and they can call him and get him direct, and this goes on.

Teiser: What does each team consist of?

Harris: It has to be a number one and a number two man. Some of them have more than that, depending on the number of accounts they have. Or the number one man might lend his number two man to somebody else who needs him. They work back and forth that way.

We have proceeded for the last twenty years on the theory that every important job must be backed up by at least one layer below, and sometimes two, for vacations and sickness and the erosion of time and things that affect your organization. We have that even at the shipping desk. The number two man has got to be able to step in and handle it as well as the number one man. When this thing was looming





Harris: as a new way of doing things, I had a meeting of all the shop. This was in I think the fall of 1946, so it's twenty-one years ago, almost. I would always be irritated and sort of embarrassed in the olden days if someone would ask for a raise, because I've gone through my whole life and never asked for a raise, and I don't know why other people shouldn't. Maybe I was more fortunate. So I had a meeting, and I announced the new policy.

I said, "We have a new way of doing things. My job is to evaluate all of you people and figure what you're worth to the company. It's possible that I may be a little slow in seeing your talents, slower than you are, or our viewpoint might be different, because after all you're one viewpoint, and I'm the other, but I'll assure you that I'm honestly going to work at this, and review the whole force from time to time with the superintendent, and make sure that everybody is being paid as much as we can afford under the circumstances and for his efforts." You see, we run the shop where we . . . it's a union shop, but the scale is only a base to take off from. Every man in the shop gets over the scale, but different amounts. "Now," I said, "you won't get a raise any quicker by asking for it, because I'm working on it, but," I said, "we're going to try to make it possible that you can feel that when you've earned it from my viewpoint, you're going to get it." And that day nearly everybody in the shop found he had an increase. I had done this, so they knew I meant what I was talking about. And we've worked that way ever since, and there's been no requests for increases in the twenty-year period.

Teiser: How often do you review them?

Harris: Oh, sometimes once a month, sometimes a couple of months. But as a business there's no particular formal way to do anything around here; we do everything informally.

Teiser: This gives you a constant review of the whole business, doesn't it?

Harris: There isn't anything that happens in this business that I don't know about. I'm every place; for a so-called executive I sit down less than anybody I've ever seen. I'm in the shop, I'm checking in--just because I'm interested. And just a little before





Harris: you came here today, I was in the caster room discussing with the chief mechanics about rebuilding some machines, and so forth. You see I can do these things myself, if I had to, so they know what I'm talking about, and I'm all over. I make the rounds at least once a day, sometimes two or three times, and see. And not in a measure of checking to see if a fellow's working hard enough, but to talk to him about his work, because we're going to always exist, I hope, by the excellence of the things that we do, and doing them on time.

### Setting Type for Books

Harris: And now, knowing the machine that we had and seeing the use of the Monotype on technical work and difficult work, it was obvious when we decided to go after book work that we had to continue to believe in the Monotype and sell the Monotype as the machine which can do that best. And one of the best illustrations of that is this book which we did in the fall of 1964. It was printed in the spring of 1965 for a publisher in New York. They have two names under which they operate. One is William H. Wise and the other is John J. Crawley.

It's an interesting story how we happened to hear about those people. They do a great number of children's books for the diocese of Cardinal Spellman in New York. These are in large type, and somewhere a long time ago, at least ten years ago, maybe longer, they adopted doing them in Centaur, because they liked the type face. But somebody told the production manager that instead of having them hand set in 14, 16, 18 and 24-point, maybe they could get the people who had all the Centaur to do it for them, so I got an enquiry. See, in Centaur we can set them on the machine up through 24-point. We have from 6-point clear up through 24-point that we machine set, so we started to do typesetting for them, and we did a great deal of it. They're the kind of books, picture books, religious books, that real young kids get, and they were very beautiful.

And I go East occasionally, I have no set time--sometimes I go a year between trips, and other times several years--but I'm always in touch with printing and printing production in the East Coast



Harris: and am acquainted with a good many of the people that are in charge of the main plants there and have visited plants in Philadelphia, Chicago, Boston, New York and vicinity. So I called on this company that we were doing these books for and suggested that they if they had anything that was real large that we could also handle that. That gave us a chance to be considered when this tremendous book was being planned, which is a real encyclopedia that describes every government benefit that there is in the United States.

Teiser: What's the title of it again?

Harris: The Encyclopedia of U. S. Government Benefits.

Teiser: How many pages is it?

Harris: One thousand and ten pages. And it's straight matter except that it has, we styled it up in Baskerville, Baskerville Bold, Baskerville Small caps, and Baskerville Italic. That's five type faces. There's no machine can set all those at one time without slowing the job up, with one exception, and that's the Monotype Monomatic, which came out ten years ago. I got a circular one day from the Monotype Company describing the new Monomatic, which was being offered. Believe it or not, I ordered it from that circular. Called the salesman up. The first unit cost us \$25,000, and we got the number two machine made by the manufacturer. I think the first one went to the Maple Press in York, Pennsylvania. Now we can set on the Monomatic all those faces at the same time from the keyboard, about two more versions than you could do with the ordinary Monotype machine. So we styled this book to do it that way all in the same point size, and we styled it so that the space above and below center headings would be uniform. We put a full quad line, not leads or anything like that, so that this book came off the machine so that the make-up only consisted of chopping them off at these two columns and putting the running head on. Almost the minimum. You see on the front page all this combination. All this came off the machine at one time.

Teiser: My word! This was offset?

Harris: Yes, this was offset. Now this is a case where in an area where labor is more expensive than it is in some places where they produce books back East, we were





- Harris: able to compete from the standpoint of service and on time to deliver at a competitive price. And the fact that it's offset, we have no bother about plates or type to be shipped. We pulled reproduction proofs four pages at a time on a Vandercook press. We've got seven Vandercook presses in our shop.
- Teiser: Those are proof presses.
- Harris: Proof presses. And on this book we didn't have a single rejected proof come back from New York. For an ordinary job of that type, doesn't it look well?
- Teiser: I should say.
- Harris: Now the odd thing about this is we have lots of type metal on hand. We have that book standing.
- Teiser: I was about to ask.
- Harris: And from two to four times a year, anywhere from fifty to a hundred pages come in for a revision for a new edition. This has been a phenomenal success. The first edition was 100,000 copies and I think practically all sold before it came off the presses.
- Teiser: But you have to keep all those standing.
- Harris: We keep them standing, but you see what that does. We've got three or four times a year a sizable job of corrections to do. And we just take the pages and cut the new stuff and insert it and pull a proof and send it back.
- Teiser: How much storage space does that take?
- Harris: Oh, we have storage space for thousands of pages on the basement floor in this building. We've provided for that as one of our plans for expanding. Now, we took advantage of air mail, so-called jet mail. And when we have proofs for this person, or anybody in New York City or thereabouts, we send it by air mail special delivery. We're two blocks from a branch post office. We get it over there before eleven o'clock this morning. Tomorrow morning when they open their office in New York it's waiting at the door.

Many of the plants that do book work are in





Harris: small towns outside of the big cities, and one of them is Maple Press in York, Pennsylvania. They can't get anything to New York as fast as we can because they don't have such air mail service. And as a matter of fact, anything from Palo Alto, if it comes by mail, wouldn't get to us any quicker. Sometimes not as quickly as the stuff we send back East.

Teiser: How many editions have you done of the encyclopedia?

Harris: Well, this has been revised, let's see, about ten times. We've had about ten sets of revisions for new editions. We had to do one last year where they had an order for 50,000 copies of this, and they had to get a revision. And there's no reason why this won't go on for so long as we're in business, because every time a session of Congress passes an important law which affects welfare or anything, or any government benefits, any revisions, that's got to be in the new edition. And for this publisher, it was a very clever thing on his part to think of this. Because once he's done it, nobody else is going to do it; it's too much invested in it.

Well, on this subject, books, we have developed quite a few sources, because you have to do that. We've done difficult books for the University of California Press, in years past. Here's one we did in 1949, Proceedings of the Berkeley Symposium on Mathematical Statistics and Probability. This is called the Neyman book. This kind of stuff, we can just eat that up, this mathematical formula. Then we were fortunate to get started with the William H. Freeman Company when it was organized. We got in touch with them and acquainted with them in 1946. And we did the first five or six books that they published.

Teiser: That was then in San Francisco?

Harris: In San Francisco. And what they publish are scientific books for the college and university level, and believe it or not, the first book we did for them was Linus Pauling's General Chemistry, which is quite famous. Then for a time, due to the facilities for press work and cost of electrotypes out here, all their work was done back East, and we temporarily lost that account. Then about ten or twelve years ago they began to use offset, which is what any publisher eventually does, particularly if it's repeats in big editions. And so now we're doing a great deal of work for this



Harris: company, and we've usually got at least one big book in the shop for them, because the use of offset has opened up a much wider field for us than if we were limited to the weight of type and plates and having it done. Unfortunately, even the electrotypers in this area are so used to making electrotypes for advertising that they're not familiar with the way that electrotypes are made for book work. There's a special rate on them back East. If you have more time to do it, you get a special rate.

I might say this, that in many kinds of manufacturing or merchandizing, the customer who buys in large volume and lets you exercise all the economies of mass production, he's entitled to a better price per unit. I think we sensed that, and when we do, or have to give an estimate on a large book, and have the necessary time to do it (not one that we have to get out in ten days) we make a study of what that book would do for our plant in keeping it running on an even keel over the next three or four months. That, or groups of books and things. We see how they dovetail in. Now this is a dangerous thing if you turn this thought loose to a bunch of salesmen who want to build up their sales, unless it has controls. And I'm the control. Nobody can release a promise of doing a thing at a certain date, of this type of big work. I don't mean I have to do all the ordinary stuff. But if it's a big book, if it's a job that's going to run into four or five hundred pages of technical work, and we have time to do it, then every estimate and promise that's given on that, I have to okay it, and we have to make sure too that their credit is good. We can't do this kind of work and this service for people where there's a shaky question of credit. They have to be the top as to credit.

We have to have enough time to do it the way it ought to be done. When I submitted a price on this big encyclopedia of government benefits, I attached a sample page and told them the way we thought it could be done and should be done, and the price was based on it that way, not substituting some other face for this or that or something. That's what we could do, and would give them a good job. And we suggest ways and means of doing things to keep the cost down and make our work competitive in this book work. And so that we really have developed not as much as we hope to have in the future, but we've developed a stability





Harris: to our business and a variety of fine work. And also this backlog of large jobs that we have, and that's been very important, and it's resulted in a very fine way, I think, because when I bought Mackenzie's interest out in 1945, Mackenzie & Harris hadn't paid a dividend since 1930, January 1930, fifteen years. The following year we started a regular quarterly dividend. That was in 1946, and we've never missed a quarterly dividend.

So that we're trying to run a business and not a way of life here. And that's very satisfactory to the people, particularly those people around me who put their money into the business. That it isn't a scheme to get their money with no return. That, I think, is quite important in whether we're stable. We are well-rated in Dunn and Bradstreet. At the present time B+1. That's the highest in our category of net worth, and we maintain that. It is very important by our way of thinking.

I could mention all sorts of books, but I think I've given the types. There's another one here that we did for the University of California, The Theory of Probability by Reichenbach, and this is about as full of mathematical formulas as any book I've ever seen.

Teiser: You must have a good staff of proofreaders.

### Proofreading

Harris: We have excellent proofreaders, and they've been with us a long time. The one proofreader, Rose O'Neill, came here as a girl out of high school about thirty years ago, and she had printer's ink in her blood, because her father, Johnny O'Neill, was the superintendent of the H. S. Crocker plant for many, many years. She worked as a copyholder for a long time, and then passed the test and became a full-fledged journeyman and proofreader, which means that she gets the same pay as a printer does. Then we had other people, but along with the good proofreaders we have a very comprehensive reference library in the proof room that we built up over the years. We have style books of famous presses. The one that we use as final say on anything that is controversial is the





Harris: University of Chicago Press style book, which is a very good one. We have style books, we have Encyclopedia Britannica, we have atlases, we have the encyclopedia of names of towns all over the world, and biographies of famous people; every book that you can get for information. And then we have shelves of dictionaries: French to English, French to German, German to English, Russian to this. So that we can set Russian in our shop too; we have Russian matrices, Light and Bold, and three or four sizes of print.

Teiser: Were you involved in the United Nations Charter?

Harris: Yes, we did a lot of typesetting for that. I was in the Army at that time, Amadeo Tommasini designed it, and I think we set quite a bit of the stuff. But the most outstanding thing in foreign language that we ever did was when Khrushchev--you remember he made a visit to the Pacific Coast in 1956 or the spring of 1957 (I was in Europe at the time)--and from the time he reached the West Coast, whatever he saw, whatever meal he sat down to on a train or in a restaurant, he had in front of him a little card in Russian explaining what he was looking at, what he was about to eat, et cetera. All in Russian. And it was all set in this shop. And it pretty near drove us nuts for a few days while it was in process.

Teiser: You mean not just the San Francisco part, but the whole--

Harris: For the whole Coast. We did that for a big advertising agency. They got a Russian that could write the stuff, and at the time we happened to have a printer, old-time printer who worked here over thirty years, maybe thirty-five years, Sol Fertig. And he was born in Riga, Latvia. He could read Russian as well as he could read English. And we happened to have the Russian matrices, Russian type, and a fellow who could read it, and I think we did some three or four thousand dollars worth of composition to cover this thing. Well, this illustrates the point of having things when they're needed.

I don't know how we happened to buy Russian matrices. I think somebody wanted some Russian type made, and we prefer not to set it in composition; we much prefer to cast it. There's some fellow over in Berkeley that I believe we made about five hundred pounds of Russian type for, and I think he was setting



Harris: a dictionary or something like that. But anyway, we can set Russian, and we have Russian dictionaries into different languages, and also we have a very comprehensive library on type faces, both here and down on the floor below, and anything on that subject including several dictionaries of types. We buy all books on that subject as they are published. We have a standing order with a book dealer, if anything new in the way of a manual of that sort comes out, we want a copy of it. And if necessary we get one for the shop and one for the office. This is all part of our plan of building up something that was different from what most typesetting businesses are. It adds a feeling of breadth and depth to our shop that you don't ordinarily find, and it has worked out.

#### Photocomposing Machines

Teiser: Somewhere along here I must ask you about phototype-setting.

Harris: Yes, that has been an interesting thing to us. As a matter of fact, in 1947 when I returned from a trip to Europe, in New York at the Intertype Company I was invited to go to Washington and see the experimental machine of the Fotosetter, which was in the Government Printing Office, and after seeing it I gave them an order for the first Fotosetter to come to the Pacific Coast, subject to cancellation upon further investigation. I also wrote a letter to the president of the Intertype Company in which I mentioned what I considered a major defect in the machine, to get a little technical, in the matter of justification.

Justification means the space between the words so that lines come out at an even length. The Fotosetter works as follows: You drop the matrices into the place that holds them before you put the light through the film for the line, and you put a fixed space between words, and then at the end of the line you have perhaps twelve or fourteen points left, and that is automatically divided between all the letters and spaces in the line. So that you get a result in which the lines are all letterspaced. Now that disqualified it for fine composition. You only letterspace when you do it for the effect, but in text composition letter-





Harris: spacing, to my mind and to many people who do fine work, even people who do fine advertising work, they would rather change the wording than have the line letterspaced and not uniformly. It depends what line it is. And I suggested at the time that they should endeavor to use the wedge system, something similar to it, which the Monotype Company had; it was one of their inventions which goes back to around 1900 or before, upon which the patents had undoubtedly expired.

I think I got an acknowledgment of that letter, but not any more, because, well, here would be the reason. Certainly the president of the Intertype Company knew very little about typesetting. He was probably a very successful businessman running a big company as an executive. That's too frequently the case, I think, where the man that makes the decisions in large concerns isn't interested in the ultimate use of his product. And it's certainly true of typesetting machines. Well, I waited and waited and waited, and they made the mistake of telling everybody up and down the Pacific Coast, as though this was a message from God, that the first machine was coming to Mackenzie & Harris.

Teiser: They made a lot of mistakes by shouting, didn't they?

Harris: Yes, they shouted. And that seemed to be an endorsement, because it was a major thing on our part. And I cancelled the order about three or four months before they were ready to deliver, and they've never felt the same toward us since.

Also they've had some very unfortunate experiences in putting machines in and taking them out. And I also told them I didn't like the financing of it, where you don't ever own the machine. You lease the Fotosetter equipment but you don't buy it.

Teiser: They had machines wandering around this area, didn't they? Are there any left?

Harris: I guess there's one now over at Falk Typography. About one of the last things Charles Falk did before he died was to saddle them with one. They have no more use for it than I do for a pair of wings.

It's very bad for anybody in any kind of business, I think, although I'm sure IBM would prove I'm wrong,



Harris: to saddle a fixed amount you have to pay every month as long as you live, and never be able to pay for the thing. That goes against my grain, so I didn't like that.

Well, during a later trip to Europe I saw the Photon being demonstrated in France. I spent the winter in France, winter into part of the spring, the winter of 1956 and 1957. And they were having an exhibition of the Photon at the type foundry of Debernet et Peignot, 17 rue Ferrus, Paris, who were considering taking over the French or European representation. Well, I was not satisfied with that method of photocomposition because it was obvious then that the work they were doing was far from perfect and that it was not a machine for good work. You see the letters are on a circular disc that's going a mile a minute. You register the letters in a line, and it shows the line on a piece of paper like the typewriter and holds all the instructions you've given into one of these electronic brains until you've decided that that's all right, it's correct. So you stop a hundred thousand dollar machine while you're reading proof of it. That's bad from the economic standpoint. You're limited to the quickness of the human mind.

And then you put it in, and the disc never stops. As the correct letter goes by an aperture which is stationary a shaft of light goes through and registers that on the film. Well, you're asking too much of any machine to have that film at the center of that opening always at the same time at the rate it's going. You just can't do it. So if you have, let's say, a double s. One time they would be closer together than they would another, depending on certain things. I don't know--maybe the machine ran a little faster, or a little slower. But you have a feeling that the letters are partially letterspaced in some places and too close together in another. And that's one of the faults.

I cautioned Mr. Peignot. I said, "I'd go easy on this thing because it isn't proven yet." But there were two Frenchmen, really, that were the main inventors of that. They worked with Bell Telephone Laboratories, I think. And then when I came back and went back East a year or two after that, I saw a bunch of them operating in the Machine Composition Company in Boston. A man by the name of Kimbal Loring was the owner of that business. He also was the director of





Harris: the Photon Company, had a lot of money in it. And he had a battery of them. And so he was showing me around. He had Monotypes, he had slug machines. He took me into the Photon department, and he was called to the phone. I was left there with the man in charge for about half an hour, and I asked him an awful lot of questions. I said, "What happens if you have a lot of author's changes?" He said, "You're cooked," and that's true with any photocomposition machine that I can think of. If you have a lot of changes, you're certainly cooked. Now there's only one--and I've seen this in operation and know how it works--the only one that really is comparable to Monotype machine composition or hand composition is a Monophoto. And they've been tried out in two plants in the East that have tried to make them a success. One is Westcott and Thompson in Philadelphia, and they were taken out. They do book work for all over the East Coast. They're producers for the composition for book work. And the other was a composing room in New York. Now they bought the machines after a long period of trial but I believe got a very, very special price to encourage the plant to keep them.

I would say, as of today, that photocomposition is probably all right for reprints of classics, things there'll be no obvious changes in, perhaps for small newspapers, but it is not made for anything of high quality. And in many cases I think that the old method that we have of setting on a hot metal machine and pulling a proof is cheaper, to achieve the same result. It'll be much cheaper.

Teiser: Is photocomposition flexible enough for a daily paper?

Harris: Just the text, not the ads, but certainly not, to my mind, as successful as a hot metal slug casting type-setting machine.

The difference in some of these new things and use of tapes is that they're able to get typists to do a lot of the work that printers do, but that has nothing to do with the machine. That's something else again. And it's funny, these people that have all these tape machines--the Monotype is the oldest tape machine connected with any business that I know of. The ribbon that comes off the Monotype. Of course it was preceded by the pianola ribbon, and the Monotype ribbon is similar to the pianola.





Teiser: Punched ribbon?

Harris: Punched ribbon, yes. And there was no such thing as tape recording such as you have on this little machine here--magnetic. Mechanical. Yes, tape perforated machines.

Well, have I disposed of the photocomposition?

Teiser: Admirably. There was Photon around here too.

Harris: Over at Berkeley. It should have had every chance in the world, because the head of the company operating the Photon was the son of one of the biggest investors in Photon, a director I believe.

Teiser: And had more enthusiasm than any ten people.

Harris: Yes, but they went after some work we were doing.

I could mention in passing, ever since Stanford Research Institute has been in existence, nearly all composition is done here in our shop, all their scientific reports, et cetera. That's a very large account with us. I hope all of our competitors won't have ready access to all these reminiscences of mine; but then we'll stand on our own feet, anyway.

### Reproduction Proofs

Harris: When I joined Mackenzie & Harris, everything, everything was letterpress. And we saw the trend . . . at one time the Schmidt Lithograph Company did a lot of recipe books and things like that, and we could see the trend of the use of reproduction proofs. But in the beginning the only way you could get a good reproduction proof was to lock up the form, put it on the press, make ready, and pull a perfect proof on coated stock.

We never wanted to have a pressroom connected with us, so one day--and this must be somewhere in the late 1920's or early 1930's--I saw an advertisement in The Inland Printer that the Vandercook Company had put out a brand new press made specifically for reproduction proofs and for making transparencies



Harris: whereby, with a rubber blanket, you would first pull the impression, then offset that onto the back of a piece of thin cellophane and print on the front of it, and then dust it with black powder, and you'd have a positive; not a negative, but a positive, of the type impression.

I called up the agent for Vandercook, which was the Norman F. Hall Company, and I asked Mr. Lawrence Hall, who was then head of it, to call up Chicago and find out how much this press was and how quick he could get one, and later that day he gave me the answer. We ordered one; we had the first Vandercook press made specifically for reproduction proofs shipped to the West Coast.

Teiser: I didn't realize that it was that recent a development. When was that?

Harris: That was somewhere around . . . it had to be after 1924, probably was in '26, '27, '28, somewhere along in there. As I say, we had the first one, and I think the second one in San Francisco was Halle-Cordis Company. We now have six of those presses; two very large ones that'll take a full page newspaper ad, can pull a reproduction proof of that. And then we have a Vandercook power proof press for making galley proofs as the work comes off the machines. So that we have seven Vandercooks in our plant.

Now in order to get a reproduction proof, it takes more than a press. To start with you want a printer who has excellent eyesight, and he has to have a knack of pulling proofs. I don't know how to pick that out; you get that by trial and error. And then you have to have a rigid inspection. On the feed board of every Vandercook press in our shop we have a magnifying glass, which is rectangular, and I would say the rectangular part is about four by six inches, with a light back of it. Everybody that makes a proof is supposed, is required, to inspect that proof carefully, under a magnifying glass. It then goes to the proof room, where a similar glass is, and they do the same thing. And when they get on to the fact that we really mean it, we don't have any trouble getting perfect reproduction proofs. Oh, and the ink. The ink is very important. And the paper. So you've got the press, the ink, the paper. I would say that one ink might be well here, and might not be in an area where humidity is different. We've tried different





Harris: ones, and we have the ink that we think is the best one in our shop.

Teiser: Do you have it formulated specially for you, or is it a standard ink?

Harris: We've had all kinds, and I think this is something that's developed, and we buy it by number. We used to carry four or five different kinds of coated stock for making these proofs, but recently we've gone to a paper that's put out by the Vandercook company, coated on one side, and that seems to be the most satisfactory. But we'll give a customer any kind of paper he wants, whether it be a shiny-coated paper or a dull-coated, whichever is preferred, but it must be a perfect proof before it leaves our shop.

We have, I'm glad to say, built up a reputation among cameramen around this area, that there might be some people that make a proof as well as we do, but nobody makes a better one. So we have the reputation to make the top kind of reproductions.

Teiser: How do they decide on glossy or dull?

Harris: Sometimes it may be an artist, or it might be the cameraman that decides. We find it better to give them what they want than to argue with them about the merits of glossy versus dull coated versus matte finished.

The difference in work has shifted with us to the point that the majority of the jobs that leave our shop now are reproduction proofs. I couldn't give a percentage, but I would say in big work, books, pamphlets, brochures, annual reports--we do a great number of annual reports--that more than ninety percent of them are for offset and we furnish reproduction proofs. We have driers close by each press so that proofs can be dry in a hurry--if necessary. And we know how to wrap a proof so it won't smudge getting there, putting a folder with chipboard on both sides. All the cautions, and it's labeled "Do Not Bend."

Teiser: Do you have your own messenger service?

Harris: No. We've tried everything, and now we contract for our messenger service. We have the company that in fact started by using our business as a nucleus, and they specialize in graphic arts concerns. Maybe at



Harris: one time of the day we need one boy and two hours later we need fifteen, and that's pretty hard, and those kids are a little hard to handle, and the supervision of them is difficult. And if they were our employees, we'd have to have a special place for them to wait in. So it's much more satisfactory to contract for the delivery service.

I think that the first place that they started a messenger service on the Coast was down in Los Angeles. It worked only for typographers and photoengravers and people like that. And then the one that started here devoted to an industry was Sparkie. He started Sparkie's and then he sold out, and then he now owns Aero. Aero is the one that handles us. But he started Sparkie's; that's his name.

But it's a problem in itself, and of course they're a public institution, I mean, like public carrier, and they have a fixed rate. The cheapest delivery we have in downtown San Francisco is seventy-five cents. Well, I don't think we could possibly do it for that. And this is much better. We have a private line or two into different parts of our shop for calling up. And they know all of our customers; we don't have to give them the address. If we say B.B.D. & Co., they know exactly where B.B.D. & Co. is located.

At one time Mr. Mackenzie and I gave a lot of thought to having a service of making plates and film for lithographers. We went into it quite thoroughly; we were going to take the lower floor of this building--that was about 1926 or 1927. I suppose in every business you figure on stretching out and stretching out. We backed away from it for two reasons: great cost and a brand new business to learn. And we'd be competing with some of our best customers, and we don't like to do that. And so we stuck to our last.

Teiser: This reminds me--do you set type for any packaging concerns?

Harris: Well, we've done work for everybody there is. We do it for envelope people, for . . . Yes, we do all sorts of things for one of the electrotypers, from which they make rubber plates. We do everything from a bag of fertilizer--all the instructions--we do all sorts of stuff like that.





Teiser: They start with type set by you and then they--

Harris: --they either etch it or mold it. Some are etched and some are molded. Yes, we've got quite a sizable account; we do that. It's the biggest factory in that business in San Francisco. And we've set everything from egg cartons up to sides of bags of a new kind of fertilizer, or chemicals, et cetera. And labels, labels galore. We've set labels for years. We've set imprints for flower and seed labels. We've . . . in fact there is very little kind of composition that we haven't done in this shop, and done a great deal of. It's like this Burlington Mills. You know, Burlington Mills said, "If it's anything that's woven, we've done it, and more of it than anyone else."

I don't want to be boastful about things, but there isn't any problem in typesetting that we haven't had and tried to reach a solution for. The fact that our business has continued for all these years shows that there must be some merit to our decisions, and we've got a very stable force. There's been some sixteen people here already who've spent more than twenty-five years with us, and we always have a little celebration, give them a gold watch for that. We don't like a turnover, off and on, with people; we like a permanent force and like to pick an apprentice as carefully as if we were going to adopt him as a son. That's how we feel about young people that we take in here.

Teiser: I won't keep you longer, today.

Harris: There is a phase of our activities that would bear discussion: the various associations having to do with type and typography that I have been active in and have certainly gained from. And this French book exhibition that I gave you a catalogue of. The story of that is really fantastic. All these activities, the things I belong to and have been active in, during my lifetime career.





## VI

(Interview 6--May 16, 1967)

Fine Printing and the Kennedys

- Harris: In discussing the printers who have seemed to start and carry on the tradition of fine printing in San Francisco we have pointed to three as the "big three:" Nash, who first attracted people's attention to San Francisco as a fine printing center, then Grabhorns, then the Taylors. Although the Taylors were probably in business--yes they were in business before either Nash or Grabhorn came to San Francisco. I would say that Nash in the beginning advertised the fact that this was a place for fine printing.
- Teiser: His work--
- Harris: His work and his efforts in finding people to buy these exquisite and extraordinarily elaborate books that he had printed. Grabhorn added something that is unique. He was always the originator of new ideas in fine printing.
- Teiser: When you speak of--
- Harris: They or he, we use them both.
- Teiser: Do you separate the two of them in your own mind when you say, "He was the originator?"
- Harris: I think you have to give Ed number one position always, and then realize that the two of them fit together like the two halves of a pair of shears. They worked together very beautifully. I steal that expression from Benjamin Franklin, the monograph that he wrote about advice to a young man; that is in there.

Of course, the Taylors were the Updikes of San Francisco, doing scholarly printing and things that



Harris: always were traditionally well done and certainly beautifully executed. But the innovator was always Grabhorn in the early days. I'm speaking of from 1919 on. Now I realize that there were many other people doing fine printing in the San Francisco area. Certainly high up on that list was Lawton Kennedy, and I should speak of the Kennedy brothers.

Originally, there was a Kennedy Company in Oakland, headed by Reuel, the oldest of the brothers. The Kennedy brothers were sons of a Methodist minister: Reuel, Lawton, Alfred, Ben, I don't recall the first name of the other one.

Teiser: Earl.

Harris: Earl. Reuel was the president of the Kennedy Company in Oakland, downtown Oakland, when I first came here. They were working for him, Lawton, Alfred. Ben was just a young person. They were all printers.

Teiser: What was Reuel like?

Harris: He wasn't like any of the others. He was more an executive type, and perhaps salesman, and quite aloof. Lawton was running the presses; Alfred was doing the composition; and I think maybe Ben (I wouldn't be sure of it), Ben was working there as an apprentice. But all of them had an influence on printing. Reuel, I'm not sure whether he's still alive or not. Alfred is dead. He in his later years had the Westgate Press in Oakland. Lawton had been with him, and as brothers sometimes do, they separated. Then Lawton came back to San Francisco and opened his plant, his business, here, as a separate plant. Ben Kennedy was more of a typographer than a book printer. He worked for us for several years.

Teiser: What was he like? I have no impression of him.

Harris: Well, he was probably the most witty of all of them. I can tell a story. We were doing a type specimen book, and we were setting up the type pages, and I believe this was the page on Cochin, and when he got down to the 6 point, the smallest size, in a humorous vein he set up, "We wish to hell somebody would buy this goddamn type," which of course was supposed to be caught in the proof room. But somebody up north wrote in for a specimen of new faces, and we rushed

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 The fourth part of the document  
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Harris: off a proof of this, which of course had a humorous reaction to this printer up in Portland, and he wrote back, he said, "I'd like to see more of it." He said, "Sounds like something out of an old-fashioned print shop."

Of all the Kennedys, though, certainly Lawton stands out as the one who over the years has contributed more to fine printing than any of the others, and he still is doing that. His printing has a flavor of early ecclesiastical design or historical sort of good books. And time will tell twenty years from now who did contribute the most. I'm only expressing an opinion as of today. And Lawton seems to have a lot more years ahead of him, and he's doing better and more interesting things all the time. Ben is dead. Alfred is dead. And Reuel, I'm not sure, I think he's dead, too.\* I haven't heard of him for years. And the youngest brother\*\* is owner of the photoengraving shop over in Oakland. They recently combined with Steve Johnson in San Francisco. They call themselves Printing Plates over there.

Young Alfred\*\* is of course Lawton's son, and he's going to carry on the tradition. And it's a good thing. I'm glad he's with Lawton. Yes, I'm quite pleased with the quality of our specimens that have been done for us by Lawton. He did another one for us about eight years ago. And he did the one that is just coming out, and it is a beautiful job.

Teiser: I think I mentioned his poster work.

Harris: Yes, posters, announcements, and things like that, like for the University of San Francisco. They're beautifully done, and they have a feeling of the library. When I said ecclesiastical, I mean his printing and his design has a feeling that has come out of a great library or a great religious organization or something like that. And it's tied to the traditional things of the past. Not traditional in the way that Taylor and Taylor did--their stuff had sort of a bookish, highly literary appeal, like you would see from New England, the old New England plants many years ago.

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\* He was still alive and in the printing business in Oakland at the time of this interview.

\*\* Earl Kennedy.

\*\*\* Alfred L. Kennedy.



Harris: I don't like to sit in judgment on these people who are contemporaries of mine. And I think that all of these people, maybe twenty different, have contributed to this tradition, as we have tried to too, but of course you can't live on traditional things. And we've had to expand to sell type all over the United States and to do work of a larger nature in order to support a large organization. It takes close to a hundred productive hours a day in our plant just to keep us going. That's a lot of composition work to be done, a hundred productive hours a day. And beyond that we're doing quite well, when you figure that you have your seven and a half hours that you put in work, and you're sixty to sixty-five percent productive, then it's good. And if you get a hundred hours a day you need about twenty people working on productive time all the time. And it's sometimes like a truck running down a hill: you can't stop it. No brakes will stop it if you get going fast enough.

#### The Employing Printers and Other Organizations

Teiser: In this connection, has your firm belonged to any of the printers' organizations that have attempted to promote better management practices?

Harris: We've belonged to the Employing Printers\* here on two or three occasions.

Teiser: Joining when?

Harris: The first time was before I came here. Mr. Mackenzie belonged to--I think they called it the Printers Board of Trade then. They got into serious trouble at one time later. With the building up of this Monotype plant, Mr. Mackenzie wanted to do railroad tariffs, and Mr. [Luis A.] Ireland, who was the boss, the executive secretary (and he was certainly the boss of the Employing Printers and the Printers Board of Trade) told Mr. Mackenzie he couldn't do any tariff.

Teiser: Why?

Harris: Because two or three other members had Monotype machines, and he forbid this new plant to do any railroad tariff. So Mr. Mackenzie resigned, and I think he had veiled threats, what would happen to him,

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\* Employing Printers of San Francisco.





Harris: but they didn't happen.

Many years later, in fact after Mr. Mackenzie's death, we joined again. I did it reluctantly. Pressure within the shop here while I was still in the Army said that things had changed and it seemed like we ought to get into the Employing Printers, and we were in there for about five or six years. And I had some differences with Mr. Ireland, which was not unusual, but I should deal very kindly with him, because he's long since dead. I resigned, and we've never been members of the Employing Printers since.

We tried two or three times to form some sort of an organization of trade typesetting plants. And there is the thing we always should have done and in the future should do, because presumably the members of the Employing Printers are our customers, and we always felt when we belonged to their organization that they were making rules for us as to how we should do business and with whom we should do it. If I'm nothing else I'm an individualist, and I think that any company, if it's decent and honorable, it should run its own affairs, and I have never gotten any lessons on business management from the Employing Printers. Except I learned things that companies should not do. But we weren't doing them anyway.

And we have belonged to a lot of other things that I think are worthy. For many years we've been members of the American Institute of Graphic Arts, and at one time I was the regional vice-president for several years. Now I personally belonged to the Typophiles in New York, to the Grolier Club of New York, to the Roxburghe Club for the last twenty years or so. For several years I was what they call Master of the Press at Roxburghe Club, which means the president. I have been a member of the Book Club; I was a director and the treasurer of that for several years. I am a member of the Zamorano Club of Los Angeles. We have always had memberships in the San Francisco Advertising Club. Many of our people have been in the Craftsmen's Club, and our present vice-president, Mr. Lloyd, has been president of the Bay Area Craftsmen's Club. We have supported all sorts of cultural things such as the museums, the libraries. Friends of the San Francisco Library, where our membership has been sustained; member of the Gleeson Library Associates at the University of San Francisco. In fact I am a fellow of the Gleeson Library Associates.





Harris: I don't know as I could remember all of the things. We're really sympathetic to all things of a cultural nature, or towards building up youths. We support such things as the Columbia Park Boys' Club, Father Flannigan's Boys' Town back in Omaha, and all sorts of things like that. We are sympathetic to Boy Scouts. I'm not active in the Boy Scouts, but I'm a sustaining member. And we give as generously as we can to all things of that sort.

The only trade association that we belong to is a small group of typographers which negotiates the union scale as a separate entity from the Employing Printers. And this is good for all of us, because when the members of the Typographical Union had the strike some three or four years ago, which lasted almost two years, we were completely out of it, and had negotiated a new contract and carried on.

Teiser: What is the name of your group?

Harris: Oh, it's just fourteen typographers; I think they call themselves the Typographers' Association. And we only get together when there's something to be done. For instance, we had to clarify the sales tax on typography. And we worked a great deal on this and finally got a group together and hired a very good lawyer to get the thing set up. Mr. Nat Schmulowitz was the attorney. And we joined with similar people in Los Angeles and had it clarified. It was in a chaotic condition; we'd get the ruling that it wasn't taxable and then a year later that it was taxable, and--

Teiser: This is actual type?

Harris: This is typesetting without the delivery of type. I mean just typesetting, typography. And finally, it was worked out in connection with the Board of Equalization. When we ship metal out, it is not really a physical transfer of certain property. You get a bailment receipt for it. We own that metal until it comes back, which is true, because we don't bill for it. We lend the metal. And the service of setting type is like the service of setting the type for advertising agencies, and I wrote sort of a brief many, many years ago, and I like this analogy.



Harris: The proof . . . Well, let's go back. The service is similar to the service you get when you go in a barber shop. You get your hair cut and you get yourself beautified. When you're through, the barber holds a mirror in front of your face. That's our proof, to see if the work he has done is correct, and we don't take the mirror, and it's the image on the mirror that we look at. That seemed to be clear to people that didn't understand the intricacies of our business. And the proof itself is ephemeral; it has no intrinsic value at all. It's evidence of the work we've done and the proof is the image on the mirror until it's photographed for lithography, or until the form goes to the foundry to make the electrotpe. But no personal property changes ownership.\* So that for the last ten years now there's been no trouble, since we all got together.

So the only time we have an organization is when something needs to be done, and it's a small group of people. We don't need a secretary; he's always finding ways and means to increase the size of these organizations. None of us feel the need of training a salesman or business people or anything like that.

Teiser: Do you have a legal counsel who meets with you?

Harris: No. Only when we need one.

Teiser: Then you hire someone to represent you?

Harris: We did Mr. Schmulowitz, but in union contracts we don't have any.

Teiser: You negotiate your own contracts?

Harris: Yes. This group does it. We have a person from each plant, and they represent the employers, and they choose a committee of three. Our Mr. Lloyd in the last contract, which is now up for ratification, is the chairman of that committee of three. You see, in typesetting plants you're so close to the picture of the members of the union, and there's no absentee ownership or anything like that, that we really haven't near as much

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\* Thus sales tax does not apply.





Harris: trouble in negotiating a contract as the large printing companies do. You have a hired professional negotiator who sits down, and I suppose he and the union negotiator are like two opposing attorneys in a big case, and the employers are way off in their ivory towers. They're the big plants mostly, and we wouldn't feel comfortable negotiating with them.

Teiser: Let me ask you to go back a minute because the whole story of the printers associations is of interest. And Mr. Ireland was a very interesting and curious figure.

Harris: Yes, you either liked him or disliked him, and personally I could stand him only for a short time, but basically I disliked him.

Teiser: Can you describe him?

Harris: He was a pretty forceful person, and I would not want to put my whole wealth or my future in his hands, for instance. But he would go off base too. He had strong likes and dislikes about everything. He used to write scurrilous letters to the president of the University of California: he'd just seen a book that they'd published at the University Press, and they had no right publishing that sort of a book according to the opinion of Mr. Ireland because that belongs to private people, and such nonsense as that.

I'll tell you the incident, the reason why I withdrew in anger. I'd tried to play along and go to their meetings and tried my best to get along with Mr. Ireland. And he felt that he had the power, and he was going to use it to stop the University of California from going East to have any books set and make sure that that business would be done by the members of his organization here. We at that time were getting work from them at the University Press and were doing quite well in establishing friendly relationships with the Press. They have a Monotype plant, and we supplemented their plant in overflows and so forth. We could help them out.

Well, this was after Sam Farquhar died--Mr. Frugé told me one day of these letters that Ireland was writing to the headquarters of the president, and they were acid; they were constantly irritating them at the Press. And so I went over to the execu-



Harris: tive committee of the Employing Printers, and I told them that I thought Mr. Ireland should not interject himself into the matter. I said, "We are doing quite well in helping them with their work and are getting some very satisfactory business out of them, because we can do it." And then they asked for another meeting, and I brought over some copies of the books, such as Nieman's symposium and the Reichenbach book, and Ireland looked at them and said, "Why, anybody can set those." And that of course raised my hackles a bit.

And then one of the members of the committee-- a big printer in town, I won't mention his name--said, "Well, I didn't know there was any business like that over there. I'll have to go over and try to get some of it." So I felt like I was a sacrifice. And then a few days later, and this I have from two people at the University, Ireland either called them up or went over to see them and asked why they gave all their business to Mackenzie & Harris, why didn't they spread it around to other people in San Francisco?

Well, in my resignation I told the president of the organization that I would never belong to the Employing Printers as long as Mr. Ireland was alive or a member or a pensioner of the organization. And I told them I wanted them to tell him that because I wanted him to know how I felt toward him. You see, my anger gets very deep sometimes.

And so out we went, and I'd meet Ireland sometimes on the street, and he'd say, "Are you still angry with me?" and I'd say, "Not personally, but I don't like your principles," or something like that and make him blush and walk away talking to himself.

Then after he did die, they've since then tried to get us to join, and I've said yes, I would consider it since Ireland was not there. But I had considered it and decided we had no place in the Employing Printers. They did one thing when they were the Printers Board of Trade--I never attended these meetings, but I know people who have, and I have enough information that I think I could express a description of how they operated.

If some plant, say plant A, did a catalogue, they registered that job with the Printers Board of





Harris: Trade, and the price they were going to do it for went through their works and was recorded there. Now, suppose the customer was dissatisfied or for some reason wanted to give that job to another printer who was a member of the Printers Board of Trade in a year or two. This new printer-to-be was obliged to submit a price which protected printer A on his price. He would first submit his estimate of the work, based on the current material and labor costs, but the second one, who might be the one that the buyer wanted to buy it from, had to submit a price that was some five to ten percent higher. And this went on and on, so that it was allocation of business: if you did the job before, it was yours.

Now when new work came up, they used to have a round table that met in the Palace Hotel; I think it was in the Transportation Club. And they met every week, or twice a week, or anyway they had a regular time of meeting. And new jobs that no one had ever done before were presented, and they had a method by rotation, allotting those to different plants, so that all the big work in town was parceled out to a small group of people in the Printers Board of Trade.

Teiser: How did the customer get directed to the person who had been decided upon?

Harris: Well, the only way he could give it to the other fellow was at the higher price.

Some years later the authorities got into this thing, and I believe that Mr. Ireland was lucky not to have been really prosecuted. There was some admission of wrong, and, "we won't do it again," and I have heard that many records were mysteriously destroyed or something of that sort. But it wasn't a pretty picture; it wasn't a pretty picture at all. And I'm glad that all those years we were not a member of it, because I'm sure if I had been in any of those meetings, I would have pushed the table over and started shooting or something, because it was just so wrong, so absolutely wrong.

Teiser: The members of that group were all quite equal, weren't they?

Harris: They were the large plants, yes, large plants. There were some small ones: Taylor and Taylor was a member. Of course the Grabhorns were not. Crocker, Crocker Union; Recorder; James H. Barry; Kennedy-ten Bosch;





- Harris: in the old days, John Kitchen Company; Phillips & Van Orden; Independent Pressroom--that was McKannay and Altvater. So you see there were some powerful--
- Teiser: Did you say A. Carlisle & Co.?
- Harris: Carlisle, yes, they were in, they were a member. All the principal printers were members of that.
- Teiser: My father lives in Portland. He's an attorney. He told me that not so many years ago when he phoned somebody and asked for a standard short piece of printing and got a price on it, he could phone any other printer in town and get the same price.
- Harris: Well, this existed all over. This was an outgrowth of--the general name for it nationally was the United Typothetae of America. And they were trying to do on their own what N. R. A. tried to do later, to prevent the people from doing work at less than cost and ruining the industry. And where they could get a group of printers together, and it certainly worked for a long time in San Francisco, they could control that. But nowadays those things are not legal, and certainly it was pretty hard on a new fellow starting out, because he was on the outside.
- Teiser: Was there anything to be said for it?
- Harris: Well, I suppose--I'll try to get some analogy. Sometimes you think that there ought to be a law to make people keep their mouths shut. But if you make a law then you destroy all of our liberties.
- Teiser: Did it contribute materially to making San Francisco a printer center?
- Harris: In volume, I guess it probably did.
- Teiser: Did the big lithographers handle business the same way?
- Harris: I assume all the lithographers did. I'm sure they did, because they had a separate organization, but all the control came out of Ireland's office. And I'm glad you brought that out, because San Francisco not only was the center of fine printing, but it was the center of printing. It was the second industry in the city, though nationally it was sixth or seventh. It was higher up on the scale in San Francisco due to the fact of course that the principal banking, insurance,



Harris: manufacturing agents had offices out here. In those days there were a lot of local catalogues and price lists and things of that sort, so it was a center of printing, and certainly a center of lithography.

### Union Wages and Work Simplification

Teiser: Do you have any comments on wage and price structure in San Francisco as compared to the rest of the country?

Harris: It's one of the highest. I would imagine that this new scale that we have just negotiated will be the highest. Usually we're pretty close to Seattle, and this will put us a little ahead of anyone else. But of course you have to wait until the whole year is out and to see what other scales come along.

Teiser: This has been the case in the past, has it not?

Harris: Yes.

Teiser: How do you account for it historically?

Harris: Well, I account for it by the fact that a good many people here have a finer Christian spirit toward employees than they do in other places. That stopped you, didn't it? Let me say it this way, that we in our little business here pay everybody over the scale, and the scale is simply the basis. And it's forced us to cut corners and be more efficient in our equipment and the placement of our equipment. Time studies--not these elaborate time studies--but certainly I am in the shop several times each day looking for short-cuts. If a man has to walk across the room and he can't make a straight line, then we move some thing so he can, and make it easier for him to do the things that he has to do. It's a thing that you do instinctively if you're forced to by the high cost.

I remember once during the war, during the last war, I was the head of one of the four big divisions at the Port of Embarkation and had a lot of employees under me, close to three hundred, and we got some lessons in job simplification and work simplification. The analogy was that if people were assembling a bunch of little plates, mica, copper,





Harris: and different things for insulation--that was used as an example. And they showed this extreme: that you had one box of things over on one side of the room, and another box on the other one. And they showed you that you just put them all in front of the operator, he could reach for them. And I turned to one of the officers who was sitting next to me, and I said, "We have similar things in my civilian business, and if anybody didn't have them near him I'd fire him." Because you instinctively do things to make work easier and save time. And the person, if he has any wisdom at all, as he goes into other plants, he picks up ideas of simplification.

I'll give you an example of that. Some fifteen years ago or so I was in New York in a very fine typography plant, and they had--as we've had to do--they had three or four type faces from different European sources which were so similar that if you looked at the type it was difficult to tell one from the other. And different versions of same type were different, and they weren't nicked to tell them. And they had conceived of the idea of spraying paint. And I brought that back, and we've done that on faces. We have color schemes. Before we distribute the font, we spray it; we use orange, green, red, blue, and then combinations of colors. We spray the face and the feet of the type, and then while the paint is still wet, we clean off the face so that the ink, the paint, goes down to the shoulder. Well, a blind man couldn't distribute it. But a normal fellow wouldn't have to give much thought to distribute it, and so we don't get wrong fonts.

This is what I'm talking about: simplification and--I don't like to use the word efficiency--but common sense in doing things. High wages make the employers do that to survive. And we've survived all these years, and with higher wages practically every year. During the Depression once or twice they went down for a year or two, but it's just something we have to do. And we do get a higher production per man. And in our type of work it's better for a fellow to take a little time and do it right, and get it done right, than to keep doing it over in haste, which makes waste. And good men have to get enough to live on to be happy, and not worry all day long about whether they have enough money for groceries. That seems to me to be the attitude of a lot of people here in San Francisco.



Harris:           And then the unions have been strong here, because it's a favorable climate for unions, and pretty fair on both sides. I would say, as far as the Typographical Union men in this concern, I don't hesitate. If I want a clarification, if I want to know about something, I call up the president of the union and ask him if he's going to be free, I'd like him to come over and see me, or I'd like to come over and see him, and discuss the matter. And that's the way it ought to be; that's sort of an enlightened attitude of mutual respect between the union and the employer. And I think this exists more here than in any other city that I know, and it has for a long, long time.

          I'll give you an example. In the union contract they allow so many apprentices for so many journeymen, with a maximum of four in the shop. And it also says that if you have I think it's two or three or more machinist operators, you may have an apprentice machine operator. Now that was written with the Linotypes in mind, mostly for newspapers. And nobody ever considered the Monotypes, because there have never been many Monotypes in San Francisco, and in recent years we were the principal plant. And I wanted to put in an apprentice to learn the Monotype casters. Now the Monotype isn't mentioned; everybody's considered that idea of another apprentice applied to the Linotype, so I called up the president of the union and said I wanted to come over and see him.

          I went over and I said, "I'd like to ask a favor of you." He said, "Mr. Harris, there's nobody in town I'd rather do a favor for. What is it?" And I said, and I explained, "We want to have this, and I want it clarified. And the next time you have a meeting of your executive committee, will you clarify that and state that it also includes Monotype casters?" He said, "That's certainly reasonable and fair, and we're having a meeting tomorrow, and I'll take it up the first order of business and let you know." The next afternoon he called up and said, "Okay."

          Well, I think that most of the plants in San Francisco, big and little--but certainly the typography plants--have an attitude of this is the way we should get along. And we realize what side of the fence they're on and what side we're on, but we should get along with them. And of course when a year goes along and the cost of living has gone





Harris: up, we always more or less figure there'll be an increase in the scale, which there is.

We had a case of a copyholder that had been with us for twenty-five years, but not a proofreader. And there was no--

Teiser: Could you explain the difference between a--

Harris: A copyholder is a person that reads to the proofreader. The marks are supposedly made by the proofreader, and the copyholder reads the copy. This goes back to the early days. You could employ anybody and classify him or her as a copyholder, and they got about half to two-thirds of the printer's scale. But we had this very competent woman, Rose O'Neill. Her father, John O'Neill, had been the superintendent of the composing room with the Crocker plant for most of his life. He was well known in town. And she sort of had the printer's ink in her blood and was a very good copyholder. In fact she was better than most proofreaders that we could find. It took us a long time, and they finally found a way to classify her as a printer. She's still with us, and she gets paid the scale, same as a compositor.

And now we don't use copyholders any more. Each proofreader just takes the copy and the proof and reads it without any copyholder. Now this is particularly true of technical stuff: how on earth does anybody read higher mathematics unless they know the nomenclature of these formulae? And we find that if we take a competent proofreader and let that proofreader in a quiet place read it, it's much better. And certainly with ad work and things like that we don't need a copyholder. So we don't use copyholders any more.

My gosh, we didn't get very far today, did we?

Teiser: Yes, we covered a lot of territory that we haven't considered before. I'm very glad I asked you to enlarge on some of these things.

Harris: Well, of course, I don't like to discuss too much my various enmities, but I might say that I think I have a reputation of being a person who, if he has feelings toward a person, they know it pretty quickly. And I don't dislike people knowing that about me, because





Harris: I'm pretty forgiving unless somebody really does something terrible to me. In my feuds over the years with Mr. Ireland I felt happier feuding with him than I did co-operating with him.

1. The first part of the document is a letter from the author to the editor, dated 1954. It discusses the author's interest in the subject and the reasons for writing the book. The author mentions that the book is a result of a long and arduous process of research and writing, and that it is intended for a general audience. The author also mentions that the book is a revised edition of a previous work, and that it contains new material and a new introduction. The author concludes the letter by expressing his hope that the book will be of interest and value to the readers.



Carroll T. Harris being interviewed.

Photograph by Ruth Teiser





(Interview 7--July 27, 1967)

San Francisco Unions

Harris: Do you want to continue on this subject of the unions and attitudes . . . ?

Teiser: Yes, if you will.

Harris: Well, I think I might re-state the reason why we've gotten along--where I said it was due to the Christian spirit in San Francisco. I'm afraid that San Francisco's got a reputation to be more on the sinful side of things than the Christian side, or any church side. I believe really that--and this is from my own experience--that you find a more sophisticated viewpoint of the unions in San Francisco than you normally do in a city of this size, particularly a long time ago.

For instance, if you contrast San Francisco with Los Angeles of fifty years ago, there a union was considered an enemy of the state and the business and all sorts of things, while in San Francisco we had a different viewpoint from that. A lot of this stemmed, in Los Angeles, from the explosion which blew up the building of the Los Angeles Times many years ago. The Merchants' and Manufacturers' Association there had as one of its cardinal objectives the destruction of the unions. Certainly that was different from the Printers Board of Trade or its successor, the Employing Printers Association in San Francisco in those days. They negotiated always with the unions, and they managed to come to an agreement without any serious strikes. I think there's been a strike against the commercial plants in San Francisco twice since, let's say, 1905 or 1906--long before I came here. Well, that's a pretty good record.



Harris: The kind of people that I've had to deal with in the Typographical Union the many years I've been in business here have usually been reasonable people, to whom you could talk and discuss your problems.

Let me cite an example, for instance. If you had a bunch of red hots running the union, they wouldn't permit a plant like ours to work for purely craft shops such as the Grabhorn Press and some other small one-man printers, and let them take work from a union shop and use it in any way they desired. We would do the machine composition only on say a book and then send the type in galleys to them. In fact I discussed that with the union officers once and I said, "You can't unionize a one-man shop that is primarily sort of an art expression of his. Isn't it better to get the machine part of the work done in a union shop than refrain from doing the work?" And they in every case would agree with me, so that question never came up officially in the negotiation of a new contract. But it shows an entirely different attitude than some would expect. Then take myself, for instance: I would always prefer to run a union shop. That could hardly be expected in Los Angeles in the early days.

I'm not a member of the union myself; I have never been eligible. I came up on the management side. But I prefer to run a union shop. Let's say, for a comparison, it's much better to be married to somebody than to live with somebody you're not married to, because the rules and regulations are all laid down, and there's a contract between you. It sort of guides both of you.

So I think that has a lot to do with the development of printing and the way it's been developed in San Francisco. And good printers who were good craftsmen drifted here. First because it was a good union town, and second--or maybe the other way around--because there was a chance for them to express themselves. And I think that that is one of the elements that helped to develop fine printing in San Francisco. Certainly we've had more fine printing than any other city on the Pacific Coast, and this has been, except for Seattle, the number one union town, in all types of unions.

Our present mayor, John F. Shelley, for many





Harris: years was the executive secretary of one of the unions, and then he got into politics. He was supported for election by a lot of wealthy people that you wouldn't expect to support a man who had a union background. But he had shown that he was a good man to represent San Francisco, in the House of Representatives, and now is the mayor of San Francisco.

And I think you'll find that there is no zeal on the part of any people of any great importance or influence here to get rid of unions. It's something that is accepted as a fact of life and that is an intelligent way to deal with it. I think that's enough on that subject.

Teiser: You mentioned, I think, the typographers' strike.

Harris: Well, that strike, which lasted almost two years, perhaps was forced upon the unions. It was unfortunate. From what I hear, there was a very ambitious secretary of the Employing Printers, and they started their negotiations by calling each other vile names and pounding the table. And that's no way to negotiate anything. If you're realistic you know that the union demands which you first get before negotiations are very much like when you're suing someone for damages. You've fallen and sprained your ankle and been laid up for six weeks, and you get a lawyer and you're going to sue for damages, so you sue for fifty thousand dollars, and perhaps you'll be glad to settle for a thousand.

The best way to deal with the union, I would think, in the case that they are asking something that seems all out of reason, would be to sit and reason with them and give them some evidence why that wouldn't be possible at this time. But I believe in this last strike that at one of the first meetings, maybe the first meeting, the spokesman for the employers said, "Well, this whole thing is stupid and crazy, and when you get to your senses, come back and talk to us." Well, that isn't any way to start any kind of negotiation.

Teiser: Was this Wayne Wade?

Harris: Yes. I wasn't there, because we had resigned from the employers' group some time before that. As I say





Harris: I heard of it from people that were on the committee and from people on the side of the union, so I think that's about the attitude they had. It didn't do anybody any good. And then there was a long period where they weren't even meeting, weren't negotiating, were just waiting for something to happen. Of course what the trade typographers did, they got a group together and quickly negotiated a contract with the union. And I guess this in a way became a pattern for the one that was finally agreed upon by the Employing Printers. Sort of a guideline.

The main difference of opinion was who should have jurisdiction over new processes, such as photo-composition, paste-up, et cetera. And I believe the Employing Printers did not want to agree that the Typographical Union could have anything to do with that.

Now I have an entirely different viewpoint. If we should ever go to photocomposition and paste-up service or anything like that, I would prefer to deal with one union rather than to deal with several unions. And as long as the Typographical Union has assiduously conducted a course of training for young printers and apprentices in these processes and has put out certain assurances that if you put in this process, they would furnish you the help to handle it, that seems to me a more satisfactory way than to go out in the marketplace and get inexperienced people and try to train them yourself, and try to buck the union by cheaper help to do this kind of work. And I think that was one of the main differences of opinion.

Now we've just negotiated a new contract, a two-year contract, the trade typographers--it was approved last Sunday--which is quite an increase in wages and benefits and so forth, but I think we can live with it. And we have again agreed that for any of these new processes that we may adopt, we will have members of the Typographical Union do this work. I think that there is no great likelihood of photocomposition becoming anything to fight about presently, as far as the typographers are concerned. I know we have no plans for it.

Teiser: The lithographers and the pressmen both would like to get jurisdiction over the new processes?



Harris: I think they would, yes. I am sure they would. You see we don't have that problem. It was easier for us to give away something that we didn't bother with anyway. I think perhaps in the company that does the telephone book the use of the computer might loom very big with them. But I think that now they've some sort of a working arrangement with the Typographical Union.

And in a way you can't blame the Typographical Union. If some new process is going to put all their people out of work in the plant, in a large plant, they would like to have the opportunity to train their people to operate. And I think that is a sensible way. If the machine does everything for us, then we've got to find some way for these people who are replaced by the machine to find gainful employment. That's a responsibility that every citizen has, whether he's in business or not, to support something of that sort, so that these people can be adapted to the new process.

#### Bogus and Newspaper Ads

Teiser: Is there any counterpart of what I believe newspapers call "bogus" in trade shops?

Harris: No, there's no such thing in trade shops. That is a thing that you cannot justify. And I believe the first contract allowing this was probably in Boston, maybe at the turn of the century. And the employers or the owners of the newspapers agreed to it because it didn't mean anything to them. I have an idea that there might have been some people in the union that negotiated the first such contract who could see that if there were not some restrictions put on it, that in a city where there were ten newspapers, they would all get together and set up one shop to set the advertisements for all of the newspapers--set it once, and make the stereotype mats to be distributed to all the newspapers. And they perhaps worried about it. I'm sure that there was more worry than the occasion demanded.

They started with the bogus. You know what the bogus is?





Teiser: Yes, but please explain it.

Harris: Well, this does not apply to an advertisement that comes to the newspaper from, say, New York, or a national campaign. It applies to advertisements of local retail stores or other advertising of a local nature. For example, we set newspaper advertisements for certain stores which appear in all the newspapers in this area in northern California. A plate is furnished to the newspapers. The newspapers have to employ people to re-set them\*, pull proofs, proofread and correct them. And then throw this all away, because this is done usually after the paper's out. I would imagine that it's not very constructive work; it's like just distributing type. And it gets put off and put off and put off, and then doesn't always get done to meet deadlines--but it has to be done. That's in the contract. That's to keep people employed, to make work probably. And of course, it's uneconomical, and it seems like a stupid thing to do. In a way it is.

But it doesn't really replace the advertisements that we have previously set in our shop. I've talked to union people and newspaper people about it. They don't attempt to do the same ad; they go through the formality, and it's sort of like the classical movements in a dance. They go through the formality of doing it, and I'm sure they don't read it very carefully, they don't correct it very carefully, and it just does make work. And the great mistake was starting it. Once you sign to do something in a contract, it's hard to get the other side, to whom it is an advantage, to give it up in a subsequent contract. The newspaper industry has that needless expense.

This is an example of how wasteful the production of a newspaper is. We couldn't operate our shop as wastefully as any newspaper composing room operates, for this reason: they have to have enough men to handle on an instant's notice any emergency which would come up--the assassination of a president, a big fire here or someplace else, a declaration of war, or anything that might happen that would be entirely new copy to perhaps cover a couple of the pages and to be on the street in a matter of minutes.

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\*The advertisements.



Harris: So they have a lot of people and normally, if everything went along smoothly, they wouldn't need all of them. But they have to have people for peak loads to do it and do it instantly. And I would think that there might be some more careful way to absorb this bogus.

I don't want to be critical of the management of papers, but it's an inefficient operation to start with, because speed at all costs comes into it. For instance, the news story breaks, so the reporter is typing, and as the sheets come off of his typewriter they go to the shop foreman, and then he cuts them up into small pieces and gives a paragraph or two to each of several linotype operators, and they turn that out. Well, that is a very inefficient way to do it; it takes a lot more people to do the same amount of work than if it were given to one man and he goes through the whole thing, such as we do in a shop like ours. So that the bogus is just one of the expensive things that a newspaper has to contend with. And they've lived with it so long now, I'm sure they're quite used to it, although newspapers are not doing too well any more. But I think the real problem with newspapers is that TV and radio have taken a great deal of their potential income from them. Just look at the amount of money that is spent on sponsoring shows and elaborate commercials by national advertisers. There was a day when the best advertising was through the newspapers, and it isn't any more the only way.

Teiser: Thank you for explaining bogus.

Harris: It does not apply to, for instance, if an Ivory soap advertisement came out of an agency in Chicago, and the plate came here. That does not have to be re-set; it's just the local ones. And frankly, as time has gone on, if there hadn't been bogus, I'm sure that some ambitious person like myself might have gone to a group of newspapers in the city and said, "Let me set up a shop to set all your ads, do them beautifully, and only set once. Every paper can use them." Because that would make sense. I'm not sure it would save any money, because we would take two or three times as long to set them, because we do them well. But it would certainly improve the typography.





Harris: We've gone about it in another way where we do this work for this grocery chain, for instance. And if you don't mind, I'd like to just make a little comment. We've done all newspaper advertising for this chain in this area for over thirty years. When they have a convention of their representatives from all over, when they discuss with the other division managers the quality of their advertising, invariably this division, which we do, is held up as the ultimate they should all attempt to achieve. They look different from other chain store advertisements. So we feel pretty good about it. When we started out, we'd do half a page a week or a page every other week, and we've been up to points where we've been doing as much as twelve pages a week.

#### French Art of the Book Exhibit

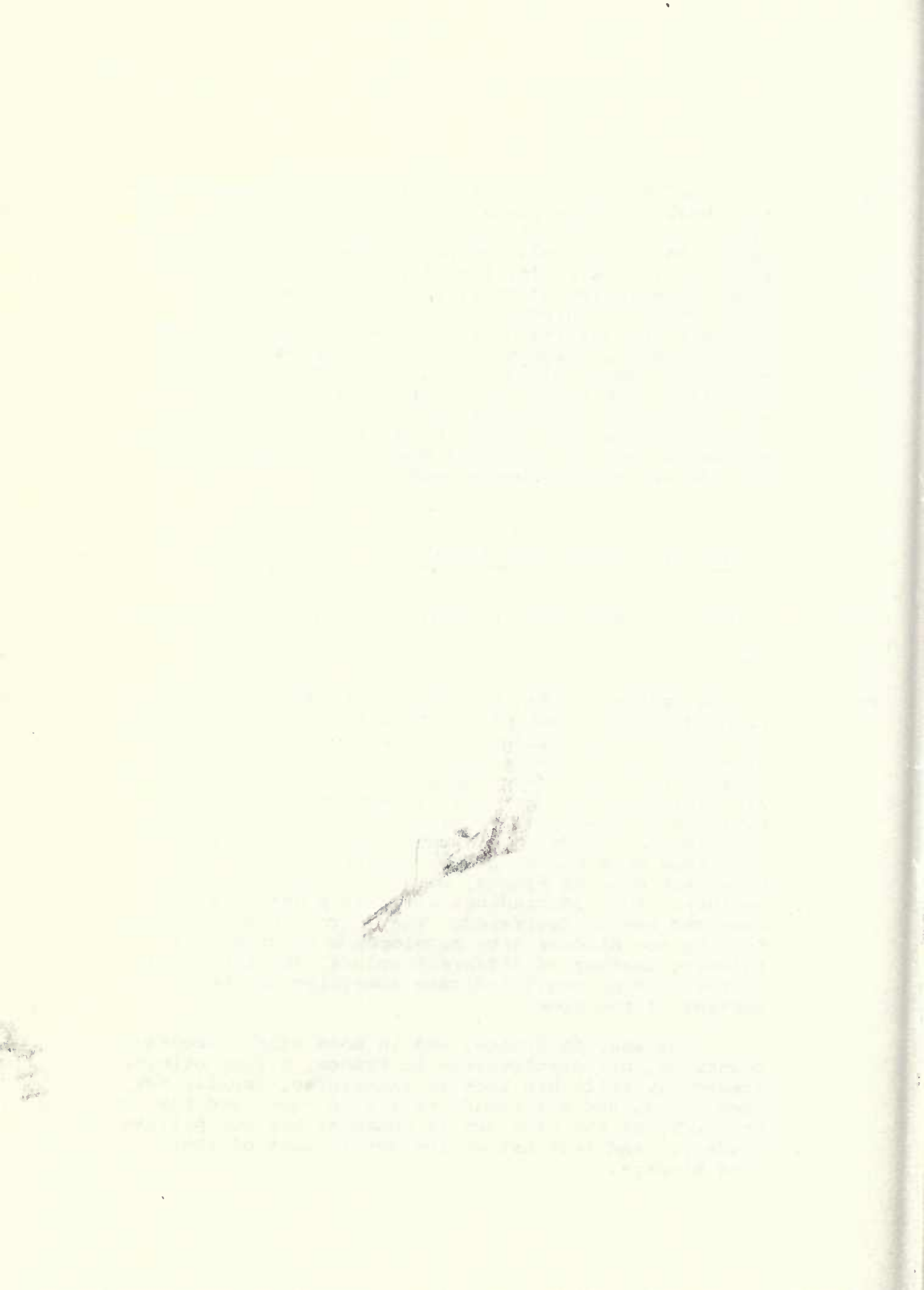
Harris: I think we were going to talk about this French show.

Teiser: Yes.

Harris: In the spring of 1947 my wife and I made an extensive trip to Europe, most of the time in Paris, and like a bus driver on a holiday, I always go to all the shows, particularly the exhibitions of printing and things related to that. They had at the Bibliotheque Nationale, which is the national library in Paris, an exhibition of bindings, going back to before Gutenberg--back to the fifteenth century. But the main point of this show were the so-called modern bindings that have been done in France, mostly in Paris, in this century. The old bindings frequently were overly done and overly decorated. They were elegant looking. But the new binders have developed a technique of inlaying leather of different colors, and the design of the binding would indicate something of the content of the book.

You see, in France, and in some other European countries, but particularly in France, a fine printer frequently sells his book in signatures, usually not even sewed, and not bound, in a slip case, and then the buyer of the book has it bound at his own private bindery. And that helped the development of these fine binders.





Harris:

I also had the great pleasure of spending a day at the shop and studio of a man who at that time was certainly the finest printer in France, and one of the best in Europe. His name was Daragnès.\* His studio was on Montmartre. He had succeeded in that number one position a man by the name of F. L. Schmied. His atelier was in Saint Cloud, a suburb of Paris. He had died, and his son was carrying on but not doing the quality of work that his father had done. But Daragnès was number one among French printers and it struck me (you see this was 1947) that people doing the fine printing, not too many of them, but a few of them, in France, had carried on with their work all during the war years despite the Vichy government and the many misfortunes of the French people. Nobody bothered them very much, and they carried on.

It seemed to me that there was an abundance of beautiful books to show Americans what had been done in France in spite of the dreary experiences of the French during the war years. (After all, I'm a Francophile, even though I'm not an admirer of General De Gaulle.)

So when I returned in the summer of 1947, I stopped in New York and talked to the people at the American Institute of Graphic Arts. Oh, I must say that I tried to discuss this point with two or three people in Paris, about putting together the material for a show to illustrate fine binding and fine printing, particularly that which was done from 1937 to 1947, which covered the span of World War II. Well, I guess my French was too poor to explain, and I didn't quite get the enthusiasm I had over to the French people I talked to on the subject. And I didn't have any better luck with the people at the American Institute of Graphic Arts. I guess they thought there was too much money involved to organize such an exhibition in the United States.

So then I came back here to San Francisco and mulled it over. Then I got an introduction to the French Consul-General of San Francisco. I hadn't met him before because he was a new man in this post, Comte Jean de Lagarde. I explained to him what I wanted to do, and he said, "But this would cost a lot of money to achieve. The best we could do would be to bring it to this country, to New York. To put on the show in San Francisco, I think, would cost money which we do not have." I said, "I will take

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\* Jean Gabriel Daragnès.

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Harris: care of that. I think I know enough people who can finance it, and I would like you to see if it could be done."

Well, with great excitement I heard from him in two or three weeks. He asked me to come and see him. He had heard from the American representative of the cultural division of the French Embassy that in Paris they had been working on a collection such as that for over a year, and they hadn't made up their minds what they were going to do with it, or where it was to be shown. This was luck.

I said, "Well, if we can have this shown in America, with the first showing in San Francisco, I'll raise the money for it."

"Well," he said, "that sounds like a big order."

I said, "I will do it."

And he said, "Well, I'll see what I can do. I'll get a commitment."

He, I think, looked me up to see if I was a responsible person, and he found out that I was reasonably so. And then he had a letter from the French Embassy that they not only had the collection selected but they had a curator, one of the famous bookbinders, Mme. Lucie Weill-Quillardet, and she would have to come to America with it.

I said, "Fine. If we can show it first in San Francisco, we'll bring her from New York to San Francisco, pay her expenses during the show here, and return her to New York." (They said they could bring her as far as New York.) I said, "Give me about three weeks; I want to get people signed up."

You see, I was then acquainted with this small group of people which I told you about previously, who were interested in books, and members of the Book Club. I was then a director, treasurer of the Book Club as it happened. And so I then went to see Mr. Morgan Gunst in his office, whom I had gotten to know. He was also a director of the Book Club and a member of the Roxburghe Club and the Historical Society and all these things that the same people seemed to belong to here. And he caught the enthusiasm that I had.





Harris: And I said to him, "I think that the show should be held in our number one place for such a show from France, which is the California Palace of the Legion of Honor."

He said, "Fine. Let's go our and see Tommy Howe, the director."

So we called up and made an appointment. We got in a cab and drove out to see Mr. Thomas Carr Howe and talked to him about it.

And he said, "This is a terrific idea," and he then looked through his calendar. This was the summer of 1948, when this came about.

So we set it up for the month of March, 1949, as a possible date to accomplish this show. Mr. Gunst and I had agreed between us that we would have but one kind of sponsor, and they would be asked to contribute a hundred dollars apiece. And we'd probably need forty or fifty to cover the expenses. And in three weeks we got 45 sponsors, meaning a fund of \$4,500.

I remember when I called on Mr. James K. Moffitt, a charming, lovable person, if there ever lived, the president of Blake, Moffitt & Towne and the president of Crocker Bank. And incidentally he had certainly one of the finest privately owned book collections that there was in the West and one of the finest collections of Horace in existence. He heard the story and said, "Mr. Harris, this is such a fine thing you're doing to organize this. It's going to take a lot of your time."

I said, "I expect that."

"And you only want a hundred dollars from me?"

I said, "That's all."

He said, "You think that is as much as I should give?"

And I said, "That's all we'll take from you."

And he said, "That's strange. I'll give you the check right now, but will you take this agreement along with you, which I'll give you verbally? If you run short, I'll make up the deficiency."

[The text on this page is extremely faint and illegible. It appears to be a multi-paragraph document, possibly a letter or a report, with several lines of text visible but not readable.]

Harris: And every person that we talked to said, "Have you seen so-and-so?" So we quickly reached 45 sponsors. I figured that was enough, because we were going to get a lot of things donated. We got car card space in every streetcar in San Francisco donated for nothing for one month. We got the car cards printed by University of California Press. I went to Mr. Howard Hanvey, who had retired and then was the number one public relations and advertising person in San Francisco for special things like raising money for bond issues or passing important things. I took him to lunch and told him about what we were doing.

And he looked at me, and he said, "In my long life, I've never given away any of my talents for nothing, but I'm going to do it in this case."

So he practically spent full time on getting advance publicity.

I engaged the Grabhorns to print a catalogue.\* And my company donated the type composition for it. I also gave a hundred dollars as a sponsor because we made sure that there were no deadheads.

The sale of the catalogue more than paid for what we had to pay Grabhorn for it. I think we sold it for a dollar, a dollar and a half. We more than paid for that.

Well, the show opened, and it was--oh, I forgot to say that the cooperation at the Palace of the Legion of Honor was terrific. They devoted five rooms of their main gallery to this show. And they put it on like an art show, a show of paintings. These exquisite bindings. And when I'm talking about bindings here, some of them had cost three or four thousand dollars for binding one book. They were like jewels. And they were done in two of the galleries in recessed cases in the wall with special lighting, just like you'd show an important piece of jewelry.

Teiser: At that time Germaine McAgy was doing the exhibits?

\*The French Art of the Book. San Francisco: California Palace of the Legion of Honor, 1949.

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Harris: Yes, she had charge of it. I couldn't think of her name.

We had some impressive (I don't like to use the word impressive, because that sounds like a stuffed shirt), but we had some enthusiastic members of the committee. And as long as I had two or three officers of the Wells Fargo Bank as sponsors it wasn't hard to make arrangements that the committee met in the big directors' room at the Wells Fargo Bank. But we'd meet two or three times a month. I was the active chairman, and the French Consul-General Compte Jean de Lagarde was the honorary chairman. Mr. Richard Kauffman was the treasurer. And the thing got under way.

Of course I had to spend about three months, almost my entire time previous to this, in all the details. I happen to be a perfectionist, and I wanted every detail to run smoothly. And I had had some experience in public relations for myself.

So we built up to a climax, and when the books arrived there were photographers to show and tell about this thing. And every day in the papers there was something about this. And when Mme. Lucie Weill arrived, pictures of her getting off the train--I think she came out by train--or some little luncheon for her, all those things that build up interest. The preview was handled in an odd way. There were a hundred people invited to the preview--sponsors and their wives and some petty officials. The invitations went out from the Consul-General, and I personally paid the bill for all the refreshments and so forth, but I would not let my name be used as having been any more than the sponsor and the chairman. And the Consul-General said, "You're the strangest man I've run into yet."

I didn't make any speeches and stood in the background and saw the ship launched, and from then on it was just unbelievable. Up to the time of this show, the show at the Legion of Honor which had had the largest attendance was the Van Gogh show. This exceeded it by several thousand people to see it. Fantastic.

Well, we reached out. We got schools as far away as Monterey and Sacramento, classes in French,



1911

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Harris: classes in printing, and classes in art, and they came. And the curator, Madame Weill, who came from France made lectures, explained things. Because all these books had been illustrated by the leading modern artists of France, and they were beautifully printed. In some of them all the illustrations were original etchings. I mean they were really fine things.

So, it was a great success, and it sort of--as far as my services to France were concerned--it sort of climaxed what had happened during World War I and World War II. And a few months after this thing, I received the French Legion of Honor, for this job I did I suppose.

And I tell about this thing because it was such a success, and everybody was trying to help to make it a success. We wound up with all bills paid and \$200 left over, and that went to the Book Club as a contribution to their general funds. And that was unusual.

Teiser: What was its general effect?

Harris: Well, people still talk about it. People in that same group. I can't recall just what, but I could see books that were done around San Francisco for several years afterward where you could see the influence of sort of the grand way in which these books had been printed. And I would say that it was worthwhile from that standpoint too.

Teiser: Were the Lewis Allens interested? They had been interested in French printing.

Harris: Yes, they were. But this quickened people's interest. He was a sponsor. Mrs. [John I.] Walter of course was there, and she gave a lot of dinner parties. In fact we all did. But I don't believe that this could have been organized the way we did it in any city but San Francisco. Now it went from San Francisco to Los Angeles, and I went down to the preview down there. It was held at the museum that Charles Boyer owns; it's on La Cienega. It was there, and there were people down there that were interested, and they had a nice party to open it, but it didn't raise the enthusiasm that we did in San Francisco. Then it went from there to New York, and it was there for a month at the Rockefeller Center. This was

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Harris: conducted by the French cultural representative, cultural consul, and I don't think the attendance in New York was half what it was in San Francisco. Then it went to the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, and it did about as well there as it did in New York. And then it went back--a lot of the stuff was borrowed--and everything went back to the owners. But certainly the one in San Francisco was outstanding.

Teiser: Did any of the items, shown in it ever find their way back to San Francisco?

Harris: Oh, yes. I bought four or five books. I would say that maybe twenty-five or thirty of the things that were there were bought. I think Morgan [Gunst] bought some bindings.

You see, there were two kinds of things: there were some things exhibited by the printers or the binders, and the others were exhibited by the owners.\* They of course did not sell them, but the ones that were exhibited by printers were for sale, at the end of the show. There were 258 exhibits, and they were insured for \$100,000, so it was very elegant.

Teiser: I should say so.

#### Typographers and the N. R. A.

Teiser: Do you have any short subjects to cover?

Harris: Well, I think the subject of the N. R. A. at the time of the Depression. We, like everybody else, had an awful time to exist. I think I mentioned about having a big loss with one account we had. And when the N. R. A. was organized, that's the National Recovery Administration, I got a call from the president of the International Typographic Composition Association, which is typesetters in the United States and Canada, asking if I would come East and represent the West Coast, help devise a code for the industry.

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\*Who had acquired them.

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Harris: And I spent about two weeks in Washington--one of those grueling things where you started in at nine in the morning and talked until noon, and you had a couple of martinis and had a quick lunch, and you talked from one o'clock until five. You went to your hotel room and freshened up and had a couple of martinis and a quick dinner and talked until midnight. This went on for two weeks.

And we tried to devise a code. It wasn't a control of prices; it was sort of notifying everybody what you were getting for your work; it was price reporting. There were various kinds of codes you could make, and ours was the price reporting kind. In each area you'd have a secretary, and each company would report in to the secretary that my price is X dollars per hour for composition, for machine composition, Linotype machine, Monotype, and hand. This was a guideline. Because there were so many people in our industry, in fact all industry, on the downward spiral of business.

Every fellow would try to do it a little cheaper than someone else so that in many things that were manufactured, they were given away at less than actual cost, just to keep the wheels going. This was in 1934 that the N. R. A. was passed. By this time you see the Depression had been on five years, and we were without any resources. We didn't have resources to continue at a loss. Well, like a lot of things I've tried, and many people have, I had great hopes for N. R. A. and I visited other cities in the East, got acquainted, got a size-up on the business situation, and I came back and went down South, held a meeting in San Diego, discussed the whole thing, explained the new system to the typographers, the typesetters, down there. Then the same thing--went two or three days in Los Angeles, and went up to Portland, Seattle, then back to San Francisco and held a meeting. And I never endeavored to do anything with high hopes and with an idea of helping other people where I was so disappointed in my life as I was on this.

It might be expressed by a conversation that took place on the street with a Linotyper. He's now dead. I won't use his name.

He said to me, "It's pretty soft in these times for a fellow like you to have a government job and also make a living in business."



Harris: I said, "What do you mean?"

He said, "Well, the salary and expense account you get for this job."

He didn't know, and I guess I should have told him, that all this travelling my company was paying for, none of which was ever reimbursed. And there was no salary in it. This was a labor of love. So . . .

Teiser: Was your company paying for your expenses because of your desire for it to or because the government wouldn't give an expense allowance?

Harris: There was no allowance for expenses from the government. It was all voluntary. And here is an example of the people that we were trying to help--and this fellow was one of the worst actors in town. He was working 18 hours a day in order to get out some work he was doing and meet the low prices--he was a Linotype operator in a small shop. Well, the whole thing eventually blew up. I think it taught me a lesson which I've always had: look after your own family and your own business first. Be as fair as you can to other people, but don't try to run their affairs for them. Because what we actually were doing was just trying to run everybody's affairs. And they just wouldn't hold, because right away you create suspicion. And we were the largest shop in town even then. The little fellows figured--not all, but many of them figured--that we had some ulterior motive, probably going to take their business away from them. And that wasn't the thing at all.

Mr. Mackenzie had an entirely different idea--that it would be fine to help these fellows to make a little money, because we knew--we'd been through the mill--that the small plant, when it makes a profit on a job, it learns that if you do work well and have nerve enough to charge enough to make a small profit on it, it tastes good, and it encourages you to try that all along and make your business stable and not just a way of life.

So, I've been a very poor organization man ever since then.



## VIII

(Interview 8--June 22, 1967)

Reproduction Proofs, Continued

- Harris: We were going to talk about, I think, specimen books and things like that.
- Teiser: Yes. But did you say something about the improvement of papers over the years for printing?
- Harris: I can't give you much technical information, but I can tell you this: with the introduction of the wider use of lithography and the furnishing of reproduction proofs, there are a lot of things that have improved the quality of work in plants such as ours. This is true in other ones. The first improvement was the Vandercook proof press, made specifically for making reproduction proofs. That first one came out, maybe, in 1928, 1929. Somewhere along in there. Quite a while ago.
- Teiser: Before that what did you use?
- Harris: If you wanted a reproduction proof before then, to get a good one you'd have to put in on a job press and make ready, or a small cylinder. There was no hand press that you could get a decent proof from for photographing. The Vandercook proving press, made specifically for that, is really like a miniature cylinder press, and it's a precision press.

Let me go back. We decided that we were going to prepare ourselves for another market because at the time I came with this business practically everything was letterpress, and we furnished forms. Then we began to get work from lithographers where we furnished reproduction proofs. So we bought the first Vandercook reproduction proof press shipped to the Pacific coast and have used them right along.



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WWW: WWW.CHEM.UCHICAGO.EDU

Harris: But that isn't the whole story. You have to have people with good eyesight to make good proofs because they have to be inspected. It isn't a special man for the press, we have quite a number of printers who can make perfect proofs; and they all have to have perfect eyesight. (Well, a printer should have good eyesight.) Then inspection by the printer and the inspection in the proof room makes it about as fool-proof as you can make anything.

But that, too, isn't all of the story. Ink is extremely important. We tried various types of inks. And for many years we bought ink from a small ink maker up in Portland, Oregon. This fellow made an ink specifically for making reproduction proofs. Then good paper is necessary. And there are different ideas in the minds of the people who operate the cameras that photograph the stuff. Some of them want a dull coat, some of them want a glossy coat, and different types of them. We really carry all the various types of good paper for this. But we find now, the best one, which we--unless instructed otherwise--use, is one put out by the Vandercook company, from whom we bought these presses.\*

And another thing is the day and the humidity. We're not bothered too much with changes of humidity here, but on a hot, humid day it might be a little more difficult to get a good proof than on a cold, dry day. I think our operators know the adjustment of the ink they use and how long they have to dry them. After we did all of that we've had to put in dryers because many people want the proof, in the form of reproduction proof of an advertisement, about a half an hour after we get the copy.

Teiser: What type of dryer do you use?

Harris: We've got one that's put out by Vandercook company. That's a large one, with about twenty drawers in it. Then we have two quick dryers put out by an outfit in Los Angeles named Reynolds.

Teiser: Are those gas or electric?

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\* See also, pp. 122-123.

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Harris: Electric. So, I think we pretty well solved the matter of reproduction proofs.

Teiser: Fine. Then on to your type specimen books.

### Type Specimen Books and Types

Harris: This is a headache for anybody in the typesetting or type foundry business, the matter of specimen books. And I think it's more complicated with us than it is with other people because we are not only typefounders, but we are typographers. As typographers we cannot confine ourselves to the faces that we manufacture in our own foundry. We have a representative selection of practically all the usable type faces imported from Europe, where the type is made there. Then we have slug machine faces, which we furnish only in slug composition, of course. So we have tried all sorts of things to keep abreast of our shop. If a new account of size or importance enough desires a face which is just imported from Europe, why we put the type in. When we put it in we like people to know about it. That isn't too hard because the advertising agencies, or the people around town whom you might call the leading advertising agencies, we can easily tell them about these new things.

Teiser: Do you take a proof sheet?

Harris: Yes, we take a proof sheet over. When we buy a new series of type, like when we bought Standard type, which is a German face, a sans serif face, here a few years ago, we bought all versions of it. That's what we do, too: we buy all versions and all sizes because eventually we have to do it and we might as well take the maximum dose in the beginning. Then we ask the representative of these foundries to give us fifty, or a hundred, or two hundred complete specimens, which we distribute among local people that might use it. And we can cover that pretty well--this is pretty much true of large typography houses throughout the nation--by showing one line and listing the sizes they have. We have a book which is in this form that I'm showing you. We've gotten out a number of editions and we're now working on another one. This is a spiral bound, quick-reference

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Harris: book of the thousands of sizes of faces that we have in the shop. So a person who wants something, "Well, do you have Agency Open or Agency Gothic?" He looks in here, "Yes, they have it in so many sizes." This is mostly for local distribution, people who want to get advertising typography set here.

But in the type which we manufacture, and which we use in our shop, and which we can compose on the Monotype, and which we also sell in fonts all over the United States, that requires a much larger volume, a much larger book than this one I've just shown you. Now this one [showing it] we get out about fifteen thousand at a time. We call this Types for Fine Advertising Typography, or some such name as that. This is our main effort in specimen books, for it sells type to printers and typographers all over the United States. And now we are doing it somewhat in Canada and in Mexico. And this book we just finished in an edition of fifteen thousand shows the faces and the ornaments and rules and strip borders and things which we manufacture and sell--actually sell this material.

Teiser: What is the title of that?

Harris: This one just says Type, Many Old and New Type Faces, Accurately Cast in Hard Foundry Metal, with our name. Usually it'll just say Type on it. We try to get an edition which will last us five years. Fifteen thousand books will just about tide us over for five years, because it's an extremely expensive thing to set, to put together, and to print. These books, before we're through, cost us between seventy-five cents and a dollar apiece.

This year we started an innovation which will help us to make a book like this last longer, and that is to set the price separately from the book itself. The book itself shows only one line of the type and lists the sizes that we have and the size of the font, like 35 cap a and 25 lower case a, which gives a fairly good idea how big the font is. But the price list is in a separate folder. And we've done another thing in this last one. With the exception of certain special faces, we have put the same price for all 6 point fonts, all 8, all 10, all 12. This is something that we didn't originate. American Type Founders started it. We went through our thousands



Harris: of type faces--I suppose in fonts and sizes of type we manufacture perhaps two thousand items which we keep in stock. And we weighed up all the 6 points. And we found out that the difference in price between one 6 point and another was so small that we could strike an average. And it would be certainly more convenient for the printer to look up the price in buying the type, and certainly more convenient for us when we bill it to someone. So we have all of our prices in a four-page folder. That means that the book will never be out of date. There may be some additions. If we get in some new type faces before this book--which we just issued--is all used up, we can get a folder which we put in with the price list. Here's a new face. We've done that with the Univers, we have a special folder on the Univers type. That's our really hot number now, we can't keep it in stock. It has twenty design versions of a sans serif face in all sizes 6 to 48 points inclusive. Do you know this face?

Teiser: No.

Harris: It consists of twenty versions, and eleven sizes of each, meaning we had to buy 220 fonts of matrices.

It was designed by August Frutiger, a Swiss, for the Deberny et Peignot type foundry in France. They sold it to the English Monotype Company, sold the design. We had heard of this face and saw and heard it was getting wide use on the Continent. American Type Founders had the right to sell it in this country, made by the Debernet et Peignot foundry, cast on the American point system. One day we got a circular that the English Monotype Company was going to duplicate this face in matrices which they would make. I had the Lanston Monotype cable the English company and find out number one: would those matrices be available to American users of Monotypes? That was the first thing I wanted to know. Were there any restrictions for us to sell the castings from these matrices, which I wanted to know. And would they match exactly the other? Would there be any restrictions to our selling this in America under the name of "Univers?" Within about three days I got the answer, which was favorable on all points. I said, "Fine, we will be the first persons in America to order the complete series. Everything." Incidentally, this amounted to a bit





Harris: over \$50,000 worth of matrices. I thought we'd get them in a matter of a year or two. It took them five years to get them all to us. So it was pretty hard to make sales.

Teiser: When did the last of them finally come?

Harris: We got the last ones in about the end of last year. Then we started to advertise it and it's fantastic. We have nothing but back orders. We're running our foundry day and night, and the bulk of our foundry is on this face and we can't keep it in stock.

Teiser: Has this happened on other types over the years?

Harris: It happened on the Twentieth Century series which matched Futura, years ago. That was in 1928, about 1928 I guess. But not to the extent of this face. This is so fantastic it's unbelievable because we have something to pinpoint. The foundry which makes this type in Europe is very high-priced in Europe. As European typefounders, they charge much higher prices than anyone else. I know this foundry, I know Mr. Charles Peignot very well, and I could explain why it's high-priced, but then that's his problem. [Laughter] He doesn't operate quite like we do. One example: a few years ago I was in his foundry in Paris one day and he had some American machines and he was having trouble with them. They're identical to the machines which we have. They were just lead and rule casting machines. I think he had four of them, and he had a man in front of each of them. And he still was having trouble. I asked him why he had a man in front of each machine.

He said, "It takes always a man in front of all casting machines."

I said, "Well, that's interesting."

He said, "How do you operate?"

I said, "We think that two men can service twenty casting machines, because the machines are automatic. One keeps them in adjustment and the other takes the material off of them as it is cast."

He said, "How much do you pay them?"



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Harris: I told him that we were paying about four times as much as he was a week, but we still were doing better. Interestingly, his nephew, who is of another generation, said, "Uncle, what have I been telling you?" [Laughter]

Anyhow, this type is made by Deberny et Peignot, imported into this country, and there's a duty on it, fairly high duty. Then the American Type Founders naturally have to make a profit themselves. They have dealers all over the country and have to provide for everybody. So by the time the mark-up gets to the consumer, it's pretty high. We've made a very careful survey and we've found out that we could sell this type profitably to us for exactly forty per cent less than the imported type. So, much to the disappointment and concern of the American Type Founders, we've advertised now for over a year that we have an exact match of Univers and it's forty per cent less than the imported type. This has helped us to establish this type in a lot of the big plants in the East.

Teiser: What do they use it for particularly?

Harris: In advertising, and in book work, textbooks, for headings and things like that. Also, we can set it on the machine up through 14 point. The imported stuff has to all be hand set. So it's been a phenomenal success and it's getting more so all the time. Every month it seems to increase.

Teiser: Will it lose its popularity?

Harris: No, our experience would show that a type that gets this widely used will have a run for at least ten years, maybe twenty. Because, you see, the first people to buy it are the top advertising typographers. Then it gets to be used in annual reports and brochures and things that fine commercial printers use. And finally the little fellow, that does letterheads and everything else, he sees this. Everybody wants it. So there are these three phases of purchases. The advertising typographer, he himself may use it and have a run on it for ten years; it'd be a popular face. We can tell it's getting into big work because-- oh--we sold a big installation to the Maple Press in York, Pennsylvania, which has Monotype machines. But you see, it'd be cheaper for them to buy this type than to cast it because they don't have a typefoundry

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1930

The following table shows the number of persons who were employed in the various occupations in the United States in 1929. The total number of persons employed in all occupations was 27,000,000. The number of persons employed in agriculture, stock raising, and fishing was 4,000,000. The number of persons employed in manufacturing and construction was 10,000,000. The number of persons employed in commerce, transportation, and communication was 5,000,000. The number of persons employed in services was 8,000,000. The number of persons employed in government was 1,000,000. The number of persons employed in the armed forces was 2,000,000. The number of persons employed in the unclassified category was 1,000,000.

Harris: such as we do. We sold them the first order--I guess it was around two or three thousand dollars worth. Now almost every month we get a re-order. You can tell, maybe they've got a book in that they're using this for all of the headings.

Teiser: Over the years, what have been the popular type faces for book text work?

Harris: There's no face for--you can't use the word "books." You have to say school books, or beginning classes. Century Schoolbook is a face that was designed originally for Ginn & Company in Boston about, I think around (this was before World War I, because I was in Boston at the time) 1913 and 1916 or 1917.

Teiser: Is that still used?

Harris: Yes. Yes, it's still used.

Teiser: Still predominant?

Harris: It's a good face for beginners. Even in schools where they teach printing that's the most popular type, Century Schoolbook. It's a good round face, large lower case, and it's very legible.

For fine books, first for people that were doing limited editions, there was Garamond, Italian Old Style, Deepdene, Grandjean, Baskerville, Bembo, Times Roman--those faces. Times Roman more for advertising booklets and brochures than for fine books. In later years, large editions of novels and things that are best sellers. People--particularly Eastern people that do most of those books--they found the cost of putting a book in an interesting type face isn't increased beyond setting it in some of the old things that were popular, and they've had better designers for novels and books of that type. Even paperbacks have good-looking title pages. All these faces are used in books that are comparatively cheap in cost.

Teiser: So-called trade books.

Harris: Trade books, yes. Now, people have tried to use the sans serif types for texts. It was tried with Twentieth Century, which is a match of Futura, and I've seen some things in Univers. But I don't believe that the public

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Harris: is yet ready to buy books and want books where you have a novel or a book of 300 pages all set with sans serif. I think the type with the serif and the light and heavy lines is more pleasant to the eyes. It's just like my viewpoint on modern furniture against old furniture. I think the chair you're sitting in is much more comfortable, and it is to me as attractive as some of these modern things with straight backs and hard sides. The old types are pleasant; they are pleasant to the eye and they are legible.

Teiser: Have any come up recently, beyond those you've mentioned, for trade book text?

Harris: People are always experimenting with a new form of the alphabet. Peignot did. He went back to a sort of a unical type, where there is no cap, no lower case. But it's only good for a few lines or a few paragraphs. There are some of the real, true unical types like Hammerschrift. And there's one that is made in this country--well I guess Hammer is done in this country. They're not good for general use. People are not used to it. I used to discuss this with Goudy by the hour, and he had some ideas about the modification of certain letters to show the pronunciation, because we have letters that are pronounced one way in one word and another way in another, and to modify the shape of the letter. But those things don't come very often. I mean, it takes a long, long time. I would say it would take much longer to change the alphabet than it would to change the language. The language is a more alive thing; a word that's slang today is accepted tomorrow. But not with type. And the classical lines of the old types are fundamentally the things that are used in the design of new types. Does that answer your question?

Teiser: Yes.

#### Franciscan, Goudy 30 and Other Types

Teiser: While you're on types, may I ask you--I was interviewing Bob Grabhorn and he was telling about the Franciscan type that they bought. They owned the matrices, is that it?

1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that every entry should be supported by a valid receipt or invoice. This ensures transparency and allows for easy verification of the data.

2. The second part of the document outlines the various methods used to collect and analyze data. It includes a detailed description of the sampling process, which was designed to be representative of the entire population. The analysis then identifies key trends and patterns within the data set.

3. The third part of the document provides a comprehensive overview of the results. It highlights the most significant findings, such as the increase in sales volume over the period and the shift in consumer preferences. These insights are crucial for informing future business decisions.

4. The final part of the document offers recommendations based on the findings. It suggests strategies to capitalize on the identified opportunities and address the challenges. The goal is to provide a clear path forward for the organization.

Appendix A: Data Collection Methods

The data for this study was collected through a combination of primary and secondary sources. Primary data was gathered through a series of surveys and interviews conducted over a six-month period. Secondary data was obtained from publicly available reports and industry publications. The collection process was rigorous and followed strict protocols to ensure the integrity of the data.

Harris: Yes, the matrices. The matrices for that type were made by the Monotype Company in Philadelphia with patterns which had been cut by Goudy himself. The Grabhorns bought it, the right to use that type, and the name. And they turned the matrices over to us. (I use matrices or m̄atrices. Both are correct.) They turned them over to us and we made a large quantity of type. That's when they were on Commercial Street. Our records show that we returned the matrices to them at the time we finished making this large quantity, several hundred pounds. Grabhorns never did have any records on anything, so they don't have records of it. After they moved out on Sutter Street they wanted some more type. That was before World War II, and we haven't been able to find the matrices here and they haven't been able to find them there--don't know what happened to them--so that type cannot be made. Maybe some day when they clean out the old Grabhorn Press on Sutter Street they might find them behind some books on a bookcase somewhere. It's a box about twelve inches long they're in, about three inches wide, an inch and a half high. We searched our place from top to bottom a dozen times, and we do have a memorandum that we sent them over.

They think they were lost in the moving. Might've been thrown in the garbage can or something with some junk. They don't know; they think so. We could get new mats made. It would be fairly expensive, taking one letter each--one that wasn't worn--and have electro-matrices made. But they haven't wanted to do that.\*

Teiser: Has anyone else ever used that type?

Harris: No, only the Grabhorns. They had the only cast of it.

Teiser: Is that a type which others might want to use?

Harris: Yes, I think it would be. I wouldn't say it was light,

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\* As of May 1, 1970, another set of Franciscan matrices has been made for Grabhorn-Hoyem in Japan. These new matrices were made by the electro deposit process from type of the original Franciscan. We are now casting a new supply (almost 500 pounds) for Grabhorn-Hoyem. When we finish, the matrices will be returned to them, and, I hope, safely preserved for posterity. --C.T.H.

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Harris: but it was in the same category as a face called Koch Bible Gothic, which was designed by Rudolph Koch, with the Gebrüder Klingspor Foundry in Offenbach am Main. This great designer designed many distinctive types including a face called Eve and the Kabel type--called Sans Serif here. The original name of Eve actually was, in Germany, Koch Antiqua. But it got sort of complicated. The italic was Koch Antiqua Kursiv; and the boldface was Grobe Koch Antiqua; and the bold italic was Grobe Koch Antiqua Kursiv. [Laughter] It was first imported by Continental Type Founders and they gave it the very nice name of Eve--Adam's wife. Eve, Eve Italic, Eve Bold, Eve Bold Italic, and so forth. But he had designed a face called Bible Gothic, which is a sort of gothic. I use the word "gothic" like the old gothic type. Franciscan was a face in that category.

Not like it, but similar to it, is a face which is the last face that Goudy designed, which he called Goudy 30. You know in the old days in the newspaper they put 30 at the end; that was the end. This was the last face that Goudy designed and it was sold in matrices for casting in one size, 18 point. We were one of the few people that bought the matrices for it.

Teiser: When was it that you bought the matrices?

Harris: It had to be some time around 1946. Goudy died in 1947; I'd say 1946. That's when we bought these--only for hand setting. Then some years later my friend Bruce Rogers wanted to use it in an edition of Canterbury Tales. He wanted it set on the machine, so induced the Monotype Company to make the matrices for composing it on the machine if he would get three orders. He wrote me and asked me if I would be one of the three. I said, "Yes." So we ordered a set of these matrices to compose on the machine. I think with the equipment for the keyborad and everything it cost us about \$1,000; just one type. But we were going to do this magnificent book for Bruce Rogers. Before he got to the point of doing it, Rogers died. We got the matrices and paid for them, but he didn't get the other two orders for the composition matrices. So we have the only set of Goudy 30 matrices to compose on the machine in existence. I think we used it only once, for a little book Jane Grabhorn did. We've used



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Harris: it on some small jobs; but the only book was one that Jane Grabhorn did, a sort of a book of proverbs. I don't know whether you remember that book.

Teiser: California Spanish Proverbs. \*

Harris: That's set on the machine in this face. Of course now that it's all paid for we're happy to have something as unique as this. I have a halfway project on it. There's a man in New York who wants to do a book of hours. We've been talking about this for a long time. The only thing, I guess, that holds him back is to get somebody to write it. I really would like to do a book of hours. This is too big for it because, after all, a book of hours should be small enough so people that use it can carry it with them. I've tried reducing it--this would be printed by photography--reducing it down to 12 point. Isn't that charming? [Showing a specimen.]

Teiser: Why it certainly is.

Harris: This is the way it's set on the machine, 18. And to reduce it to 12 point, it's very legible.

Teiser: This is Goudy 30?

Harris: This is Goudy 30. Now, this is the way it comes off the machine. It wouldn't pay to have matrices for 12 point made, but we could set the whole thing and have the art work done and then reduce it.

Teiser: Reduce it photographically?

Harris: Yes. Now I'm all ready to do this book of hours. I would have Mallette Dean do the design and the art. And I have a very smart priest friend of mine back East who thinks he has another priest whom he knows who could write it. You see, a book of hours--there's no standard text for a book of hours. We did some research. There's some lady at the Free Library in Philadelphia who's an expert on it. But she's an expert on the various editions. Since this thing came up about a year ago I've been accumulating reproduc-

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\* Collected and translated by Mildred Yorba MacArthur. San Francisco: Colt Press, 1954.

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Harris: tions of all the books of hours I can get. Actually it's a book of devotions. The text is something that's different in all of them. So this man in New York, this publisher, whom we've done a lot of work for--this book is one of his books--he wants to do it. He wants to do it as something; and he could probably get the imprint of Cardinal Spellman on it because he's done a lot of things for him. And I would even do the job for nothing; it's an idea of credit to our organization. You see, we get a lot of fun out of what we do.

Teiser: Have you ever done anything of this sort in reducing or enlarging type?

Harris: We do that all the time, all the time. Our people are very skillful and our superintendent, Mr. Lloyd, is extremely experienced in doing that. And it's surprising. You couldn't do this from anything but new Monotype because the Monotype is such a precise machine. Where we have work such as presentations, when advertising agencies are presenting to a new client, or a prospective client, a campaign they're going to do for some reason or other, they want a large sheet that can be put up on the wall--a series of them showing the various stages of the new campaign. We've done it on things where you're going to go before a committee or something: charts. These things usually have to be big enough so you can read them sitting around the room so they have to be maybe in 24, 30, or 36 point. If it's a job it's quite expensive to handset it. We can set, picking a good type, preferably where there are not too many fine lines--but more of a monotone design--we can do it well with Centaur; we can do it well with Times Roman; we can do it with Century Schoolbook; we can do it with Baskerville. We set it in about 14 or 18 point on the machine and blow it up as clean as a whistle. We do that all the time. It's very economical.

Teiser: Do you have cameras here for that?

Harris: No. No, we don't make our own shoes. [Laughter]

Teiser: At an exhibit put on by the manufacturers of equipment for typesetters and so forth a year or so ago, they were showing two machines, I believe, that photographically distorted type so that you could make it a squat or thin . . .

1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that this is essential for the proper management of the organization's finances and for ensuring compliance with relevant laws and regulations.

2. The second part of the document outlines the various methods used to collect and analyze data. It describes how this information is used to identify trends, assess risks, and make informed decisions. The document also highlights the need for regular updates and reviews of the data to ensure its accuracy and relevance.

3. The third part of the document focuses on the implementation of the findings. It provides detailed instructions on how to apply the results of the analysis to the organization's operations. This includes identifying key areas for improvement, setting priorities, and developing action plans. The document also discusses the importance of communication and collaboration in this process.

4. The final part of the document concludes with a summary of the key points and a call to action. It encourages all staff members to take ownership of their roles and responsibilities and to work together to achieve the organization's goals. The document also provides contact information for further assistance and support.



Harris: I think it's the most horrible thing that anyone could conceive of doing. The shapes of letters are so beautiful, and they're so much a part of our heritage. Look at that word Centaur up there [on the Centaur broadside], the way the letters seem to fit together. Suppose you pulled it out that way; it's be like taking one of God's most beautiful creations, a woman, and spreading her out or pulling her up that way and she'd look the same. It's a good comparison. [Laughter] There've been machines for a long time that you could do that with. If you widen--they use prisms to do this--if you widen that word "Centaur," the serifs remain the same thickness. The vertical stems are wider, so you redesign it. And you don't really redesign it. It's like going into one of these funny houses where you have odd mirrors. It's only to attract attention.

Teiser: I think they were trying to sell it for paste-up work, to fit in space.

Harris: Maybe they could get one of these fellows that makes cards for store windows and a ball pen and let him do it. There are all sorts of types that you can attract attention with without doing that. We have one designed by Eric Gill. See this one in reverse there?

Teiser: Oh, yes. What's the name of it?

Harris: Well, we sometimes rename types because we don't like the name. We bought the matrices recently for this. It's listed in the English Monotype book as Gill Cameo, or something like that. We searched around for a name because there are other faces called Cameo. So we gave it the word Harlequin because, you see, it has little streamers on the end. I can't show it here, but at the end it has things that come to a point. I mean, just type like that, you see.

Teiser: Oh, yes.

Harris: Then there are circle things. And when I saw that I thought of a circus and Harlequin. So we are going to try to sell it under the name of Harlequin. We have a similar thing with the--this is really something. Canterbury Capitals we call it. This is designed by Eric Gill. The matrices are sold under the name of Floreated Capitals. Now this name Bob Grabhorn gave me. I told him we were going to get it. I know the face. I've seen the book where Eric Gill first used



Harris: it as a drawing and then developed the type face. It was first used on the title page of Canterbury Tales which Eric Gill designed. So we call that type Canterbury Capitals, and that's a lot better word than Floreated Initials.

Type Specimen Books, Continued

Teiser: You were going to speak a little about your earlier type books.

Harris: There was one book that came out previous to this, before I came with Mackenzie & Harris. And one of the first things I did when I came with this company in 1924, we bought the Goudy Garamond in all sizes up to 36 point. That's as big as it was made then. Then I proceeded to get out a type book. I'm going to give you this for your record.

Teiser: Fine!\*

Harris: We were then Monotype Composition Company. The title page says "Monotype Composition Company, Typesetters & Typefounders, George W. Mackenzie, President and General Manager, Carroll T. Harris Vice-President and Treasurer."

Teiser: Is there a date on it?

Harris: 1925. This page was sort of a resume of the history of the company, at three stages. I've got 1915, then 1924, then 1925. I announced to the world it was a great step to get me. You see, being youthful I was pretty proud of myself in those days. In 1925 we opened a branch in Oakland. I'm sorry we have that in there because that wasn't successful, and three years later we closed it.\*\* We made a profit only three months out of the three years.

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\* Monotype Composition Company, San Francisco, Specimen Book of Type Faces, 1925. Copy deposited in the Bancroft Library.

\*\*See pp. 81-82.

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Harris: But the book has something else. It's sort of a description of our service. In most of the faces I did something that I would like to do in all type books, but you don't have room for it: a history of the type. Here's Kennerley. We had just bought Kennerley. An authentic history of this type. It was designed in 1912 by Frederic W. Goudy for a book for his friend Mitchell Kennerley, the publisher in New York. This is the whole story of it. The name of the book was The Door in the Wall by H. G. Wells. I had some information and I got it down here and I'm glad to have it.

At least something was said about each face, if there was anything to say. Before each series we had the name of the type. I was trying to pad the book to give it an air of importance. I designed the cover of this book, which is made up of ornaments made here. Fleur-de-lis. That shows my being a Francophile a long time ago. I've used the fleur-de-lis frequently. The specimen book was printed by Hartley Jackson at the Metropolitan Press here in San Francisco.

We've done a number of books over the years, and I've explained to you our great difficulty. The one which we've printed in the largest volume is this book which is for the sale of type, primarily--incidentally shows the Monotype faces we have, one size. But we have to keep out of this anything that we don't manufacture because we mail this to people all over the United States, all over North America, to sell type of our manufacture. And if it's somebody else's type face we naturally don't show it. That's our big effort. We've had, since World War II, about five different editions of this particular book. I can give you two of them.\* The last two. The others I don't have. Then we get another book out of just slug machine faces. That's only for local use; and that's one product we don't particularly push.

We have an Addressograph system, machine and plates and so forth. We market our stuff. We've always been consistent advertisers in trade papers.

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\*Mackenzie & Harris, Type, November 1962 and March 1967. Deposited in the Bancroft Library.



1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that this is essential for the proper management of the organization's finances and for ensuring compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

2. The second part of the document outlines the specific procedures that should be followed when recording transactions. This includes details on how to properly categorize expenses, how to handle receipts, and the importance of double-checking all entries for accuracy.

3. The third part of the document discusses the role of the accounting department in providing timely and accurate financial information to management. It highlights the need for clear communication and collaboration between the accounting staff and other departments within the organization.

4. The final part of the document provides a summary of the key points discussed and offers recommendations for further improvement. It suggests that regular training and updates on accounting practices are necessary to ensure that the organization remains current and efficient in its financial operations.

The Printing Trade Press and Books on Printing

Harris: When Western Advertising was a big magazine, for many years we carried a full page or a third of a page. One period over two years we carried a full page. Pacific Printer, as long as they were in business, I think, we carried a full page every month.

Teiser: In the last years of Pacific Printer I was on a rival publication, Western Printer and Lithographer. Were you not one of the sponsors of The Pacific Printer who tried to keep it going?

Harris: We sure did. By every way possible. We were setting the type for it.

Teiser: It was a very nice magazine.

Harris: It still should be in existence. But Charlie McIntyre got to a point where he didn't want to run it any more and sold it for a very good price, right after World War II. He sold it to a man who had some other publications, a man by the name of MacDonald. Then he hired a fellow--let's see, what was his name. He's dead now. He let the thing run into the ground. They got into us financially and we even increased our ads--ran a couple of pages, anything to help them out, to eat up what they owed us. But it just lost all its vitality.

Teiser: Maybe the fact that you set it made it seem to have a much higher quality than otherwise it would have, even when the content dropped in quality.

Harris: We set it for a good many years. In fact, we set Western Advertising for one period of ten or twelve years. We set Sunset Magazine for a period of about ten years.

Teiser: When was that?

Harris: 'Way back, before World War II. It left us during World War II because Larry [Lawrence] Lane, the owner, was afraid he wouldn't get deliveries across town and he got Filmer Brothers to set it, across town. We've done a lot of publication work, but that kind of work doesn't fit too well in our shop. If you look at most trade publications, they are not noted for their quality of composition.

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1. The purpose of this document is to provide a comprehensive overview of the project's objectives and scope. It is intended for the use of all project team members and stakeholders.



2. The project is organized into several key areas, each with specific responsibilities and deliverables. The following table outlines the primary components and their associated tasks.

Table with multiple columns and rows, likely detailing project tasks, responsibilities, and timelines. The text is too faint to read accurately.

3. It is important to note that the project's success is dependent on the active participation and collaboration of all team members. Regular communication and reporting are essential to ensure that the project remains on track and meets its goals.

4. This document is a living one and will be updated as the project progresses and new information becomes available. All team members are encouraged to provide feedback and suggestions for improvements.

- Harris: We would take these things--you would have to do it on a price--and we would wind up giving a good many of the advertisers the same kind of typography they'd get through an advertising agency. And you can't afford to do that in a publication. You do a little, then a little more, and this is just a special thing. And first thing you know, you're doing an agency job with all the care and attention. So we don't particularly go after that sort of work.
- Teiser: Has there ever been any talk of reviving that magazine or another like it?
- Harris: No. Even the Western Printer and Lithographer is out of the picture now.
- Teiser: It's still printing news.
- Harris: Yes, but I mean it isn't as important as it was.
- Teiser: No.
- Harris: Well, maybe the country has gotten smaller. This has happened to so many. I was going to say, we advertise in Graphic Arts Monthly, The Inland Printer, Printing, and Printing Impressions now, and Western Printer. We have ads in these five, and maybe one or two other publications.
- Teiser: Which are quality magazines?
- Harris: None of them. None of them. Compared to the old days--none of them.
- Teiser: Is there any magazine that approaches printing on a level of quality?
- Harris: No. No, there isn't. Thinking back, in the old days of The American Printer--the greatest one from the standpoint of printing quality was Printing Art. I think I mentioned it earlier. A fellow by the name of Lou Gandy was the editor of it. It was printed at the University Press in Boston. It was just exquisite; it was something that any young printer would be inspired to see. And The Inland Printer was that way for a long time. But they just couldn't afford to do it any more; so they got more and more to do things cheaper--machinery and all this. That was the main thing. Now the highly successful maga-

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- Harris: zines are--the Graphic Arts Monthly has been for many, many years; that's free circulation. Then this Printing Impressions that comes out of Philadelphia.
- Teiser: It's a terrible looking magazine, isn't it?
- Harris: Yes, it's sort of a tabloid. But for results from our advertising, in all of our history it pulls many times more than any other publication.
- Teiser: Whom does it reach?
- Harris: Everybody seems to get it. We run an ad about 4 1/2 by 5, or 4 1/2 by 6 inches. It costs us \$225 a month. You can just feel--whenever we change the thing--you can just feel, because coupons come in. We use coupons, and you can see the returns. Many, many of them mean business.
- Teiser: From advertising people or commercial shops?
- Harris: Printers of all types. We've hit the right thing to advertise in it, which is a direct appeal. We have been running now for the last year, year and a half, an ad which will say--about Unifers: "Forty per cent less than the imported type, equal in quality, accurately cast, matches the original completely." Then we show the ones that we list, such-and-such sizes in the following versions, and the coupon at the bottom of it. And we've gotten a tremendous amount of business from these advertisements.
- Teiser: How does Western Printer go?
- Harris: About equal to Inland Printer or Printing, but not like Printing Impressions. I would say the next would be Graphic Arts Monthly. And of course these people, particularly Printing Impressions and Graphic Arts Monthly, have a service: they have a chart in the back where you check the things you want information on. And they're very good on that.

With Printing Impressions an advertiser can get some information. For instance, we've had, from time to time, some requests from dealers. We sell a lot of our type through dealers, in Chicago and different places. We don't give any exclusive territories to dealers, but we will accord a dealer's discount to people if they will handle our line; we don't tie

1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that proper record-keeping is essential for the integrity of the financial system and for the ability to detect and prevent fraud.

2. The second part of the document outlines the specific requirements for record-keeping, including the need to maintain original documents and to keep copies of all records for a minimum of seven years. It also discusses the importance of ensuring that records are accessible and retrievable at all times.

3. The third part of the document discusses the role of internal controls in ensuring the accuracy and reliability of financial records. It emphasizes that internal controls should be designed to prevent errors and to detect and prevent fraud. It also discusses the importance of regular internal audits and the need to ensure that internal controls are effective and efficient.

4. The fourth part of the document discusses the importance of transparency and accountability in financial reporting. It emphasizes that financial statements should be prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) and should be audited by an independent auditor. It also discusses the importance of providing clear and concise disclosures of all material information.

5. The fifth part of the document discusses the importance of ethical behavior in financial reporting. It emphasizes that financial reporting should be based on the highest standards of ethical conduct and that all transactions should be recorded accurately and honestly. It also discusses the importance of ensuring that financial reporting is free from bias and manipulation.

6. The sixth part of the document discusses the importance of ongoing monitoring and evaluation of financial reporting processes. It emphasizes that financial reporting processes should be regularly reviewed and updated to ensure that they remain effective and efficient. It also discusses the importance of ensuring that financial reporting processes are compliant with all applicable laws and regulations.

Harris: them up so they can't handle anybody else's because those things are not economically possible, and we don't want anybody ever to cheat on us or to be tempted to cheat. So we just don't make any exclusive contracts. If somebody we haven't heard of before should write in and say he wants to be our dealer, I can call up the service in Printing Impressions and they'll give me sort of a run-down, not about his financial responsibility but who the fellow is, how long he's been in business.

Between that and Dunn and Bradstreet--and we subscribe to Dunn and Bradstreet for the whole United States and use their service extensively--we do a volume of business in excess of half a million a year, which is a fairly large volume for this type of business, and our credit losses are less than one tenth of one per cent. Now, of course, if we were talking to somebody in the retail business, he would say we weren't exploring all the possibilities or we wouldn't have such good low credit losses. [Laughter] You're supposed to figure in your profit a certain amount of losses and give everybody credit. But that doesn't quite apply to selling to printers because we're selling to the same people. If we once get a customer we hope to keep him; and we want a person that can be happy with us and we can be happy with him.

Teiser: To get back to the printing publications, if a young man now sets out to learn about type and printing, he just has the old files and the books to go to? There's nothing current?

Harris: Yes, there's a course that is given young printers by the Typographical Union. I guess that's better than nothing. We, in our little organization, have a fairly good reference library on printing in the proof room and up here in my office. We have history, we have Updike, and style books and things that they can study, and the Monotype system book, which is a very good technical book on the Monotype. I have [L. A.] Le Gros and [J. C.] Grant which is certainly the finest book ever done on the technique and history of printing, typesetting, and typesetting. It's called Typographic Printing-Surfaces.\* Do you know the book?

\* Published in London in 1916.



Harris: It's hard to get. I keep it in the safe downstairs. It's my only copy, and I've been trying for three years to buy another copy so I can take mine home and let the people here in the shop have access to this fine reference book. It's more like a technical book for anybody that has anything to do with a typesetting machine or the typesetting business. We offer to lend apprentices--I do--books of my own. I'm somewhat disappointed (this is not critical of our people, but it's the youth). They become good mechanics and they learn to do the things, and do them well, perfectly; but I don't think that this sort of an inspirational idea that you get exists to the degree it did. At least it did when I was a kid. I don't know; maybe this is just an old man talking. But it's something that's lacking. I've offered to lend books on printing many times. When the fellow says, "Gee, I enjoyed that book, have you any more?" he's the rare exception. I guess these fellows make awful good wages and get lots of overtime, and have other interests that are more fun to them than reading books. Maybe that's all right.





IX

(Interview 9--June 29, 1967)

Financing a Typesetting Business

Harris: This building\* was built for us, and we moved into it January 21, 1925.

Teiser: Where were you before?

Harris: 560 Mission, which was inadequate. We moved over here because it was a place where you could find plenty of room to park, and it was sort of a quiet neighborhood. This was the edge of Rincon Hill, and the street along the side went up to the second floor, which our shop is on. And we had a bridge across there and we used to load direct from the street. There was a cobblestone street that went up to the top of Rincon Hill. You could look out this window and it was even with the penthouses. So we've seen a great many changes in this neighborhood.

Teiser: They changed the contours when they built the Bay Bridge.

Harris: All around us right now, these new buildings are going up, the telephone building, and this building that's being constructed on the other side is for the international telephone company. Across the way that building was originally Roebling Wire, then was a storehouse for a trucking firm. Now it's to be the computer headquarters for United California Bank. So we're old-timers here.

Teiser: Taxes go up and up?

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\* 659 Folsom.



Harris: They have, yes. We've had three or four owners of the building. The time that the building was reasonable enough to buy was during the Depression and we didn't have any money, naturally, to buy a building. It sold several times. Now it's owned by Mount Olivet Cemetary people. It's one of their permanent investments. We started out with a twelve-and-a-half year lease. This is of some interest because it shows you how we go about things.

Teiser: I never heard of a twelve-and-a-half year lease. Was that just because you moved in in the middle of a year?

Harris: Oh, I don't know. I think we got as much as we could, as long as we could ahead. And that was about as long as they'd give us. Then we've always renewed our lease from three to five years before it expired. We would pick a time when, well, maybe, a couple of times when the real estate market was soft and we needed a little bit more space, and we'd get our landlord to give us the additional space in the building and extend the lease for another ten or twelve years.

Teiser: Do you occupy the whole building?

Harris: No, we occupy about four-fifths of it now, I guess.

Teiser: You've always considered that more economical than owning your own?

Harris: Yes. The money we could have spent on this building and so forth was better used in our own business. Because we've always expanded and particularly in the last twenty years we've needed all of our resources to expand. I'm glad to say, though, that as of last November, we were able to eliminate any outside financing. We have a line of credit, open credit, in the bank, quite large for a company of our type. We got to a sort of a climax. You see, we borrow money to buy equipment. Last November we paid our last note at the bank. So we've been financing ourselves and we carry a very, very comfortable balance on hand, in the bank. Now our bank occasionally suggests, "Maybe you need some help."  
[Laughter]

Teiser: I suppose every year you allocate a certain amount for new equipment or replacement.





Harris: Oh, yes. We have a depreciation charge-off which is quite large. It's something like \$2,500 a month. And that is in a separate fund. I think, in the future, we can probably keep our purchases of equipment within that, and temporary difference would be out of our own current assets. We hope so. It's a comfortable way to be. Particularly inasmuch as we will always maintain that line of credit at the bank. That's in reserve.

The way you get a line of credit in a business like this: they look at the company itself and its record, and then the principal, which is me. I have a continuing guarantee in the bank, in case the company goes broke, that out of my private interests I would have to make good. So it gives us plenty to work on.

We try to make a business out of this. So many typesetting companies are a way of life. A fellow would be an operator and pretty good at it. And he would buy himself a secondhand Linotype or Monotype and get long terms to pay for it, and then work long hours himself until he got on his feet, but it isn't a way to run a business. We've always run this business where the principals are paid a regular salary. It's a corporation. And then we set up dividends and pay regular quarterly dividends. And if we have a particularly good year, at the end of the year we pay an extra dividend, and operate it like any business should be operated.

Teiser: Have you ever worked late nights, habitually?

Harris: Myself?

Teiser: Yes.

Harris: In our early days, oh, yes. Yes, I've done all sorts of things. And Saturdays and Sundays and things like that. But, you see, I'm not a practical printer and I can't work in the shop, but I used to do a lot of work other than in the office. But I made a rule for the last twenty-five years not to take anything home from the plant to work on or to study on, and even try not to think about it. I try to make my business life and my private life two separate things, and even go so far as at lunch I may--and I frequently take customers or clients to lunch--but I have an



Harris: invariable fixed rule that nobody may talk business at lunchtime. I tell them it gives me indigestion, which of course isn't true, but I don't want anyone to think that they have to pay for their lunch by giving me an order, which I think is a better kind of public relations than the kind you get from an insurance agent. After the lunch is ordered he says, "Now, there's something I wanted to discuss with you."

### The French Club

Teiser: The French Club, where you usually lunch--what is the background of it?

Harris: It's one of the oldest clubs, if not the oldest club, in San Francisco. It was founded about 1900. Its name is Cercle de l'Union. There was a French club with another name (I don't know what that was) that preceeded it. They had some kind of an internal fight about whether or not they would admit Jewish people to membership and they split. The club that is now the French Club, or the Cercle de l'Union took its name because it was right off of Union Square. Cercle means a club and Union is of Union Square. They were up on Powell, I think, and later on were at 220 Post. The one that survived that is the Cercle de l'Union has no discrimination against any religion or anything of that sort. The other one is no longer in existence, the one that wouldn't take Jewish people.

Teiser: I was recently discussing with a prominent Jewish woman here the Bohemian Club's earlier acceptance of Jewish members, and later the change in policy.

Harris: I think they may have. I have heard they have had some. But they might just be a token membership. Actually, I would think the Bohemian Club would be about the same as the Pacific Union Club, they would not. I'm, of course, not Jewish, but I wouldn't join and belong to any kind of an organization that excluded people for that reason. So I wouldn't care to belong to the Bohemian Club, and that isn't sour grapes. I've had opportunities to join and get my name on that list. But I wouldn't care to belong to any organization that had that sort of discrimination.



Teiser: The French Club . . .

Harris: It's a man's club, primarily a place to eat. At noon-time only men, members and their guests. In the evening we can bring ladies. We don't have any ladies' auxiliary or anything. I can tell a funny story. We have a picture--we have some nudes in the club and we have one semi-nude, an Algerian dancing girl, very lovely painting. The wife of one of our members, who's a very prominent man, said to me one night at dinner, "You know, I don't think that is a very good picture. I don't like it and I think it ought to come down. It's a little bit risqué."

And I said, "Mrs. X, I want to tell you something. You know, this is a men's club. And we think it's just beautiful." [Laughter] "And I'm sure it's going to stay there." She changed the subject.

Teiser: Does it have any living facilities?

Harris: No, no living facilities. We eat around a big table, and you can discuss anything, politics, religion--anything. Occasionally there are private parties, but you bring yourself around that big table. Extended in the dining room, it'll hold seventy people. It's quite a stimulating place. There're people of all walks of life. There's no particular reason for it except good food. We have only 110 members. We have a French chef, and the food is after the French fashion, but mainly it's good food well cooked.

Teiser: Are all members Francophiles?

Harris: Oh, not necessarily. Maybe they just like French food, or something like that. Perhaps a third of the members have some French blood in them and maybe another third of them have French interests, like I do. I've been a Francophile. I'm not a de Gaulle-ophile. My wife is French, born in France. I've been in France a good many times and spend a lot of time there. But it is mainly a bunch of people that seem to get along. We can disagree. Being a sort of argumentative person myself, I've had occasions where somebody would say something. I'd look across at the man and say, "It's very interesting what you say, but I totally disagree with you and I'm going to try to prove that you're wrong, or why I disagree with you."



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Harris: Then all ears are cocked up, and this is a stimulating thing. And there ought to be places where you can do that, because there are so few left. You know, life is now you mustn't say anything to offend people or to disagree with them. I don't believe in that kind of life.

It's interesting in taking in members--we are limited, as I say, to 110 resident members and perhaps thirty out of town members. The length of time a person's been on the waiting list, proposed by a member and has to be seconded by two other members, has nothing to do with whether or not he'll be admitted. The membership committee is composed of people of very good judgment. They know the tone of the club. And they'd be just as likely to pick someone whose name had just been presented as someone whose name had been proposed three or four years ago. Because they look into the man as to whether or not he will fit into the picture. And they try to find out, also, about his wife, whether she's the sort of person that will mix properly, or would be pleased with the parties that they have at dinner time. Because we're supposed to be ladies and gentlemen that don't eat with our knives, unless, of course it's peas, and then you use mashed potatoes with that. [Laughter] But they look into a lot of things. There are no special rules. If one member would object to somebody that was proposed, he would not be accepted.

Teiser: Have you had any people in the organization who have been leaders, who have guided it?

Harris: Oh, yes. Paul Verdier, who was a member for many, many years. He's dead. And Michel Weill is next to our oldest member. He was a nephew of Raphael Weill. George Davis, who succeeded Raphael Weill as head of the White House; he was a member until he died. He was there every day for lunch. Mr. Leon Bocqueraz, a banker of the old French bank, was a member until he died. Jerome Politzer, a prominent attorney, world figure, was a member. We have always the French consul general and his deputy, the representatives of Air France, French railways, all the resident people that have to do with the French government, they are automatically members. So we maintain a French tone to the place. We have a beautiful, modern Gobelin tapestry that must be



Harris: twelve by fifteen feet, which is a permanent loan from the French government. A lot of things. And the decor is very beautiful inside; it's quite French inside.

### The Roxburghe Club

Harris: The Roxburghe Club at times used to have an annual meeting there and take the whole club over. I eat lunch there every day, and have entertained a great number of visiting firement and local people. They all like the French Club.

Teiser: Are you a charter member of the Roxburghe Club?

Harris: No, no. I came in at the end of World War II. I'm not a charter member. I came in and I was Master of the Press for two years following Larry Clark.\* I guess it must've been 1948 and 1949 I was the Master of the Press.

Teiser: Larry Clark, the San Francisco librarian?

Harris: Yes. He preceeded me. Master of the Press is the head of the Roxburghe Club.

Teiser: Do you continue active now?

Harris: Very active. The Roxburghe Club has no by-laws, no rules. There is a bunch of fellows, just a small group of fellows, that seems to keep the thing going. Some people call them the steering committee. Some call them the power behind the throne, and so forth. Usually they've been Masters of the Press. I'm one of those. We have a meeting every couple of months all during the year, make plans of what we'll do next year, and so forth.

Teiser: Who are the committee members?

Harris: It sort of shifts. David Magee; Ted [Theodore M.] Lilienthal; myself; Mike [Michael] Harrison, who's just finished as Master of the Press. Duncan Olmsted

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\* Laurence J. Clark.





Harris: is the new master; he will be one of them. That about gives you the idea of it. On some special meeting they might ask someone else to come in and join with us on something. But somebody has to keep things like that going. As I say, there's no rules, regulations, or anything. The custom is that the Master is elected, and then is reelected for one year. That's the custom; it isn't written down.

Teiser: What have been the main functions of the club since you have known it?

Harris: To have interesting talks about collecting or printing or bookbinding or about certain types of collecting that people have had experience in. Frequently out-of-town people such as Dr. Ian Forbes Fraser, who was the head of the American Library in Paris--and twice he talked before the Roxburghe Club. This diversified group of people are held together by one common thing: they collect some kind of books. Anyone who comes to town who has a message--I don't like to use the word message--who has an experience that those people would be interested in, we hold a special luncheon or a dinner meeting.

Teiser: You occasionally have held exhibits, as I remember.

Harris: Yes. We participated in exhibits. The local members of the Grolier Club and the Roxburghe Club acted as hosts the week that the Grolier Club was here. Every other year we meet with the Zamorano Club, every two years. Last year we went south, and a year from September the Zamorano Club will come up here.

Teiser: Several-day meetings?

Harris: It's usually a weekend. Go down Friday night, and the festivities are on Saturday and Sunday, and then return.

Teiser: What kind of festivities?

Harris: Usually two or three cocktail parties and a couple of dinners and a couple of luncheons, and then see something that is of interest. Last year we went over to the Los Angeles Music Center. On a couple of occasions we've gone to Huntington Library or one of the famous libraries.



Teiser: It's as social as it is bookish then?

Harris: I would say the emphasis is on the social. The bookishness is just something to give a reason to go down there. Now there are a lot of us who belong to both clubs. I'm an out-of-town member of the Zamorano Club. This is all part of that ceremony of the way we live, these people who are interested in printing, or have something to do with printing in San Francisco. You take the same people, they belong to the Roxburghe Club, to the Book Club of California, the California Historical Society. And those that have stretched out a little bit belong to the Zamorano Club, as I do, and to the Typophiles of New York and to the Grolier Club. And I belong to the American Institute of Graphic Arts. And I think Mrs. Florence Walter at one time was an associate member. So, you see, it's all these things that bring the same people together all having the same interest, which has had a lot to do with the development of fine printing here. Or the development of fine printing has attracted such people together. I don't know which came first, the egg or the chicken.

Teiser: First, let me ask you about the pronunciation of the Roxburghe Club's name. Many people call it "Roxboro."

Harris: I call it the way it's spelled, with a hard "g", but I think the English pronunciation is probably "Roxboro." But it's b-u-r-g-h-e. Both, I guess, are correct. Like matrices and matrices. I say matrices. Both are correct--I think. For short, you call them mats.

Teiser: I want to ask about the publications and the keepsakes of the Roxburghe Club. It seems to me they are of permanent interest.

Harris: On a few occasions there've been publications. One was the twenty-five year history that we did. I engineered that.\*

This was quite a job because we had to have so many copies in order to get the price down to--

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\* Chronology of Twenty-Five Years. San Francisco: Roxburghe Club, 1954.



- Harris: I believe it was \$10 or \$15 a copy. We started a long time before. We couldn't do it until we had sold so many. I really used a club and kept after fellows. I got some people to buy as many as ten copies. I know I bought fifteen, I think. And I've used them all up. But the Roxburghe Club has not been much for sponsoring publications. What we do is to get a lot of keepsakes. The club itself has nothing to do with that. On the occasion of joint meetings there are always a lot of keepsakes.
- Teiser: Can you explain the basis of keepsakes? Who gets them and why?
- Harris: Lawton Kennedy has done a lot of them, the Grabhorns have done them, David Magee--or a group of fellows get together and do them. I did one last year on Carl Wheat. I gave you a copy of that. Carl had died in the spring. I knew Carl Wheat very well over a long period of years and I think the day after his death I called George Harding and I said, "I want you to write something that I can have printed for the joint meeting of the Zamorano Club, because Carl was one of the founding members of the Zamorano Club and also of the Roxburghe Club." I think he was a founding member of the Zamorano Club, or else he was a very early member. But he belonged to both of them, very active in both of them. So it turned out to be a very beautiful thing. I got Mallette Dean to design it and print it. It was a beautiful--it was done as a sort of surprise for the members. We mailed copies to all members of the Zamorano and the Roxburghe clubs and then to a list that Mrs. Wheat selected. That's about how they're done.
- Teiser: Did you set it in this shop?
- Harris: We set it in this shop, but we had it designed by Mallette Dean. And then he printed it and bound it.\*
- Teiser: Then you paid for it.
- Harris: I paid the bill. Harding spent a whole month writing it. That's about the way you do those things, and you give it to the members of the Roxburghe Club, or at a joint meeting you give it to members of both clubs.

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\*See also pp. 76-77.





Teiser: Is there a collection of those anywhere?

Harris: I think there's one, a pretty good collection, at the Book Club. They handle the mailing out of things for the Roxburghe Club. And also at the San Francisco Public Library. I believe that that's probably the best collection.

Teiser: Back to the anniversary book--

Harris: It reproduced an announcement, each from a different person. There are two kinds of members of the Roxburghe Club. There are printer members, who pay no dues. And there are other members who pay \$15 a year, something like that. Now the cheapest thing is to be a nonprinter member. Because all the announcements are done by printer members.

Teiser: Don't I remember that occasionally some nonprinter will undertake to pay or contribute toward--

Harris: A keepsake, but not an announcement. The announcements for the monthly meetings are done by the printers. And the rule is that just the name of the speaker, and the date, and the place, that's all the printer gets, and you let him do whatever he wants. It may be something that is twelve by eighteen, or it may be a small thing that you can put in your side pocket.

Teiser: I see. So one announcement of each printer was reproduced?

Harris: In this history, one of each printer.

Teiser: And who printed the book?

Harris: The Grabhorn Press did. It's a beautiful thing.

#### The Book Club of California

Teiser: Then the Book Club, in which you also were interested.

Harris: I joined the Book Club just about the time I got out of World War II, which was in 1946; George Harding was then the president, and I was made the treasurer.



Harris: I succeeded Morgan Gunst, who had been the treasurer for a few years. He had also been the president. I think I was four or five years the treasurer of the Book Club. I've been a member, of course, ever since, and active in that respect.

Teiser: What do you feel its contribution has been in the years you have known it?

Harris: Well, I think ever since the Book Club was formed it was one of the very important reasons why fine printing was developing in San Francisco. Because here was a group of people who would underwrite, or buy, from 250 to 400 or 500 copies of a special book that might be, usually, Californiana or Western Americana, and a ready market for it. And without that a lot of these things would never have been done, and the fine printers who did the work would never have had that to work on. Because none of the fine printers is endowed with enough money to go out and act as a publisher of the things that they have done. They've built up a library at the Book Club representative of the fine printing which is done here, which is an important thing.

I think the Book Club is the one most important organizations in the development of fine printing in this area.

Teiser: Do you think it's continuing now to fulfill the same function?

Harris: Yes. Of course they got to the bottom of the barrel as far as original manuscripts of somebody's trip across the continent in search for gold or a place to live. But there are still things that they can do. Now I think they have on two or three occasions done something that was of interest about printing. For instance, the Estiennes, the book they did on the Estiennes, the great French family of printers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This book was designed by the Grabhorns and had a leaf from an original Estienne.\* It was a leaf book. But it didn't sell very well. I would imagine they still have a few copies left. Eventually they will sell them all. It's a beautifully printed book. It's the story of this remarkable family of French printers and scholars.

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\* Mark Pattison, The Estiennes. 1949.





Harris: But I would think that the Book Club can continue on and on and on, because pretty soon some things that happened when I was a young man become historical, to be printed by the Book Club. And I like to see them also do things that are reprints of classics, something that has something to do with the West, or something about printing. I think those things are important to do, because there are always a new bunch of people coming along that might be interested in that.

Teiser: How about the printers to print them?

Harris: This is really a problem. We have still a bunch of younger printers here. Some of them are not too young, but they still have a lot of years to go. But they--let's take Mallette Dean as an example. He does exquisite work but he hasn't got a press big enough to do much of an edition.

Teiser: He's not that young, either.

Harris: No, he's not that young. He was in here a couple of days ago. He looks pretty good. But if he just had a larger press. Another young fellow is [Arlen] Philpott; he can do beautiful printing. But he has a family so big he has to work daytimes as a surveyor and nights and Saturdays and Sundays as a printer.

Teiser: Is that right?

Harris: Yes. He has four or five kids, and he really has to make enough money to keep them going. He can't seem to keep them going; he can't as a printer.

There's a little angle here that I might put into this record, that so many people have felt that a printer almost ought to pay to do these works for the Book Club. Now there are not many of them, but there's always a bunch of people. I remember one day at a directors' meeting that someone spoke up on something the Book Club wanted to do. This person said, "Maybe we could get some printer to do this for nothing."

I turned to Mr. Harding, who then was treasurer of the Telephone Company, and I said, "George, what months does the Telephone Company give free service



- Harris: to the Book Club?" And I really gave them a lesson. I said, "Why should a printer give his life blood to we people, people sitting around here? Because after all, this is a luxury thing we're doing. It's something we're doing because it gives us something. And I don't think we should ask printers to do things for us without making enough to pay their expenses. We should give them a little profit." That has held a good many of these fellows back.
- Teiser: You mean . . .
- Harris: That the fine printers have done their work too cheaply, much too cheaply.
- Teiser: For the Book Club?
- Harris: Yes. For instance, if a book for the Book Club would sell for \$10 and a year later that book was selling for \$25 or \$15, wouldn't that indicate that maybe the printer didn't get enough for it in the first place?
- Teiser: Or that we were in an inflationary time.
- Harris: It wouldn't inflate that quickly.
- Teiser: No, that's right. (Or that they were creating an artificial shortage with a small edition.)
- Harris: The best example of that would be the Grabhorn books on Japanese prints. A book that sold for \$40 within three or four months was sold by dealers for over \$100. And I know for a fact that the Grabhorns didn't get half as much for those books as if they'd have had a cost system it would've shown they should've gotten for them, just to get their cost out of them. They did it as a labor of love, and poured it in, poured the love into the book, and it turned out.
- Teiser: On the other hand (I want to mention this as a cross-reference) I've been told by others I've interviewed that during the Depression the Book Club served a financial function very well.
- Harris: That's right.
- Teiser: It gave some printers something to eat while they kept alive, some kind of creative printing.



Harris: That's right. That thing carried over after the Depression was gone.

### Printers of the Future

Teiser: The question of the young men who are coming as fine printers is a concern.

Harris: I'm sure that Alfred Kennedy will be able to carry on. Lawton looks like he's in good health, will last a long time, and he certainly is getting a great deal of good assistance and help in his son. And you would think that that company would continue. And Bob Grabhorn with Hoyem\* is a good influence. I think that Philpott, if he can just start making enough money as a printer and get a bigger press--he needs a bigger press.

Teiser: How big is his press?

Harris: I don't know, but it's too small, and not adequate for doing things of a little larger size. And there are younger people, always, even working in a shop like this. We have a young man that we expect to start as an apprentice with us. He's worked during holidays, and he's through junior college. He went to the Laney trade school. He's already got a private press. He comes in here and spends his six years to learn to be a printer, but he has a private press and has had it for a couple of years and does beautiful little things, sheets and things like that. Those kind of people, with all the background there is in San Francisco, somebody will come up that you don't even know about now, I'm sure of that.

Teiser: This brings up another point. How long is he going to have to work as an apprentice?

Harris: It takes six years. That's according to the rule.

Teiser: I suppose that when young men went into print shops much younger, by the time they were twenty-two, they could get journeyman's wages and start supporting a family. But today, when so much more education is required of a young man, it keeps his earning capacity down for quite a long time.

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\* Andrew Hoyem.





- Harris: No, it isn't as bad as it sounds. The new scale for a printer in San Francisco is \$166 a week, a 35-hour week, plus a lot of fringe benefits. The fringe benefits are tremendous. An apprentice starts at fifty per cent of the scale, a little over \$80 a week. After he's worked six months he can be up-graded, upon the recommendation of his employer and the concurrence of the apprentice committee at the union. We invariably do that. We pick the kind of fellow that we can up-grade. So we endeavor to put a young man through in four years or four years and a half.
- Teiser: He can become a journeyman at that time?
- Harris: And each time he gets up-graded six months he goes up five per cent in pay. I think it's fifty-five per cent he starts instead of fifty now. I haven't got the copy handy. But it isn't as bad as it seems. And there's always lots of overtime in most shops. He can't support a family on that, but he can move ahead, and he has this to look at. When a man is a journeyman, he has about \$9,000 a year. But in most shops, with overtime, a journeyman printer--who doesn't get over the scale (all of our people we pay over the scale)--he can easily see that before he's thirty he's making \$10,000 a year. And all he needs is a high school education and an aptitude.
- Teiser: I still keep wondering if this doesn't simply drive college men out of printing. I wonder if the printing industry shouldn't be looking more to college-trained men, since most of the brightest young men now want to go through college. Suppose they get out of college at twenty-one and go into an apprenticeship. In five years, well, at twenty-six . . .
- Harris: You have a point there, because, you see, today these bright college men who are engineers or chemists, or this or that, are hired by the big corporations. This process of getting them as they graduate. But I always talk to fellows about this and say, "Look at the average one ten years out of college. Don't forget it's a policy of a big publisher for instance, back East--they recruit several hundred people with possibilities of doing editorial work, writing for the publisher. But after two years they weed out the majority of these people. They're all looking for genius. I don't know what percentage of people are



Harris: geniuses, but that's what they are doing. So that it seems to me, from the little I know about such things, that being a printer offers a person frequently more than this white collar job that they might be taking. Of course, in the office end of printing, particularly in the big companies, they are employing college graduates for executives.

Teiser: And salesmen?

Harris: And salesmen, yes.

Teiser: Why in the world should your salesmen be more highly trained than your production men?

Harris: Well, are they better trained?

Teiser: Well, have more theoretical, intellectual training.

Harris: In the process of becoming a printer, this boy who is out of high school, he has to take up a correspondence course which is run by the union and pass that in order to progress. The trade itself, if he's working at a good shop, should be educational to him.

I've done pretty well in getting all of my people right out of our own people. The man that's next to me in this business came to us in 1926 as a boy out of Berkeley High School. He's quite a well-educated fellow.

Teiser: I'll bet if he were coming up today, he wouldn't stop at high school.

Harris: No, usually junior college. A good preparation to an apprenticeship is high school plus Laney trade school which is sort of equivalent to junior college. We are looking for people that have a little more than just mechanics. We want people that'll take responsibility. You can learn it; you can learn it on the job. Particularly in the printing business. I don't know about these fellows that have degrees. I don't think that would help them in printing.

Now there are some good schools, there are some very good schools. We have one down in San Luis Obispo, the printing school there. I guess that's the best printing school there is in the West.





Teiser: Cal Poly?\*

Harris: Yes. And of course, Carnegie Tech is a good one.

Teiser: Have you ever had any young men from these?

Harris: No, no I haven't. I've never even run into one that was looking for employment.

Teiser: I wonder where they go?

Harris: I have never wanted to have anyone start to work here at the bottom who had been trained to do typesetting. I only want to know that he has an aptitude for it. And if he has an aptitude, then we can do the rest. Because, after all, we don't just give a fellow a job and forget him. I even offer him the use of all the books I have on the subject of training. It's a little library. But, strangely, only a small percentage of the fellows who remain here a long time are interested in that. They are interested in doing a good job from a mechanical standpoint. They can intelligently handle the work they have to do. But it was always true that the people who look at the history of printing and become something else are the exception rather than the rule.

Teiser: And not always in the printing trades?

Harris: [Laughter] That's right.

Teiser: Are there other general subjects that we have missed?

Harris: I think we've covered it.

I'd like to re-state something we talked about in the beginning, how fine printing got started here. I believe that we have to put John Henry Nash at the head of the procession to get the thing going, at least. Because he was a combination of a fine printer and a great salesman. I don't know whether the Grabhorns would have come here if they hadn't heard before that this was a place where people appreciated fine printing. So you have to give him credit for the beginning. Such people as Rothschild, who was an early member of the Roxburghe Club--I'm trying to think of them--Morgan Gunst. The people that knew what fine printing was. Herbert Rothschild, and Morgan Gunst, such people. Mrs. Walter. People that

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\* California State Polytechnic College.



Harris: were in that world that you find, that buy paintings and fine literature and stuff like that. They had congregated in San Francisco. That must go way back to the early days of San Francisco, the kind of people that were attracted here by the gold rush.

To bring this thing up to its greatest period of fitness, you have to put the Grabhorns at the top, because they were the great innovators in fine printing. The rest of the people were part of a movement. I don't belittle any of them by not mentioning them specifically. And the Taylors, the Taylors were the scholarly printers that would correspond to Updike in Boston. All of this is an example of a lot of forces in a good environment. A lot of forces came together to produce this, with an excellent environment. And don't forget that San Francisco's a lovely place to live.

Now, if I've contributed anything to it--I returned to San Francisco because I didn't like the hot days in the East. I came from the East originally. So the life and the spirit of San Francisco brought me back after I had been sent out here and worked here two years for the Monotype Company. Three years in Philadelphia after that was all I could stand of the East Coast. So that all of these things have brought people here. I was fortunate to bring an interest in making out of the typesetting business something more than just a service to the printers, to stand on our own feet in our own right and to do something worthwhile. That is sort of the end of our story, I think.

Transcribers: Mary Ratliff, Bayle Emlein

Final Typist: Mary Millman



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