

California State Library Foundation

# Bulletin

Number 78

Spring/Summer 2004





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**Front Cover:** Saul Marks of the Plantin Press of Los Angeles. Photograph by William Reagh.

**Back Cover:** Pressmark of the Plantin Press.

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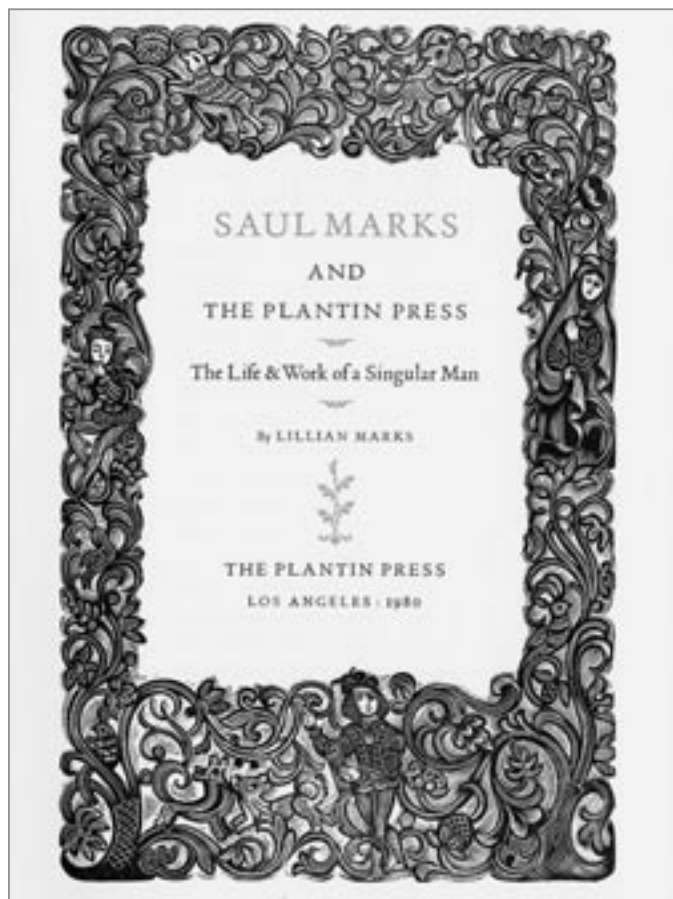
# Saul Marks: The Great Printer of Los Angeles

By Robert Dickover

One indisputable fact has emerged in the longtime rivalry between San Francisco and Los Angeles as cultural and artistic centers. San Francisco has had a far more important community of fine printers. However, Los Angeles has had its share of distinguished printers; and one of them, Saul Marks of the Plantin Press, ranks as one of the greatest of the twentieth century. The California State Library has more than 125 works produced by Marks, including both books and ephemera. The collection contains some of his most important printing and is testimony to his eminence as a typographer and book artist.

Marks is unique among the great printers of California in the last century in that he was born in Europe. At his birth in 1904 in Warsaw, Poland, he was given the name of Yisroel Chaim Miodownik. Educated at home and at a Hebrew school, Miodownik decided to leave Poland at the age of sixteen. This decision resulted from his growing concern over the mistreatment and ghettoization of Jews. When there was a delay in receiving a visa for the United States, he found it necessary to enter this country through Canada. His maternal uncles arranged for him to enter the U.S. at Detroit, where they were living. As the first stage in his Americanization, his uncle decided to assist him in choosing a name more easily managed by English speakers. His new first name, Saul, was selected because its sound was not too dissimilar to that of Yisroel when the latter was spoken rapidly. His surname, Marks, is a modified version of the name of Oscar B. Marx, who was mayor of Detroit about the time of Saul's arrival there.

Marks' inability to speak English limited his job prospects, and his first job in this country was at a Yiddish language newspaper in Toledo, Ohio, only a short distance from Detroit. Fired because he refused to cross a picket line, he went to New York where he found work in an advertising copy shop. Deciding that his proficiency in English was still too limited, he entered into a crash course in the language and culture of the United States by enlisting in the Army. He served a three-year hitch in the Field Artillery in the Canal Zone and was discharged in June 1925, just six days after his twenty-first birthday. By the time he married his wife Lillian in December 1928, his command of English was excellent. Working in print shops in Detroit and New York until the end of the 1920s, Marks contin-



Reproduction of the title page of Lillian Marks' outstanding book on the Plantin Press (1980).

ued to grow as a printing craftsman and designer. He found that the technical and artistic potential of the jobs available to him in the East did not conform to his vision of what printing could and should be. Having heard that San Francisco was the mecca of fine printing in this country, he decided to seek employment there.

Marks left Lillian in Detroit and departed for the West Coast in January 1930. By the time he reached Long Beach, he had run out of money. He found employment in the area and decided he would stay in Southern California, where he was soon joined by his wife. The depression years of the 1930s were not the ideal time for opening a printing business; but after stints with a failing printery and a fruitless partnership, Marks opened a new printing establishment in Los Angeles in 1931. Calling it the Plantin Press after the celebrated sixteenth-century printer Christophe Plantin, Marks chose a name which symbolized his aspirations toward excellence. His choice also suggests a hope for the printery's endurance, since the original Plantin Press in Antwerp continued operating in the hands of Plantin and his descendants for over 300 years. Marks' Plantin Press with the assistance of his wife and employees, also established a record of both endurance and great achievement that extended over a period of more than forty years.

People who have known or worked with Saul Marks stress such things as the outstanding nature of his vision as a designer, his absolute dedication to excellence in printing, and his capacity for hard work and long hours. Fine printers have often preferred to use larger page sizes for their books. Such a choice has obvious advantages. Generally, the use of larger type sizes for both display and text is possible. The larger types make it possible to see the nuances of the letters and their beauty more adequately. The larger pages also accommodate larger illustrations, typographical ornaments, and decorations. Finally, there is something appealing in just the heft of a large book and the fact that such a book is not easily overlooked when displayed. In comparison to the books of many of the great printers, the major books of the Plantin Press are often small in size. Within this arena of small books, many of which would be characterized as no larger than quarto or octavo in size, Marks designed and printed books of great beauty. There are many aspects of his work that place him in the ranks of the finest of fine printers, but three will be cited.

The first of these is his mastery of the title page. His skill in the layout of these pages and the choice of type styles, printers' devices, colors, and ornaments was equal to that of any contemporary printer. However, his use of the typographic border on the title page, places him at the head of the class. The typographic borders assembled by Marks were composed of a number of discrete pieces of type metal, as opposed to the decorated strips of metal of five inches or more in length that were cast on typesetting machines. Marks used his "piece" borders to form squares, rectangles, other geometric figures, and even some rather irregular figures. On title pages Marks used borders to enclose some of the lines of printing or in other cases to enclose all of them. The Plantin Press borders were often narrow in thickness involving the repetition of a single typographic figure. In other cases they were as much as three-quarters of an inch or

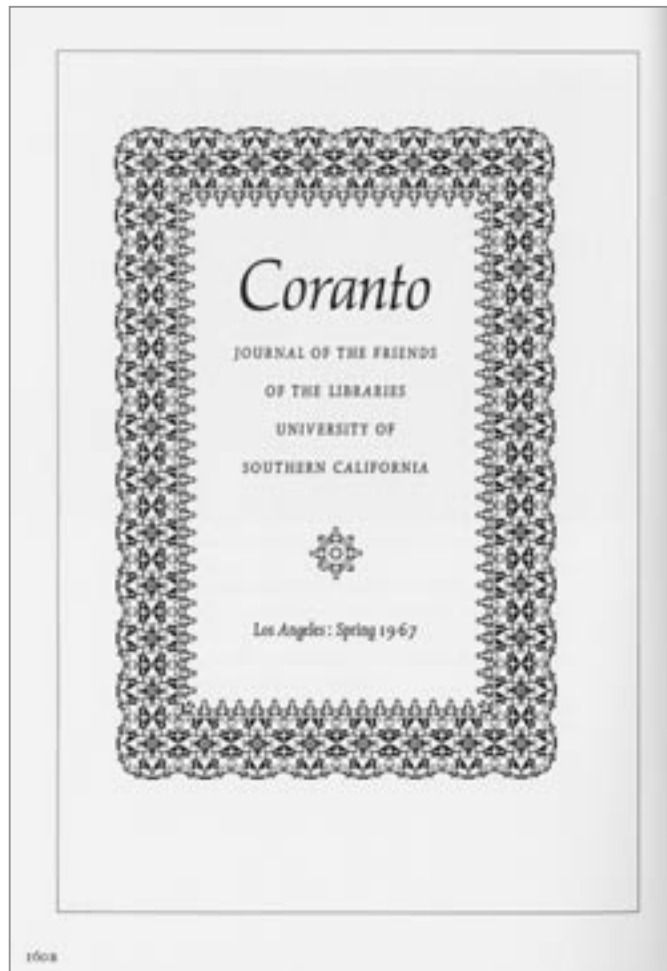
more and composed of rows of different typographical elements that incorporated ornamental figures. Marks' design of the title page of the journal *Coranto* in the illustration in this article shows his skill in designing a wide border. It is not a heavy border in the sense that is solid in form. There is a great deal of white showing within the structure. Where as a solid border might detract from the title and other information on the page, this more open border does not. The title and other text appear to be visually

equal in strength. Above all, the border shows Marks' virtuosity in constructing something beautiful out of separate pieces of type.

To the non-printer, the employment of typographic borders may seem to be a relatively simple matter. It is not, and this accounts for the infrequency of their appearance in printing of all periods. In many cases the use of the border commits the printer to printing the page in two colors. Marks often preferred to print his borders in a red or reddish brown. Other important considerations are how much space should be left between the border and the printed text it encloses, and how thick the border should be in relation to the heaviness of the lines of type it surrounds. There is also the matter of the labor involved in putting the border together and keeping it intact until it is ready to be put on the press.

These various problems associated with borders have discouraged letterpress printers from using them. In the contemporary technological realm, practitioners of computer-based composition seem to be reluctant to use borders as well.

The second feature of Marks' printing which strikes my fancy arises from his appreciation of the beauty of the italic letter. He was one of the most extensive users of italics among his contemporaries. In some instances he chose an italic face as a contrast to the roman face that was used to print the body of the text. For example, his wife, in designing the printing of her biography of her



A Plantin Press title page for a 1967 issue of *Coranto* reproduced from *Saul Marks & The Plantin Press* (1980).

# THE ALDINE BEMBO TYPES

## Available at The Plantin Press



### Showing Bembo Roman & Italic

### Also Alfred Fairbank's Beautiful Narrow Bembo

[ 40 POINT BEMBO ITALIC ]

*It remains to speak of the establishment of printing in Italy, an event no less important for the preservation & diffusion of classical learning than the previous discovery of manuscripts had been indispensable for its revival. What has to be said about credit activity of Venice may appropriately be introduced in this connection, while the final houses of the third period will be seen of type to belong to one of Italy's most well-attended scholars, Aldus Manutius. In 1476, Adolph of Nassau pillaged Mantua, and dispersed its printers over Europe.*

[ 40 POINT BEMBO ITALIC ]

*John of Mainz, in 1473; Nicholas of Brevint, in 1477; Antonio Miscomini, in 1481; and Lorenzo Alopi of Venice, who gave Homer with Greek type to the world, in 1488. Still, Florence had been anticipated by many other cities; for when over the new art took root in Italy, it spread like wildfire. Omitting smaller places, it has been estimated that, before the year 1500, some 4,000 books were printed in Italy, of which 200 are claimed by*

[ 40 POINT BEMBO ITALIC ]

*Artisans to find employment in the new trade. The great nobles, on whose patronage the scribes depended, did not suddenly transfer their custom from scribe to printer; nor was it to be expected that so essentially democratic an art as printing should find immediate favor with the aristocracy.*

[ 40 POINT BEMBO ROMAN ]

Though copyists of manuscripts were thrown out of work by the printing press, it gave important stimulus to other industries in Italy. The paper mills of Fabriano & of Colle in the Val d' Elsa became valuable properties. Compositors &

[ 40 POINT BEMBO ROMAN ]

Instead of having previous editions to work from, the publishers were obliged to collect manuscripts. For this purpose they either travelled or employed amanuenses.

[ 40 POINT BEMBO ROMAN ]

This mammoth work was accomplished without the aid of grammars or lexicons.

[ 40 POINT BEMBO ROMAN ]

THIRD YEARS later two Germans, Sweynheide & Pannartz, who had worked under Faust, set up a press in Subiaco, a village of the Sabine mountains. Here, in October 1467, the first edition of Lactantius saw the light. The German printers soon afterwards recovered from Subiaco, & settled, under the protection of the Marquis, in Rome, where they continued to issue Latin authors from their press. (Some facts about their industry may be ascertained from a Memorial presented by

[ 40 POINT BEMBO ROMAN ]

BOLOGNA, 300 by Florence, 600 by Milan, 500 by Rome, & 2,815 by Venice. The disproportion between the activity of Florence and of Venice in the book trade, while unexplainable, is worthy of notice. Fifty towns and a great many insignificant boroughs—Pinerolo, Savona, Pieve di Sacco, Lucciano, Cividade, Chivasso, Scandiano, for example—could house of local presses. Ambitious printers set up their

[ 40 POINT BEMBO ROMAN ]

A PRINCE with a collection of manuscripts worth 40,000 ducats hated the machine that put an equal number of more readable books within the reach of moderate competency. Moreover, a certain suspicion of subversiveness & license clung about the art of printing.

[ 40 POINT NARROW BEMBO ]

Sweynheide and Pannartz to Pope Sixtus IV, in 1475. They had at that time printed no less than 12,000 volumes. It was their custom to issue 200 copies of each volume.) In 1480 John of Speyer established himself at Venice. He was soon afterwards joined by his brother Wendelin (or the Italian wrote the name) and by Nicholas Jenson, the Frenchman. Florence had no press till Bernardo Cossuto began printing in 1479. To Cosimo belong the honor of having been the first Italian to set his own type. Like many other illustrious authors, he was by trade a physician. Other presses sprang up in Florence

[ 40 POINT NARROW BEMBO ]

Machinery for half a year or so in a remote village, printed what came to hand there, and moved on. While scholars rejoiced in the new art, the scribes complained that their occupation would be taken from them. The whistles of a locomotive at the beginning of this century was not more afflicting to the stage-coachman than the making of the wooden printing press to these poor scribes. Yet, however quickly a labor-saving invention may spread, there is generally time for the established industry to die an easy death, and for the

[ 40 POINT NARROW BEMBO ]

This was to some extent justified by fact, since the press was destined to be the most formidable engine of modern times. Erasmus, too, questioned whether the promiscuous multiplication of books were pious; and Alexander VI censured his hand out to censure printers. To check the spreading of printing would, however, have entailed the process of any tyranny.

[ 40 POINT NARROW BEMBO ]

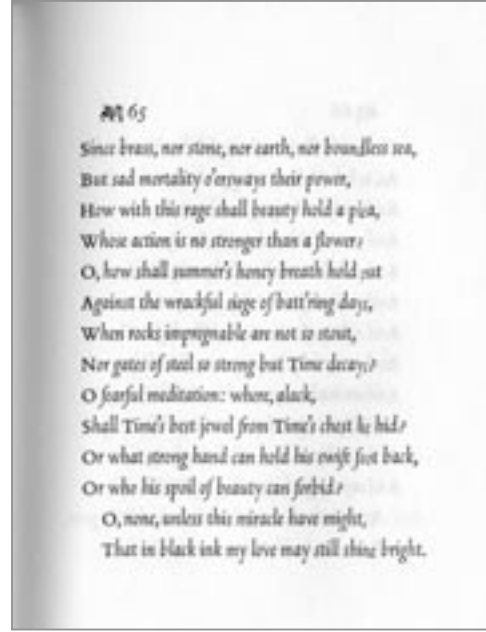
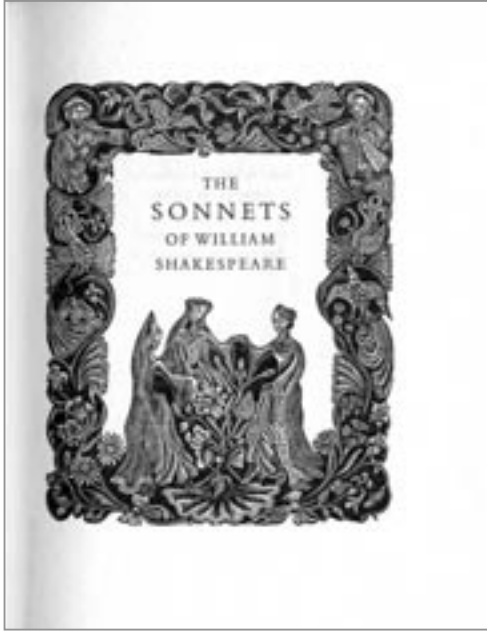
Readers began to form a separate class of artisans, while needy scholars found a market for their talents in the houses of the publishers. When we consider the literary work that had to be done before Greek, Latin, and Hebrew texts were made for the press, we can understand that scholars found the new art profitable.

[ 40 POINT BEMBO ITALIC ]

Next, it was necessary to study the historians, philosophers, mathematicians, poets, and mystics, whose works they were to print, in order that no error in the sense of words be made.

[ 40 POINT BEMBO ITALIC ]

The enthusiasm of discovery, and the rich field for original industry, rewarded the great toil.



Left: Title page of *Sonnets of William Shakespeare* (1974) with wood engravings by Mary Kuper.  
 Right: A page from the *Sonnets of William Shakespeare* demonstrating the use of roman and italic type.

husband, followed his model and used italics for the foreword to the book and for quotations within the text. The roman type used in the biography was Bembo, a Plantin Press favorite, and the italic was Narrow Bembo Italic, a letter of remarkable grace. In the book that some regard as his masterpiece, *The Sonnets of Shakespeare*, he chose this italic type as the medium for communicating the Bard's great poetry. In his version of the sonnets, Marks followed models from the earliest printing of italic types. The printer who first brought italic types to the page, the Venetian Aldus Manutius, used a face (ca. 1500) with only an italic lower case. Italic capitals were not fully in use at that point. Aldus followed the practice of some of the earlier scribes and used the straight, roman capital along with his compressed, slanted italics. As the illustration indicates, Marks does this with the sonnets. The letters beginning each line in the sonnets are roman; and following the typographic practice of Aldus, they are smaller in height than the lower case italic letters with ascenders (l, b, d, etc.).

A third impressive thing about Marks' printing was his skill in spacing between capital letters. The basic principle involved in letterspacing, as it is called, is to make the visual distance between the letters appear as nearly equal as possible. That sounds easy, but it isn't. The name DAVID in capital letters illustrates the problem and the reason that printers have felt the necessity of trying to equalize the visual space between letters. The distance

between the I and the D appears smaller than the distance between the other letters; therefore one must put considerable extra space between the I & D and attempt to equalize the visual distance between the others by adding lesser amounts of space. With larger sizes of metal type and computerized typesetting one can subtract space as well; the A V combination is a particularly good candidate for some internal subtraction. With the smaller type sizes that Marks often worked within his titles, adding space in different amounts between the pairs of individual characters was the only alternative. Few printers have consistently achieved a visually satisfactory outcome through letterspacing. Marks was one of these.

Marks quickly became integrated with the community of publishers, booksellers, and artists in the Los Angeles area who were involved in the patronage and practice of fine printing. The first book he printed after he opened his own shop was *A Gil Blas in California* by Alexandre Dumas. The designer of the book was the multit talented Ward Ritchie; and Jake Zeitlin, bookseller extraordinaire and principal in the Primavera Press, was the publisher. Paul Landacre, one of the finest of California's wood engravers was responsible for the book's wood engraved illustrations. Marks set the type on a Monotype machine at a local trade school and printed the book on his somewhat erratic Colts Armory press. Five hundred copies of the book were printed at \$3.75 a copy; a discount of ten percent was

*The work of the  
 Plantin Press  
 has received wide  
 critical acclaim.*

offered to those buying the book prior to the date of publication. The American Institute of Graphic Arts (AIGA) selected the book as one of its Fifty Books of the Year. It was the first time that either Marks or Ritchie had received the award, and it was a harbinger of the many awards and wide recognition that each was to receive over their lengthy careers in the world of books.

Fine printers have generally not had large shops, and Saul Marks' Plantin Press was certainly no exception. As he continued in business, he gradually accumulated equipment that expanded his capacity to produce the fine printing associated with him. In the mid-thirties the press made a major acquisition in the form of a Monotype keyboard and caster. The Monotype system, which casts lines of type consisting of single, separate characters, historically has had many advantages over the more widely used Linotype machines, which cast lines or characters on single strips of type metal (slugs) up to five inches in length. Generally, the Monotype's casting of the type face, the surface that prints, is of higher quality. Equally important, it is possible to alter the spacing between the words and letters in a Monotype line so that the distances between them appear more nearly equal. Lastly, and most importantly, the variety of type faces appropriate to setting the texts of books was greater for the Monotype. In that period a large Babcock cylinder press was also added to the shop; this facilitated the production of books and larger pieces of printing.

After the war the Plantin Press adapted to the changing technology and added an ATF Little Chief offset press to its equipment. This enabled the press to print reproductions of works of art for specialized types of printing requiring the greater flexibility of the offset method. The Plantin Press acquired a new Heidelberg cylinder press in the 1960s; this is probably the best small letterpress ever manufactured. In 1965, an entirely new Monotype system was obtained to replace its old worn-out predecessor. Both the Heidelberg and the Monotype are still in service in a high quality printing establishment in Northern California. The last notable piece of equipment to join the press' inventory was a splendid 1854 large-size (double royal) Albion handpress.



Saul and Lillian Marks. Reproduced from *The Plantin Press of Saul and Lillian Marks* (1960).

The press, shipped from England in 1968, figured importantly in some of the Plantin Press's finest printing.

The work of the Plantin Press has received wide critical acclaim. The most recent and the most significant accolade over all the years was the selection of two of the press's books for *A Century for the Century*, the major exhibition of great printing at New York's elite Grolier Club in 1999. For this exhibit Martin Hutner and Jerry Kelly, two of the luminaries in the world of the printed book, selected what they regarded as the 100 most excellently

printed books from "all the superlative books of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century." Their choices were made in some instances with the advice and counsel of other luminaries in the field. Obviously not all experts on the printed book would choose the same 100 books, but there is likely to be a considerable amount of agreement that a substantial number of the books chosen for this exhibit are among the greatest. Few would deny, for example, that Bruce Rogers' Oxford Lectern Bible or the *Leaves of Grass* of the Grabhorn Press, which were among the selected, belong on the list. Few would also contend that any of the books chosen is not a superlative book. The interesting thing about the Grolier exhibit is that

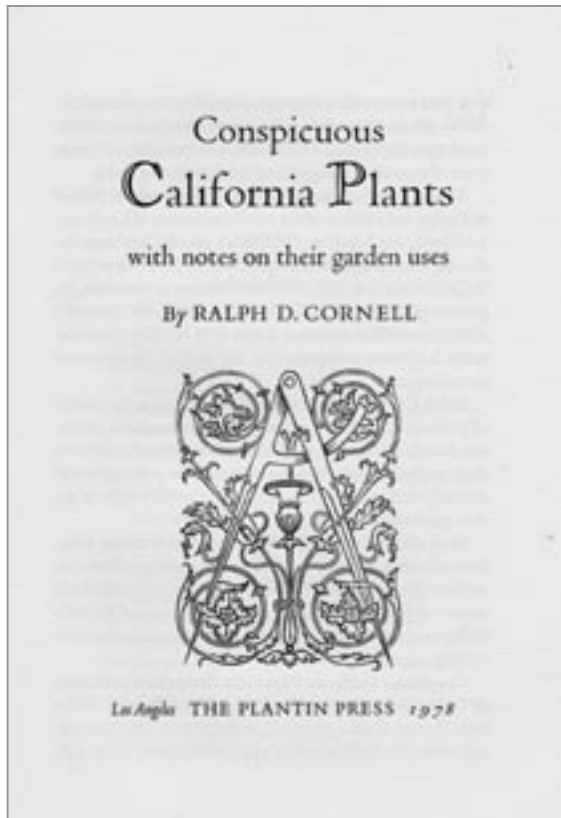
eleven of its 100 books were printed in California. That defines California as one of the most important centers of printing in the world. As a lifelong resident of Northern California, mired in insularity, I was not surprised that nine of the eleven were printed in the San Francisco Bay Area. What did surprise me was the two Plantins from Los Angeles.

The Grolier exhibit leaned heavily toward books that were printed by letterpress. The first reason for that is that letterpress was the dominant process for printing books of all kinds during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The second is that there is so much more labor, difficulty, and real agony in letterpress printing than in the new technologies that have become prominent in the second half of the century. A book printed on a large offset press from computerized typesetting rarely generates much excitement among us aesthetes. The Grolier exhibit included some offset printing; however this technology was primarily used for reproducing the illustrations in some of the books it included.



Example of a woodcut by Edgar Dorsey Taylor used to illustrate *Presses of the Pacific Islands* (1967).





An example of a Plantin Press title page with its pressmark. 1978.



A 1978 broadside announcing an exhibition at the press in Los Angeles.

The illustrations in one of the Plantin Press books chosen for the exhibit were reproduced by offset. This book is a 1967 printing of Richard E. Lingenfelter's *Presses of the Pacific Islands 1817–1867: A History of the First Half Century of Printing in the Pacific Islands*. With a page size of 5 ¾ by 8 ¾, this book is one of the smallest in the Grolier exhibit, and it is a model of what can be done with a small book. It was published by Dawson's Bookshop in Los Angeles, another longtime patron of the Plantin Press and celebrated seller of fine books. The edition consisted of 500 books, with the text set in Bembo types printed on specially-made rag paper. The original selling price was \$20.00. The artist, Edgar Dorsey Taylor, produced six very beautiful woodcuts for the book. These were printed on Kitakata, a cream-colored Japanese paper, and bound into the book. Marks selected tan cloth for the binding, and a part of one of the woodcuts was reduced in size and stamped in gold on the book's cover. Much care was lavished on the design and printing of every detail of this book. For example, the size of the margins on the pages of the book's text contributes to its beauty, and one can see Marks pondering over how large to make them. This book is a treasure, and the California State Library owns a copy of it.

The other Plantin Press book in the Grolier exhibit, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Book of Common Prayer and Related Material in the Collection of James R. Page*, has a larger page size, 8 by 11 ½. It is a very typographically elegant listing of the sixty-seven items in the Page collection and was printed in 1955. The text is printed in black with many embellishments in red. In the latter color are the first two lines of each section of the book, the initial letters in each listing, quotations in the margins of the pages, and miscellaneous ornaments and borders. On the title page "The Book of Common Prayer" and an ornament are in red. The rest of the title page printing is in black. A heavy pictorial border, intended to be reflective of the century of the origin of the Book of Common Prayer, the 16<sup>th</sup>, frames the title page. There is a reproduction in the book of a manuscript copy of the proclamation of Queen Elizabeth I of October 20, 1573 ("Agaynst the despisers or breakers of the orders prescribed in the Booke of Common Praier.") The proclamation is directed at Puritan opposition to certain ceremonies in the book and threatens sanctions upon those who in public preaching, writing, or printing argue against the "orders" contained in the book. There is a large reproduction in red of Elizabeth I's striking formal signature in this section. Among the many elegant touches in this book is a reproduction of an ornate binding of a Book of Common Prayer in its section dealing with bindings. The book is bound in blue-gray paper with a vellum spine. The title on the cover of the book is in a frame of rules and ornaments of the expected beauty. With this book Marks rose to the challenge of how to make a listing of

masterpieces a masterpiece itself, and it also is in the California State Library.

The Plantin Press printed an enormous variety of books of beauty and literacy and historical significance during its more than forty years of operation. For Muir and Glen Dawson of the aforementioned Dawson's Bookshop, Marks printed a number of books of Western Americana and other material as well, including catalogues for their book sales. One of the Plantin Press' very significant projects was the printing of a series of books by German refugee writers in their native tongue. Among these writers were some of the giants of twentieth century literature. For this enterprise, he acquired a Linotype, which gave him a less expensive type caster for producing more ordinary kinds of printing.

Many printers, some already well-known, worked with Marks in his shop. In the 1960s he taught a course in "The Art of the Book" at the University of Southern California. The Plantin Press trained a number of apprentices. The press's first woman apprentice, Mary Kuper, was an artist who took up wood engraving at the urging of Marks. She engraved two illustrations for *The Sonnets of Shakespeare* and helped Marks print it on the Albion handpress.

Marks had an enormously productive life. He was an active

participant in a minor renaissance with booksellers, authors, publishers, and other printers in the Los Angeles area. His work almost from the beginning was recognized as outstanding both nationally and internationally. He died on November 25, 1974 just short of his seventieth birthday.

As a printer and as an individual, his principal associate was his wife Lillian, who, in addition to raising their two children, was a major participant in many phases of the printing operation of the Plantin Press. She could set type on the Linotype and do the keyboard work on the Monotype. Doubtless she was involved in much of the other composition as well. She handled many other tasks, including such minor ones as hand coloring the illustrations in at least one book. Her book, *Saul Marks and the Plantin Press*, is an excellent account of the career of her husband and the work of the Plantin Press. In 1985 the California State Library acquired the large "double royal" Albion handpress used by the press from Lillian Marks. Her presence at the installation and dedication of this noble Albion made the occasion a great experience, and all of us who work in the library, staff and volunteers alike, recognize the press as a bond between the library and the great printing tradition of Saul and Lillian Marks. ❀



The Albion Press used by the Plantin Press. The iron handpress was purchased by the Foundation for the State Library. *Photograph by Mary Swisher.*

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*Mr. Dickover is a member of the Foundation's Board of Directors, talented letterpress printer, authority on typography, and frequent contributor to the Bulletin.*

# Starr Qualities

## The Retirement of Dr. Kevin Starr as State Librarian of California

Editor's Note: *The following article and two letters beautifully summarize Dr. Starr's contributions not only as State Librarian but also as California's foremost historian. The Foundation certainly appreciates the many contributions he has made to strengthen both the Library and its Foundation. The article "Starr Qualities" first appeared in the editorial section of the Los Angeles Times for April 17, 2004. This is followed by an excerpt of Dr. Starr's letter of resignation and Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger's letter naming Dr. Starr State Librarian Emeritus.*

*“The territory of Alta California, a network of scattered settlements on the lower edge of an empty American West, had a number of visitors during the Spanish and Mexican period...”*

With that modest sentence, Kevin Starr began his monumental history of California. *Volume I, Americans and the California Dream 1850-1915*, was published by Oxford University Press in 1973. The work now stands at six volumes, through World War II. More are coming.

But Starr now has left his “day job,” the most publicly visible position of a distinguished career, as California state librarian. He resigned after 10 years to spend more time teaching history at USC and, of course, to continue to define California for the world. His departure from Sacramento earlier this month leaves a huge void. Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger should seek a successor worthy of Starr and not use the position as a political reward.

Starr, 63, a University of San Francisco, UC Berkeley and Harvard man, is learned, witty, urbane, well-spoken and a gentleman who never came to work without a necktie. He also is a man of the people of California, who has sought to bring history alive and offer useful information to all. He started a program of volunteers to read the news daily to the blind over a toll-free

telephone line. He insisted that plaques outside the Capitol celebrate California's Spanish and Mexican heritage, as well as the paler immigrants from parts east. He welcomed the diversity of students jamming the public schools, calling it California's “internationalist destiny.”

As state librarian, Starr did far more than just oversee the state library in Sacramento serving the Legislature and state agencies. He was responsible for administering state and federal programs to local libraries. As such, he worked to serve the underserved, even in the most remote parts of the state. He also oversaw the distribution of \$350 million in library-construction bond funds approved by voters in 2000. He has written regularly in *The Times'* Opinion section about topics ranging from the cultural makeup of California to the Gray Davis recall election. And he was active in selecting the design for the forthcoming state quarter. Schwarzenegger appropriately named Starr the state librarian emeritus. The state library reached unprecedented visibility and prestige during his tenure.

Starr's greatest legacy, however, will be his history of California. To be able to write it and tell it as he does, Starr imagines the California dream just as richly and grandly as those he writes about. ❀



Dr. Kevin Starr presents the State Librarian's gold medal to poet Lawrence Ferlinghetti in front of the City Lights Book Store in San Francisco in celebration of the store's 50th anniversary. *Photograph by Philip Adam.*

**Excerpt of Dr. Kevin Starr's retirement letter to Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger:**

"For the past nine and a half years, I have been privileged to serve as State Librarian for California. Appointed by Governor Pete Wilson, I was re-appointed by Governor Gray Davis, and was deeply complimented to be re-appointed by you. I cannot, however, continue to fulfill my duties as State Librarian, complete my writing assignments, and teach the courses USC wishes me to teach.

I am therefore retiring as State Librarian effective 1 April 2004 so as to be better able to focus upon my teaching and writing responsibilities. Deputy State Librarian, Cameron Robertson, a distinguished Vietnam veteran and seasoned public administrator, is fully capable of conducting affairs at the State Library until you appoint my replacement."

**The Governor's Message:**

Dr. Kevin Starr  
 "State Librarian Emeritus"

I am delighted to convey my sincere appreciation and congratulations on your retirement as California State Librarian.

California had the great fortune to welcome you back 30 years ago when you returned to teach at University of California, Berkeley. Over the ensuing three decades, you excelled as a historian, author, journalist and professor. Your books, columns and countless lectures have brought our state to life, giving a rich voice to our land, people, history and culture.

Most recently, under your energetic leadership, the California State Library experienced significant improvements, and it remains a vital institution and a source of great pride for all Californians because of your efforts. Your commitment to our state has earned you the respect and deep appreciation of your students, colleagues and fellow Californians. Therefore, it is my distinct honor to bestow on you the title of State Librarian Emeritus.

Thank you for your many distinguished contributions to California, and please accept my best wishes for every future happiness.

Sincerely,  
 Arnold Schwarzenegger

# Shipping Out From San Francisco

By Jerry Kilbride

All thirty of us were from either the East Coast or the Middle West. We had just completed an accelerated course in signal intelligence at Fort Devens, Massachusetts and received FECOM Orders, meaning that we were now assigned to the Far East Command. The time was November 1952, well into the third year of the Korean War. We had individually and collectively been under a great deal of pressure to meet the vigorous demands of our training, a situation that created a sense of solidarity, a feeling that we were indeed a band of brothers. After graduation, each of us was given a ten-day furlough before reporting at a casual detachment at Two Rock Ranch, near Petaluma, to prepare for shipment. With one or two exceptions, none of us soldiers had previously been out west, and the very word “California” instilled a spirit of adventure in us. That is not to deny our trepidation at leaving our families and voyaging off to the other side of the globe where a war was in progress.

A glorious New England Indian summer was at its end as we left to spend precious time with family and friends back home. My parents were living in Sterling, Illinois, and in addition to being received with love and human warmth, I was greeted by the gray skies and vast distances of the Mississippi River Valley. The luxuriant green of the growing season was gone. Trees and fields were bare and the onset of winter was just around the corner. At the end of my leave, I was driven to Chicago’s Midway Airport by my parents and an aunt and uncle. I was to catch a United Airline overnight flight to San Francisco, and we arrived at the terminal after dark in a cold and blustery rain. Not the ideal conditions — if, indeed, any exist — in which to bid loved ones farewell before going overseas. Luckily, arrangements had been made with a Fort Devens’ buddy, Tom Krempp from Indianapolis, to take the same flight; his optimistic and always upbeat presence made leaving home a lot easier. Tom and I walked to the plane across a rain-soaked tarmac.



Private First Class Gerald F. Kilbride.



U.S. Army Identification Card of PFC Kilbride. Issued September 23, 1953.

I don’t remember the takeoff as particularly rough, and the landing in Denver was smooth. The skies had cleared during the second leg of the flight and the snow-covered Rockies were luminous in moonlight. We landed in Oakland at dawn and could feel tepid air coming in through the aircraft’s open door; that warmth in itself was some kind of miracle, as we left behind cold weather only hours ago. A few more minutes in the air and we landed just as the sun was coming up over San Francisco. Wonderfully situated on all of those hills, The City appeared clean and welcoming and — Eureka! — we felt that the world was our oyster. Of course, there were those anxious few moments when the plane seemed to be coming down in the water, but the runway appeared just in time.

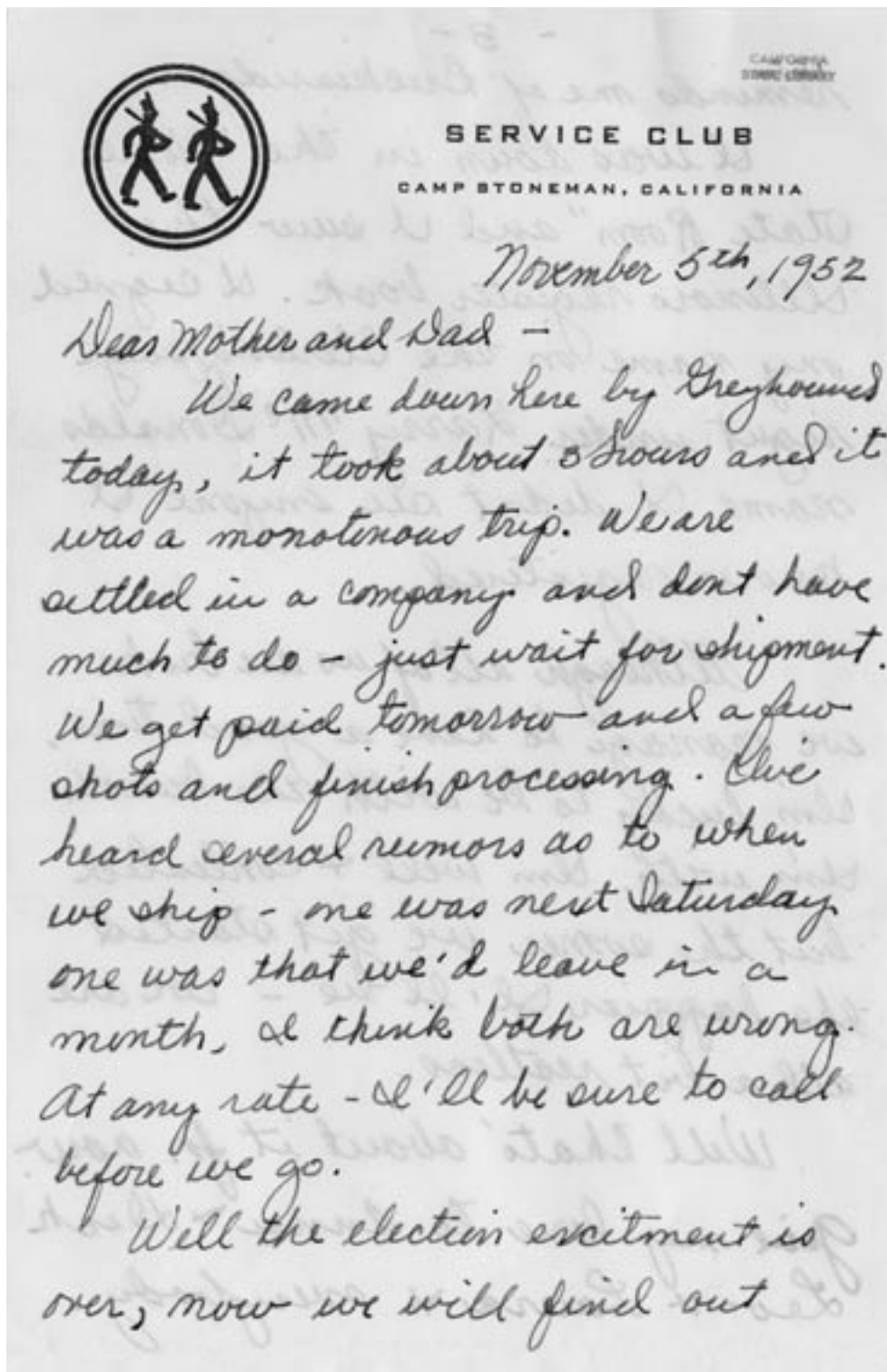
We took a taxi into town and checked our gear at the Greyhound Bus Station on 7<sup>th</sup> Street. There was a bus for Petaluma later that day, and, still early, Tom and I took off to see some of

A letter from Jerry Kilbride to his parents written on stationery from Camp Stoneman, Contra Costa County, California.

the sights. We had breakfast and took a cable car to-and-from Fisherman's Wharf. The palm trees surrounding Union Square brought home the fact that, indeed, we were no longer in the corn belt. I remember Tom lingering wide-eyed in front of one of those sidewalk stands that displays an infinite variety and veritable rainbow of flowers and exclaiming, "Wow, these Californians really do believe in Technicolor."

Before leaving Massachusetts, the name "Two Rock Ranch" conjured up the image of a place where buffalo roamed and coyotes howled. We queried one of our field cadre about the place, a non-com who had previously been stationed in California. He laughed, "It's a chicken ranch; what better destination for you thirty eggheads." It seemed a particularly apt and timely answer, as it came toward the end of that year's presidential campaign. Hadn't the admired Democratic candidate from Illinois, Adlai Stevenson, given hope, with his memorable words, to those who could put two and two together and come up with a reasonable answer: "Eggheads of the world unite, you have nothing to lose but your yokes!"

Arriving late that afternoon, we found that many of our contingent had already signed in at the post, located in a beautiful and lush little valley between Petaluma and the coast. All of the buildings, in my recollection, were one-story and painted white, with the exception of a few World War II Quonset huts, which had rounded corrugated roofs that curved down to ground level. Someone obviously had a green thumb as flowers surrounded most of the buildings, creating a very nice environment. In addition to being vaccinated and processed for shipment, we spent one full day cutting down trees and removing stumps in a wooded area in the hills above the post. After the mental demands of Fort Devens, it was a pleasant assignment as we leaned into



our shovels and aggressively pulled on ropes attached to the stumps. There was the fragrance of the forest and a bracing breeze coming from the nearby ocean, and if this work detail was designed to take our minds off the prospect of being shipped overseas, it was certainly successful.

The following Saturday was All Saints' Day and Roman Catholics were given early passes to attend Mass:

Tom Kremp, Tom Murn from Baltimore, Maryland, Dick Sperry from Brookfield, Illinois and I were in San Francisco in time for mid-morning services. Shortly after we left Old St. Mary's, we were stopped by a matronly woman driving a Salvation Army station wagon. She offered to give us a tour of The City, something she had volunteered to do for servicemen and women every Saturday. She already had two sailors as passengers and could easily accommodate the four of us. We readily accepted and enjoyed a drive down Grant Avenue through Chinatown, up to Coit Tower, over to Fisherman's Wharf, and out through Golden Gate Park to Cliff House. One of the sailors was a country boy, who, along with his buddy, had just been shipped from Great Lakes Naval Training Center to Alameda. While looking down on Seal Rocks, he asked our hostess a question that has probably been posed hundreds of times by tourists, either in jest or in all seriousness. "When do they feed the seals?" We all laughed, but in my heart-of-hearts I found myself in sympathy with the sailor, as back in the Middle West the sight was such that could only be seen in a zoo. I don't recall the name of that genial woman who generously shared of her time and love for her city in a way that enhanced a day in the lives of six servicemen.

Having a drink at the Top of the Mark seemed almost obligatory, as I had a brother and cousins who served in the Navy in the Pacific Theater during World War II. Both had enjoyed this landmark. We got up there at dusk and saw a million lights coming on all over The City and across the Bay. Little did we realize, while walking back to the Greyhound Station, that we were treading the sidewalks of an American City for the last time before shipping out. The following Tuesday, November 3<sup>rd</sup>, was Election Day, but more significantly for our contingent came the news that we would be leaving the following morning for Camp Stoneman, the Embarkation Center. The orders had come much sooner than expected.



Graduation Day at Fort Devens, Massachusetts, September 26, 1952.

The Post Theater was showing *The Prisoner of Zenda* and the news reports had Eisenhower ahead of Stevenson as most of us left the NCO/EM Club to see the film. It looked like Stevenson still might have a chance, but when we returned to the club a few hours later, Eisenhower had gained ground and was winning. The majority of the Two Rock Ranch enlisted personnel and all of our group stayed glued to the TV set until Stevenson

conceded at 11:00 P.M. We did little drinking that night, as a bus taking us to Camp Stoneman was leaving early in the day; in addition, we were not in a celebratory mood. After the Fort Devens non-com called us eggheads, many of us felt that the good Governor of Illinois was our patron saint. Of course it went deeper than that; there had been a lot of ambivalence and deep discussion among us as to which candidate was the best man to bring the war to an end. And, Eisenhower had promised if elected he would go to Korea to study the situation. A close-to-the-bone issue!

After a quiet and pensive three hours on a bus, we found Camp Stoneman to be a dusty and sprawling place; many of the barracks seemed to be in need of repair. However, there was a large and modern Service Club that housed a beautiful swimming pool and lounge, a library and a restaurant. In the library, I signed my name in the Home State Book directly under that of Larry McDonald, a young man from Sterling who had dated my sister. A restlessness set in among our ranks when the little processing there was left to do had been completed. We were ready to go and being on a state of alert meant that passes would not be issued. A certain poignancy preceded those final few evenings spent in the beer hall, as there was the sharp realization that upon arrival in Tokyo we would be separated and sent on different assignments. A band of brothers no more.

A cadre walked through our barracks blowing a shrill whistle at two in the morning on November 8<sup>th</sup>; we were to get up immediately, strip down our bunk beds, turn in the sheets and blankets and then assemble for breakfast. We had received shipping orders the day before —again sooner than expected —and were to be transported on two half-ton trucks the short distance to Pittsburg, California, where we would board a ferry. It was cold, damp and dark as we filed onto the decks of the Yerba Buena



Top: Dick Sperry and Jerry Kilbride enjoying the fresh air of the Pacific Ocean aboard the *General Meigs*.  
Bottom: U.S.N.S. *General M. C. Meigs*. Boarded at Fort Mason, this vessel transported the author and fellow troops to the war.



along with hundreds of other service personnel. Gathered on the dock was the Camp Stoneman band playing patriotic music, while above them hung a huge banner displaying the words of a surreal and incongruous greeting: WELCOME HOME. The inner and outer decks were jampacked and lines began to form in front of ice-cream concessions as the ferry moved out onto the water; lines so lengthy that they circled the decks. I did not want to meet the ice-cream challenge, but did manage to maneuver my way into a souvenir shop where I purchased a photograph of the *USNS General M. C. Meigs*, the troop transport that we would be boarding at Fort Mason. A gray and murky light began to gather, and it looked as though it would be a day without sunshine. We stopped at Treasure Island to pick up naval personnel, which hardly seemed possible considering the crush of men already aboard. The ferry was hushed as we sailed across the Bay, as hundreds looked through a gathering fog in the direction of the forbidding rock called Alcatraz.

The *General Meigs* seemed like a leviathan anchored next to one of the Fort Mason piers, and there were close to 4,400 who boarded the ship that day. One wonders how the logistical planning was so successfully implemented. Long, orderly, slow-moving, switched-back files crowding the huge interior of the pier and spilling out onto the asphalt, each soldier shouldering a duffel-bag with his name and serial number stenciled in white on

the coarse, olive-drab fabric. During unshouldered pauses, several quietly smiling Red Cross volunteer women — with all of the kindness and California hospitality they could muster — gave each of us a cup of hot coffee, orange juice, a donut, and a paperback book; I received a copy of *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin*. The flags of the United Nations hung from the ceiling of that massive room, and the second military band of the day played outside at the end of the pier. The band also gave out with popular songs, including Kay Starr's "Wheel of Fortune," which I have always considered the unofficial anthem of that constantly muddy and forgotten little war. "Oh, wheel of fortune, keeps spinning around . . . spinning, spinning, spinning . . . winning, winning . . . fortune or fame . . ." Shouts and whistles, of course . . . shouts and whistles! Fortunately, our little group was among the very last to go aboard, and that meant that we would probably not be assigned to KP or other duties during the voyage. Finally, there were blasts from the *General Meigs*' might horn, and we slowly moved away from the pier and into a thick fog. The Golden Gate Bridge was hardly visible as we passed below, and after the tug boats pulled away, the huge ship began to rock gently in a westerly direction. ☘

*Mr. Kilbride is the Honorary Curator of the American Haiku Archive at the State Library, author, and veteran of the Korean War.*



# Thongs, Brooms, and Bottles: Collecting the California Recall

by Gary E. Kurutz

The California Recall Election of October 7, 2003, ranks as one of the most pivotal and explosive events in recent California history rivaling Proposition 13 and the taxpayers' revolt of 1978. Never before in California history had a sitting governor faced such voter wrath. Never before had an incumbent governor been removed via the recall. Once the recall gained momentum and withstood legal challenges, the California State Library's California History Section went into action to collect campaign materials documenting this politically earthshaking event. Hearing of our efforts, Michael Falcone of the *New York Times* interviewed me about our collecting. His article was reprinted in a number of California newspapers and resulted in several fascinating donations, including hand-painted signs, thongs, chewy mints, a bottle of wine, and an assortment of buttons, bumper stickers, and campaign flyers. The Library is proud of its historic political campaign collection, but this extraordinary election and the materials it generated will be written about for generations to come.

The shortness of the drive to unseat Governor Gray Davis challenged the Library's ability to track down and acquire materials from the fantastically large field of 139 candidates. A special effort centered on obtaining representative materials from all the serious contenders. Phone calls, solicitation letters, and personal visits to campaign headquarters and rallies shook out a rich harvest of lawn signs, buttons, bumper stickers, and copies of press releases and position papers. In addition, Library staff brought in from their homes a wide assortment of mailings. Not all candidates responded, and consequently, not all are represented. More than likely, very few of the candidates had the fiscal resources to generate the typical printed campaign propaganda let alone to purchase radio and TV spots. Most of the mailings and signs were issued by the major political parties and by well-funded and organized special interest groups.

Whiskbroom "Let's Clean up Sacramento" is an example of a rare Schwarzenegger campaign artifact.



In this digital age, many candidates relied primarily on the Internet to get out their message. Several of these sites were downloaded and printed in order to have a hard copy on acid free paper. The Library's Government Publications Section complemented the work of the California History Section by concentrating on electronic resources. Other institutions such as the California Digital Library of the University of California likewise focused on preserving the electronic format. Furthermore, the Library's extensive collection of newspapers and magazines automatically captured news reports, editorials, and campaign ads. Both digital and analog sources will therefore provide a solid foundation for any serious study of this historic election.

Arguably, this election stands as the most bizarre in modern California history highlighted by the declared candidacy of all manner of would-be governors. Anyone who paid the \$3,500 filing fee and obtained sixty-five signatures could run and the recall quickly degenerated into a circus-like atmosphere. Jokes abounded as candidates with absolutely no qualifications gained



Bumper stickers with a variety of candidates and their messages were issued by the various campaigns.

state and national attention. Even eventual winner Arnold Schwarzenegger achieved his notoriety as a body builder and action hero in the movies. Those outside of California shook their heads in disbelief. Rarely had an election in the Golden State attracted such international attention, and journalists and TV crews from around the world poured into the state to report on this free-for-all. Certainly the entrance of a celebrity like the former Mr. Universe turned the political world upside down. The removal of a sitting governor and a state fiscal crisis of epic proportions, however, were issues not to induce mirth but to stiffen the jaw of the electorate. Once the clowning faded, and all but the well-financed candidates dropped away, the election turned into a serious race concerning a “yes” or a “no” on recalling Governor Davis. Ultimately, the election came down to a contest between Lieutenant Governor Cruz Bustamante and athlete and actor Arnold Schwarzenegger. The anti-recall forces tried unsuccessfully to sway the electorate by tying the election to Proposition 54, the controversial “Racial Privacy Initiative” (the initiative to eliminate government classification of persons by race), while pro-recall groups pounded voters on the car tax (the 300% increase in state vehicle registration fees).

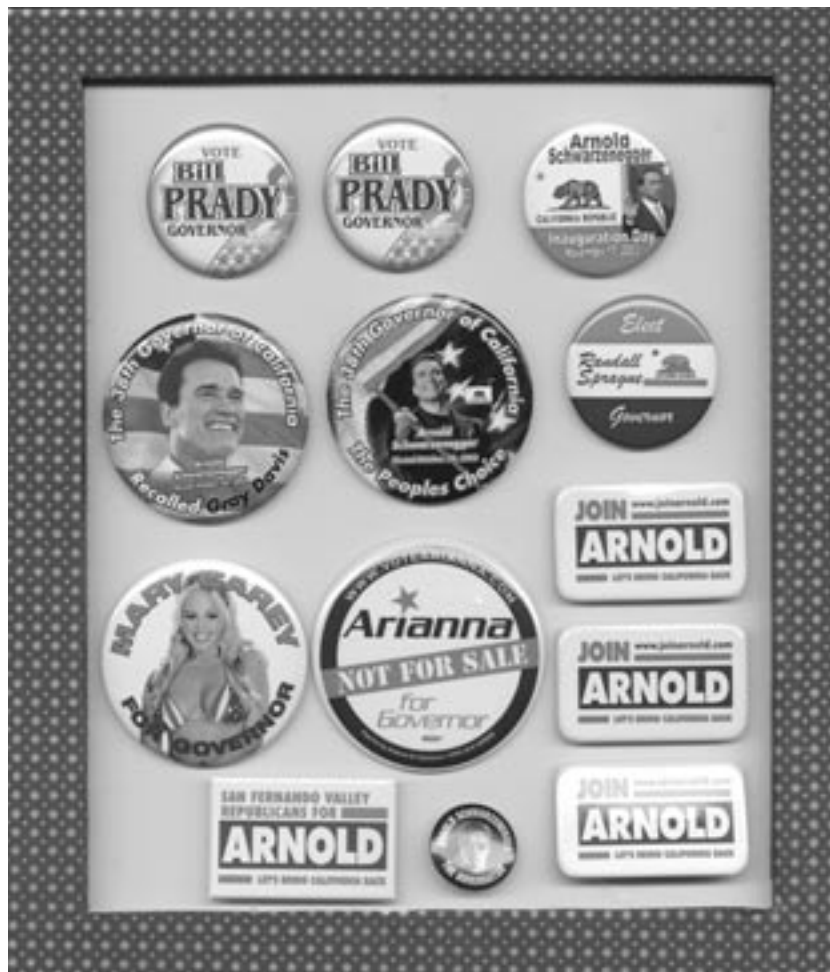
Several actors, a porn star, exotic dancer, smut peddler, sumo wrestler, golfer, boxer, columnist, software engineer, denture manufacturer, divorce attorney, boxer, and meat packer all jumped in promising, in their own inimitable ways, to right the ship of state. Some focused on serious issues, while others saw the recall as an opportunity to gain a little name recognition. Mary Carey Cook, the buxom porn actress, for example, relied primarily on the Internet using “Kick Ass Pictures” to promote her campaign. For a contribution of a mere \$5,000, a donor could get a date with the blonde candidate. Her gubernatorial platform included several innovative ways to handle the state’s daunting deficit: legalize gay marriage and promote the state as a honeymoon destination; tax breast implants (stressing

her own natural assets); extend bar hours to 4 A.M.; and recruit fellow performers in the adult video industry as ambassadors of good will to help with such vexing problems as negotiating rates for buying electricity. Mary’s campaign button and poster featured her smiling face and her eye-catching American flag bikini top. Another exotic entertainer, Angelyne, ran on the “The Pink Party” platform. Gary Coleman, the boyish-looking actor, issued posters with the campaign slogan “What Choo Talkin’ ‘Bout Davis?”

Clearly these colorful candidates created a collecting bonanza, and online sources such as eBay were studded with electioneering collectibles. Every election produces unique symbols, and with this election, thong underwear emblazoned with the candidate’s name or the message to dump Davis emerged as an eyebrow-lifting favorite. Seemingly, the thong represented the more permissive attitude of Californians or demonstrated the “anything goes” approach of some of the above-named candidates and their supporters. Consequently, three thongs now form part of the State Library’s permanent political campaign collection. In the past, coffee mugs, Frisbees, key fobs, tee shirts,



Gathering signatures for the recall petition drive. *Photograph from the People’s Advocate Collection.*



Preserved by the Library is a sampling of campaign buttons generated by the gubernatorial recall.

magnets, potholders, and other artifact-like mementoes served as icons of electioneering popular culture.

Recall mementoes did not, however, end with underwear. Again reflecting popular taste, the Library obtained three beverages: a bottle of “Recall Red” wine issued by the Milano Winery in Hopland, California; four bottles of “Governator Ale—Pumping Iron Brew”; and a bottle of “Recall Rally Relief” water. The Mentos Corporation sent a box of its mints all neatly packaged in four bags labeled with the words “The Official Chewy Mint of the California Recall Election.” One of the rarest campaign artifacts was a whiskbroom from the Schwarzenegger Campaign with the words “Let’s Clean up Sacramento” printed on one side. Several tee shirts came into the collection all bearing various negative messages concerning Governor Davis. Showing restraint, a “Cruz” tie tack promoted the cause of the lieutenant governor. Political consultant Joel Fox donated a faux eight dollar bill with the face of Schwarzenegger in the place of a U.S. president accompanied by the signatures of Gary Coleman as “Secretary of Comic Relief”

and Gray Davis as “Dead Man Talking.” The reverse side depicted the State Capitol Building with the words “The Abused State of California.” Mr. Fox stressed, however, that this was not an “official” campaign publication.

The recall naturally inspired a song. It was created by Silver Blue Productions in Studio City and entitled “Make Gray Davis Go Away.” Donated by the People’s Advocate of Sacramento, the CD opens with the following chorus:

Make Gray Davis Go Away  
 And get him off our shoulders.  
 We can’t afford to have him to stay,  
 So make Gray Davis Go Away.

Another company, Royal Ring of San Diego, saw a commercial opportunity and published a calendar called the *California Recall 2003 – 2004 Calendar: A Chronicle of the Recall Election*. Issued quickly and covering sixteen months from October to December



The first in a series of posters by Michael Sun that captured poses of over 100 would-be governors.

*This election stands  
as the most bizarre  
in modern  
California History*

2004, the calendar nevertheless incorporated useful tidbits of information on the recall process and California election laws. At the time of publication, Royal Ring did not know if the election would be held on October 7, 2003 or postponed to the March 2004 primary date. The calendar featured full-color photographs accompanied by salient quotations of fifteen candidates plus the incumbent governor. Because of this calendar, such names as Reva Renee Renz, Christy Cassel, Brooke Adams, and Abner Zurd will be forever preserved as gubernatorial candidates.

Perhaps the most ingenious creation consisted of a series of twelve posters beautifully designed and printed by Michael Sun that reproduced a likeness of over one hundred of the candidates. Try as he might, Michael could not find a photograph of all 139. With a touch of Hollywood glitz and mimicking movie posters, he printed the series under the general name of “Mass Media Presents.” A high school student living in Berkeley with a true talent for graphic design, Michael generously drove to the Library and presented a complete set of his posters. Several

included actual signatures of the candidates. For each person running for office, he developed a nickname or short descriptive phrase. Examples include “The Incubating Incumbent” (Davis); “The Aspiring Govenator” (Schwarzenegger); “The Child Actor” (Gary Coleman); and “The Enigmatic Angelyne.”

Upon learning of the recall movement, I contacted Ted Costa, the director of the People’s Advocate, a lobbying group in Sacramento originally founded by anti-tax crusader Paul Gann. Mr. Costa graciously agreed to donate his recall files to the Library. In 1987, the Library had obtained the Gann archive and Mr. Costa worked as his chief assistant. Articles in the *Los Angeles Times* and *New York Times Magazine* credited Mr. Costa as the real organizer of the movement and as the first to draft the petition to recall the governor. The *Los Angeles Times* described him as the “recall’s original proponent.” In February 2003, Costa went on a talk show to say that he was collecting signatures. The next day, he reported that his office was swamped with calls and



A typical anti-recall flyer issued by one of the labor unions.

*Rallies shook out a  
rich harvest of  
lawn signs, buttons,  
bumper stickers. . .*

donations. Mr. Costa named his campaign “DAVISRECALL.com: A Special Project of People’s Advocate, Inc.” Pressing duties delayed his donation until after the election, but he nonetheless saved a variety of materials, including bumper stickers, copies of completed petition forms, press releases, photographs, and some correspondence. In addition, he also presented the Library with a box of materials documenting his organization’s work on Proposition 40, the ballot initiative that established legislative term limits.

To complete the whole process, the Library sought out inauguration day mementoes, as it has done following every gubernatorial election. Programs and passes to various celebratory events are routine. However, with a Hollywood celebrity as governor and the suddenness of events, the circumstances were markedly different. A beautiful inaugural program passed out at the swearing in ceremonies on November 17, 2003 served as a reminder of the dignity of this high office. This contrasted with a button featuring Governor Schwarzenegger sporting sunglasses and

identifying him by his most popular sobriquet “The Governor.” The menacing-looking button, of course, played on his famous motion picture role as the “Terminator.” Amazingly, these souvenir “governator” buttons are for sale in the State Capitol. Another artifact donated by a Library staff member is an antique-looking “governator” pocket watch.

The Library makes available for research campaign literature dating back to the 1850s when Californian John C. Frémont ran for president. It actively pursues material as each election occurs, and donations to our files are always appreciated. With the forthcoming election this November, new materials will be added and preserved. It is doubtful, though, if anything will equal the zaniness of the great gubernatorial recall campaign of 2003. Let us all hope that the new governor’s campaign slogan “Let’s Bring California Back” will be realized. ❀

*Mr. Kurutz is Curator of Special Collections at the State Library.*

# Foundation Notes

## Kenneth B. Noack, Jr. Elected President of the Board

The California State Library Foundation Board of Directors elected Kenneth B. Noack, Jr. of Sacramento as its president at its April 23 meeting. Mr. Noack has served on the board for several years and has done a masterful job as its treasurer. He has a deep interest in the programs and collections of the State Library and sees the Foundation as a vehicle to further enrich and support the Library's many and varied activities. Over the years, Mr. Noack has been chairman of the board of directors of KVIE 6 Public Television, Yolo Basin Foundation, and Sacramento Society for the Blind. He also serves on the board of directors of the Rotary Club of Sacramento and Capitol Valley Bank. Mr. Noack is a senior adviser with Grubb & Ellis Company of Sacramento. In his spare time, he is an avid skier, cyclist, and mountaineer, having climbed twenty-five major peaks in the world.

Mr. Noack succeeds George Basye, who generously agreed to serve as the Foundation's vice president. Mr. Basye headed the Foundation for five years and presided over the Library's sesquicentennial celebration in 2000. Always acting with wisdom and grace, Mr. Basye guided the Foundation through a period of growth and maturity. One of Sacramento's most distinguished attorneys with the firm of Downey Brand of Sacramento, Mr. Basye at his final meeting as president of the board, presented the Library with a signed copy of his recently published *Battling the River: A History of Reclamation District 108*. In addition to his activities with the Foundation, Mr. Basye has been president of the Crocker Art Museum Association, California Historical Society, California Historical Foundation, Sacramento Symphony Association, and Rotary Club of Sacramento.

At the meeting, the board elected Thomas Vinson as treasurer and Barbara Campbell as secretary and reelected for new terms George Basye, J. S. Holliday, and Marilyn Snider. ❀

## Support for Gladding, McBean Archive

Pacific Coast Building Products (PCBP) of Sacramento, through a generous cash donation to the Foundation, has agreed to support the Library's Gladding, McBean & Company Archive. Headed by David Luchetti, the Sacramento firm is the parent firm of Gladding, McBean & Company, a manufacturing business noted for its architectural terra cotta and decorative tile. Because of this assistance, the Foundation will contract with architectural photographer Mary Swisher to work on the Archive's preservation and organization. In 1986, PCBP donated to the Library's Foundation its incredible collection of Gladding, McBean glass plate and flexible film negatives that document



Modelers from the Gladding, McBean Lincoln Plant in front of one of their glorious creations, an urn for the Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles.

thousands of its architectural projects in California and the West. This was followed by the donation of the terra cotta works' historical job order files and general business records. Both donations occurred through the able assistance of Ms. Swisher. Over the years, she has worked tirelessly with this rich source answering questions, mounting displays, and making archival prints from the negatives. Moreover, the Library collaborated with Windgate Press of Sausalito in producing a gorgeously illustrated book, *The Architectural Terra Cotta of Gladding, McBean* written by Gary Kurutz and Mary Swisher. Royalties from book sales support the Library's California History Section and the Gladding, McBean Archives. ❀

## Foundation Support of Library Activities

On April 20, 2004, the Foundation sponsored the State Library's first annual National Library Worker's Day, a program initiated by the American Library Association. Events were held simultaneously in the reading room of the Braille & Talking Book Library in Sacramento and at the Sutro Library in San Francisco.

From May 19–22, the Foundation sponsored a booth at the annual meeting of the National Genealogical Association. The annual meeting held at the Sacramento Convention Center and hosted thousands of amateur and professional family historians. Staff from the California History Section and Sutro Library made presentations and manned the booth. Both Library departments made available extensive genealogical resources, and this annual convention gave the Library an excellent opportunity to promote its collections and services to a national audience. The Foundation put on display its publications and posters as well as membership applications. Foundation Board member J. S. Holliday gave a presentation entitled "Far from Home and Family: The Origins of California's Risk-Taking Culture."

Last February, the Foundation co-hosted with its longtime friends, the Sacramento Book Collectors Club, a dinner program featuring eminent book artist Joseph D'Ambrosio (see Foundation Note below). D'Ambrosio gave a superb slide-illustrated talk concerning his masterful "biblio-creations." That same month, the Foundation co-sponsored an exhibit and reception in celebration of Black History Month. The Library created a display in the Memorial Vestibule of the Library & Court

Building featuring rare books, manuscripts, and pictorial material. A major portion of the display included highlights from the Library's Tarea Hall Pittman Collection. Ms. Pittman served for many years as an official of the Northern California NAACP. The reception was co-hosted with Black Sacramento. ❀

## Joseph D'Ambrosio Presents Spectacular Book

Known as one of America's most ingenious book designers, Joseph D'Ambrosio presented the Library with a special, deluxe edition of his *A Memoir of Book Design 1969 – 2000*. Issued in an edition of only thirteen copies, the deluxe edition is a specially bound version of the larger edition of 350 copies published last year by The Book Club of California. D'Ambrosio donated copy number nine. The deluxe binding of morocco-grained leather, copper, and crumpled colored paper is highlighted by a self-portrait of the artist on the front cover and a sunrise/sunset on the back cover.

This artist of the book is well known to the State Library. Anyone who walks into the Library & Courts II Building will be struck by the beauty of D'Ambrosio's rotunda floor design of concentric circles of the alphabet with the State Library logo in the middle. Former State Librarian Gary E. Strong commissioned him to create this superb example of public art in terrazzo. First time visitors invariably ask, "What do the letters spell?" The artist will always respond, "Nothing." The design simply celebrates letters. For an artist who creates miniature books, the rotunda floor represented a project of gigantic proportions.

D'Ambrosio's *A Memoir of Book Design* beautifully narrates his long and wonderful career as a book artist and relates the "how" and "why" of his entire body of work in ninety-two separate entries. Rarely does a book artist present such detailed and important information. Amazingly, this versatile artist not only designed, printed and bound his books but also wrote the text for several titles. Many were published in limited editions of less than fifty copies and are virtually impossible to acquire in the antiquarian market. Fortunately, the Library's California History Section preserves the D'Ambrosio Archive and numerous examples of his work. Copies of the standard edition of his book may still be purchased through The Book Club of California in San Francisco. ❀

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