

THE NORWOOD PRESS

PAPERS, 1893-1980s, n.d.

MSS #2
Vol.: 1 box: .5 linear feet

Processed by: Jane E. Ward
March 2006

Provenance: Many of the photographs and a few other items have provenance numbers on them that can be checked against the society's records. Some photographs were made from glass plate negatives in the society's collection. The papers in Box 1, Folder 7 were the gift of the Norwood Town Building Inspector's Office on 10 February 2006 and have been marked accordingly. The provenance of the rest of this collection is unknown.

Conservation: Newspaper clippings have been photocopied onto acid-free paper; in some cases the original clippings have been discarded due to their condition. Photographs have been placed in plastic mylar sleeves.

Copyright: Requests for permission to publish material from this collection must be submitted in writing to the Executive Director of the Norwood Historical Society.

HISTORICAL SKETCH

The Norwood Press was formed in 1894 by two individual companies coming together in Norwood, Mass., to form a company that covered all aspects of the book-making process. The J. S. Cushing & Co. handled composition and typesetting, and Berwick & Smith Co. was the pressroom. In 1897 the bindery E. Fleming & Co. (later known as C. B. Fleming & Co.) joined the Norwood Press to complete the book-making process. The three companies remained independent, each owning a one-third interest in

the Norwood Press Co., which existed only as a real estate holding company that held no authority over the production depts. of any of the three individual companies.

The Norwood Press flourished, employing about 700 people by 1898. The press specialized in printing scientific and school and college textbooks, and was known for its quality work. In 1929, the press added publication of novels to its work to offset the seasonal nature of textbook publishing. After World War II, production declined and operating deficits increased. Berwick & Smith Co. and C. B. Fleming & Co. both closed in 1952, followed by J. S. Cushing Co. in 1953.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Norwood Press papers consist primarily of newsclippings that cover various aspects of the company's history; tickets and programs for the 1894 dedication of the new Norwood Press buildings; some examples of items published by the press; and photographs.

The newsclippings (B1 F1) begin in 1893 and sporadically run through 1952, where there are several that cover the dissolution of the company in 1952-53. There is also some 1979 information on Arthur Gray, the architect of the Norwood Press building, and a history of the Fleming book bindery building (after 1983).

Included in the items related to the dedication of the Norwood Press buildings are tickets, dance cards, and committee lists (B1 F2). Box 1, Folder 3 contains three copies of the souvenir program from the dedication. (Six additional copies were removed to the library.) Box 1, Folder 4 contains an invitation to the 20th anniversary of the dedication and three copies of the 20th anniversary menu and program (1915).

Examples of items published by the Norwood Press are divided between those that relate to the company directly and those that do not. Company items include two 1896 issues of The Norwood Bee, a souvenir program from the Press's First Grand Ball in 1898, and the 1902 program of the Norwood Press Minstrels (B1 F5). Non-company items include a handout from Norwood's Gala Day (1895), the booklet produced for the Mass. State Board of Trade meeting held in Norwood in 1913 (produced entirely by Norwood businesses--another copy will be found in the Winslow Bros. & Smith Co. collection), a 1918 marriage announcement, and an undated booklet, "The Composer's Assistant in Spelling, Punctuation, and Style," presumably supplied to the company's employees in the composition room (B1 F6).

The business correspondence in Box 1, Folder 7 concerns the installation of electric elevators in the plant, 1925-29.

Virtually all of the photographs are undated, but most were clearly done in the early years of the company. A few include negatives with them. Box 1, Folder 8 contains dated photographs from 1911, 1922 (aerial), 1958-59 (aerial), and 1977, along with some undated photos. Box 1, Folder 9 contains undated photographs, all of the exterior of the plant, and a photo of the Norwood Press Club. Box 1, Folder 10 contains undated photographs of two of the company's principals, company employees in both exterior and interior shots, and some unidentified tennis players. Box 1, Folder 11 contains two oversize photographs of some C. B. Fleming employees in the early 1900s, and an undated oversize photograph of the plant.

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| <u>Box</u> | <u>Folder</u> | |
|------------|---------------|--|
| 1 | 1 | Newsclippings re: history of company, dissolution, 1893-1980s, n.d. |
| | 2 | Items re: dedication of new building, 1894. |
| | 3 | Souvenir program from dedication, 1894 (3 copies). |
| | 4 | Items re: 20 th anniversary, 1915. |
| | 5 | Items published by Norwood Press relating to the company, 1896-1902, n.d. |
| | 6 | Items published by Norwood Press, 1895, 1913-18, n.d. |
| | 7 | Business correspondence re: elevators, 1925-29. |
| | 8 | Photographs of Norwood Press, 1911, 1922 (aerial), 1958-59 (aerial), 1977, n.d. |
| | 9 | Photographs of exterior of plant and Norwood Press Club, n.d. |
| | 10 | Photographs of owners, employees, interior of the plant, and unidentified tennis players, n.d. |
| | 11 | Oversize photographs of C. B. Fleming employees, exterior of plant, n.d. |