Abstract: The C. B. Cottrell & Sons Co. printing specimens and trade catalogs includes approximately 133 items related to this printing press manufacturer spanning the period 1874 to 1910. Items found in the collection include trade catalogs, advertising cards, broadside and leaflet advertisements, blank stationery, memoranda, ledger sheets, invoices, receipts, and other printing specimens, and other materials related to the business.
Descriptive Summary

Identification: MSS 093, Item 014
Creator: Cottrell Company.
Title: C. B. Cottrell & Sons Co. printing specimens and trade catalogs
Inclusive Dates: 1874–1910
Extent: 1 v. and 4 oversize folders (2 boxes) ; 39 x 32 cm.
Language: Materials in English, Spanish, French, and German.

Administrative Information

Citation: MSS 093, Item 014, C. B. Cottrell & Sons Co. printing specimens and trade catalogs, Special Collections, University of Delaware Library, Newark, Delaware.

Shelving Summary: Boxes 1-2: Shelved in SPEC MSS 093 FOLIO+
Location: Special Collections Department, University of Delaware Library Newark, Delaware 19717-5267 Phone: 302-831-2229 Fax: 302-831-6003 URL: http://www.lib.udel.edu/ud/spec/

Processing: Processed and encoded by Lora J. Davis, April 2010.
Access Restrictions: The collection is open for research.

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Biographical Note

The C. B. Cottrell & Sons Company was founded in Westerly, Rhode Island, in 1855 by mechanic Nathan Babcock and machinist Calvert Byron Cottrell. The company, originally known as Cottrell & Babcock, opened as a general machine manufacturer, but soon focused on the manufacture of oscillating printing presses. In 1868 the company began manufacturing printing presses exclusively. The company became known as the C. B. Cottrell & Sons Company following the 1880 retirement of partner Nathan Babcock and subsequent introduction to the business of C. B. Cottrell's four sons, Edgar H., Charles Perkins, Calvert Byron, Jr., and Arthur Cottrell. C. B. Cottrell & Sons Company continued to produce a wide line of printing presses throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, eventually becoming a subsidiary of the Harris-Seybold Company (later the Harris Corporation) in 1953.

The early foundation for the success of the C. B. Cottrell & Sons Company was the mechanical mind of its founder. Throughout the late nineteenth century C. B. Cottrell made a name for himself as an inventor of and innovator in printing press technology. Over the course of his life he applied for and received over one hundred American and European patents for improvements in printing press machinery, including patents for an air spring for the bed of a press, a tapeless sheet delivery system for a drum cylinder press, a front sheet delivery system, a rotary color printing press, and a shifting tympan for a web perfecting press. In the closing decades of the nineteenth century the C. B. Cottrell & Sons Company doubled the capacity of their Westerly, Rhode Island works. Following an extensive addition to the Westerly works in 1899, C. B. Cottrell & Sons became the second largest pressworks in America, only behind R. Hoe & Company.

Though the company was founded in Westerly, Rhode Island, the business's main administrative offices were located at 8 Spruce Street, New York City, beginning in 1867. The manufacturing works remained in Westerly, however. The company also operated several regional offices across the nation, namely in Chicago and Boston. In Chicago the company occupied offices at various times at 292 and 297 Dearborn Street, 112 Monroe Street, and 198 Clark Street. The Boston office was located at 174 Forthill Square. In addition to these offices, the company also exhibited their printing presses at many national and international exhibitions, including the Richmond (Virginia) Agricultural and Mechanical Exhibition, the Cincinnati Centennial Exhibition (1888), and the Paris Exposition of 1900. During the late 19th and early 20th centuries the company conducted business with a sizable number of international customers, and many of their trade and exhibition catalogs were printed in foreign languages including French, Spanish, and German.

C. B. Cottrell & Sons Company was incorporated in 1892, a year prior to C. B. Cottrell's death, with a capitalization of $800,000. Three of Cottrell's four sons would go on to serve as presidents of the company in their lifetimes. During the twentieth century the company continued to manufacture letterpress and, occasionally, gravure presses, spending much of its time and effort in perfecting high-speed, natural-color, magazine presses. Beginning in the early twentieth century the company also began manufacturing printing plates. In 1953 the Cottrell Company was acquired by the offset press manufacturing firm of Harris-Seybold Company.

Sources:


Additional information derived from the collection and accompanying accession information.
Scope and Content Note

The C. B. Cottrell & Sons Company printing specimens and trade catalogs includes approximately 133 items related to this printing press manufacturer spanning the period 1874 to about 1910. Items housed in the collection include trade catalogs, advertising cards, printing press advertisements, blank stationery, memoranda, ledger sheets, invoices, receipts, and other printing specimens, and other materials related to the business. In addition to the 43 pages of material pasted into the scrapbook, an additional four folders of loose materials have been removed from the scrapbook. The 29 loose items are similar in nature to the materials found in the scrapbook, and include trade catalogs (including several in foreign languages and/or full color), leaflets and broadsides advertising printing presses, engravings depicting various presses, and several pieces of printed ephemera regarding printing press manufacture, set up, and operation.

The large scrapbook is in poor condition, and many of the pages have become detached from the binding. Examples of the products mentioned in the scrapbook include job presses, news presses, two and four roller presses, stop-cylinder presses, two-revolution presses, and hoe drum presses, many of which were specialties of the C. B. Cottrell & Sons Company at various times. Approximately 10 pages in the scrapbook include items demonstrating work performed on Cottrell presses, including sample letterhead, leger sheets, envelopes, invoices, receipts, and time cards. Another 25 pages include advertisements for new and second-hand Cottrell & Sons presses. These advertisements range from full-size trade catalogs to advertising cards to broadsides, price lists, and informational leaflets. Of particular interest are advertisements and catalogs directed toward the international market, including an advertising card listing presses available specifically for the Canadian market and one large printed advertisement in Spanish. A final subset of materials pasted in the scrapbook consists of advertisements, invitations, and other printed ephemera documenting the presences of C. B. Cottrell & Sons at several national and international exhibitions.

Materials which were once loosely laid into the back of the scrapbook have been removed and rehoused in four oversize folders. The folders are organized loosely by material type, and include: F1 Cottrell & Babcock trade catalogs, F2 C. B. Cottrell & Sons trade catalogs, F3 Foreign-language catalogs and leaflets, and F4 Miscellaneous materials. F1 includes four Cottrell & Babcock catalogs dating from before the retirement of Nathan Babcock from the company in 1880. Two of the catalogs bear dates (July 1874 and June 1878). A handwritten receipt for the production of the 1878 catalog is attached to the back of the catalog. Two of these early 1870s catalogs include detailed and vibrant full-color covers.

F2 and F3 include trade catalogs and pamphlets produced between 1880 and the 1900s. F2 consists of nine C. B. Cottrell & Sons catalogs, including two that are dated (1886 and 1893). Two copies of the undated "Special Catalogue of Triumph, Monarch, and Paragon Printing Presses" are housed in this folder, though one does not have a cover. Some of the catalogs found in this folder are also pasted into the scrapbook. F3 includes six additional catalogs of machinery and informational pamphlets about the Cottrell presses, however all of these materials are in languages other than English. At least two catalogs were printed in association with Cottrell's exhibition at the 1900 Paris Exposition Universelle. These catalogs are identical, with detailed green and gold covers, however one is printed in French, while the other is in German.

The final folder, F4, includes 10 pieces of miscellaneous printed material. Housed in the folder are three single sheets and one booklet of engravings of printing presses. Some of the titles of the miscellaneous
pamphlets found in this folder include "Joseph L. Firm's Perfecting Printing Presses," "Up-to-Date Electrotyping" by P.M. Furlong, and "Directions for Setting Up Potter's Country Drum Cylinder Press" by C. Potter, Jr.
Selected Search Terms

**Personal Names**

Cottrell, Calvert Byron, 1821-1893.

Cottrell, Edgar H.

Cottrell, Charles P.

Cottrell, Calvert Byron, Jr.

Babcock, Nathan.

**Corporate Names**

C. B. Cottrell & Sons Company.

Cottrell & Babcock.

**Topical Terms**

Printing machinery and supplies--History--19th century.

Printing machinery and supplies--History--20th century.

Printing machinery and supplies--Catalogs--History--19th century.

Printing machinery and supplies--Catalogs--History--20th century.

Printing--United States--History--19th century--Sources.

Printing--United States--History--20th century--Sources.

**Form/Genre Terms**

Scrapbooks.

Trade catalogs.

Broadsides (notices)

Advertising cards.

**Corporate Contributors**

C. B. Cottrell & Sons Company.

Cottrell & Babcock.
Related Materials in this Repository

This item forms part of MSS 093 Commonplaces, Albums, and Scrapbooks collection.

Materials Cataloged Separately

C. B. Cottrell & Sons. [Catalog]. New York: C. B. Cottrell & Sons, [1886].
SPEC Trade Catalog.

SPEC Trade Catalog.
Detailed Description of the Collection

C. B. Cottrell & Sons Co. scrapbook, 1874–1910 [Box 1]

Cottrell & Babcock trade catalogs, 1874–1880 [Box 2 F1]

C. B. Cottrell & Sons trade catalogs, 1880–1910 [Box 2 F2]

Foreign-language catalogs and leaflets, 1880–1910 [Box 2 F3]

Miscellaneous materials, 1874–1910 [Box 2 F4]