
Frank W. Tober papers
1791-1995
(bulk dates 1945-1995)

Abstract: The Frank W. Tober papers comprise letters, postcards, photographs, pamphlets, magazines, newspaper clippings, newsletters, printing ephemera, invoices, notebooks, woodblocks, prints, coins, sculpture, and other realia. A major portion of the papers relate to Tober's collections and collecting activities. Tober was a chemical engineer with a substantial personal interest in the study of rare books, printing, Napoleon and the French Revolution, and, in particular, literary forgery.
Descriptive Summary

Identification: MSS 602
Title: Frank W. Tober papers
Inclusive Dates: 1791-1995
Bulk Dates: 1945-1995
Extent: 4 linear feet and one oversize box (7 boxes)
Language: Materials in English.

Administrative Information

Citation: MSS 602, Frank W. Tober papers, Special Collections, University of Delaware Library, Newark, Delaware.

Shelving Summary: Boxes 1-3: Shelved in SPEC MSS record center cartons; Box 4: Shelved in SPEC MSS shoeboxes; Box 5-6: Shelved in SPEC MSS manuscript boxes; Box 7: Shelved in SPEC MSS oversize boxes (20 inches)

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 Teresa K. Nevins, November 2009.
Access Restrictions: The collection is open for research.

Terms Governing Use and Reproduction: Use of materials from this collection beyond the exceptions provided for in the Fair Use and Educational Use clauses of the U.S. Copyright Law may violate federal law. Permission to publish or reproduce is required from the copyright holder. Please contact Special Collections Department, University of Delaware Library, http://www.lib.udel.edu/cgi-bin/askspec.cgi
Biographical Note

Frank W. Tober (1919-1995) was a chemical engineer with a substantial personal interest in the study of rare books, printing, Napoleon and the French Revolution, and, in particular, literary forgery.

Frank W. Tober was born in Detroit, Michigan, in 1919. As a youth, he was an avid reader who enjoyed history and literature, but he was particularly interested in the sciences. Following his graduation from high school in 1937, he enrolled at Michigan Technological University where he earned his bachelor's degree in chemistry in 1941. He subsequently received a master's degree in chemical engineering from Virginia Polytechnic Institute in 1941 and a doctorate in physical chemistry from Yale University in 1948. Tober went on to have a long, successful career with the Du Pont Company.

Dr. Tober maintained a wide range of book collecting interests, including the history of printing and publishing, the history of papermaking and the manufacture of paper, the era of Napoleon and the French Revolution, and contemporary fine printing and book arts. However, the cornerstone of Dr. Tober's personal library was his collection on literary forgery, which includes examples of forgeries from all periods.

Dr. Tober bequeathed his collection to the University of Delaware Library following his death on June 24, 1995. The Frank W. Tober collection comprises nearly four thousand books and periodicals, hundreds of manuscripts and papers, and a variety of other materials, including artwork and ephemera.
Scope and Content Note

The Frank W. Tober papers comprises letters, postcards, photographs, pamphlets, magazines, newspaper clippings, newsletters, printing ephemera, invoices, notebooks, woodblocks, prints, coins, sculpture, and other realia. A major portion of the papers relate to Tober's collections and collecting activities.

Series I. Personal papers. This series is composed of materials from Frank Tober's personal and professional life, including many photographs of Frank, his wife Ellen, his parents, his friends, and his Du Pont coworkers. Notable among his correspondence is a series of postcards sent by Tober between 1945 and 1947 to his future wife, Ellen, to whom he wrote several times a week while in graduate school at Yale. Tober retained copies of his yearbook from Southwestern High School in Detroit, The Prospector, as well as his college yearbook, Keweenawan, from the Michigan College of Mining and Technology. Included in subseries I.C. Writings, is a copy of Tober's 1948 doctoral dissertation from Yale, as well as his short essay on collecting the Wise-Forman forgeries and a personal notebook recording poems, quotations, extracts, and other items that interested him.

Series II. Collections and collecting comprises a major part of the Tober papers, and includes both documentation of his collecting activities and objects he collected. The numerous invoices and letters Tober kept are related primarily to his book collection. The records are arranged chronologically, reflecting Tober's own system, and include Tober's handwritten inventories and periodic estimates of the value of his book collection. The vast majority of these records relate to Oak Knoll Books and its proprietor, Robert Fleck, with whom Tober maintained a decades-long friendship. Tober was also a long time member of the Delaware Bibliophiles, whose newsletters, announcements, and meeting information from 1991 through 1993 are also included. Notable among the items related to Tober's collecting activities are five finely-made custom slipcases (F57-F61) removed from Wise forgeries when the books were cataloged for the print collection in Special Collections.

Another area of collecting interest for Tober is subseries II.B. Napoleon and the French Revolution, which is composed of a small group of items. These include two French Revolutionary assignats (F62), engraved portraits of major French Revolution-era historical figures, depictions of important subjects and events from that period, and portraits of Napoleon in several different media (Box 6). Tober also acquired a boxed set of Napoleon medals created circa 1810 by Bertrand Andrieu (Box 5), and sixteen (16) French Revolution-era and Napoleonic-era coins dating from 1791 to 1815 (F24).

Series III. Pucca Press contains the output and records for the small personal press founded by Frank Tober, and also includes records pertaining to his interest in book repair and preservation. Tober printed his annual Christmas cards under the imprint of Pucca Press from 1964 through 1981, and he retained examples of the final versions of the cards, arranged by year. He also preserved the trial sheets, paste-ups, sketches, and even eight original woodblocks used at Pucca Press. Notable in this series is Tober's record book, which includes detailed notes about his printing methods, as well as various recipes related to book repair and preservation (F69).
**Selected Search Terms**

**Personal Names**


Tober, Ellen Brady.

Napoleon I, Emperor of the French, 1769-1821.

**Corporate Names**

Oak Knoll Books (Firm)

Pucca Press--Delaware--20th century.

**Topical Terms**

Collectors and collecting--20th century.

Book collectors--20th century.

France--History--Revolution, 1789-1799.

**Form/Genre Terms**

Correspondence.

Postcards.

Black-and-white photographs.

Color photographs.

Christmas cards.

Medals.

Woodcut (process)

Woodcuts (prints)

Slipcases.

**Occupation**

Collectors.

Chemists (scientists)
Personal Contributors

Tober, Ellen Brady.
Fleck, Robert.

Corporate Contributors

Oak Knoll Books (Firm)

Related Materials in this Repository

MSS 473, Frank W. Tober French revolutionary-era song sheets and pamphlets
MSS 474, Frank W. Tober manuscript and early printed leaf collection
MSS 600, Frank W. Tober papermaking and paper samples collection

Publication Note

Arrangement

I. Personal papers, 1920-1991
   I.B. Yearbooks, diplomas, and organizations, 1933-1948
   I.C. Writings, 1948-1969, undated

II. Collections and collecting, 1791-1995
   II.A. Collecting activities, 1791-1995
   II.B. Napoleon and the French Revolution, 1793-1965

III. Pucca Press, 1963-1985
Detailed Description of the Collection

Series I. Personal papers, 1920-1991


Tober-Brady postcards (1 of 2), 1945-1946 [Box 1 F1]
Postcards sent to Ellen Brady by Frank Tober.

Tober-Brady postcards (2 of 2), 1946-1947 [Box 1 F2]
Postcards sent to Ellen Brady by Frank Tober.

Personal correspondence, 1976-1992 [Box 1 F3]
Includes several letters regarding the estate of Ellen Tober, a few postcards, and several photocopies of newspaper articles. Also includes one letter from Ellen to Frank.

DuPont correspondence and documents, 1970-1989 [Box 1 F4]
Includes pamphlets, booklets, and newsletters from Du Pont. Also includes an original patent for permeation separation membranes invented by Tober, and related correspondence. Jackson Laboratory Quarter-Century Club certificate removed to oversize.

Family photographs, 1920-1990 [Box 1 F5]
Includes photographs of Frank Tober's parents and his wife Ellen. Also includes pictures of Frank as a baby, child, and youth.

Photographs of Frank Tober, 1944-1967 [Box 1 F6]
Includes portraits and individual photos of Frank Tober, as well as Tober in group pictures. Also includes photographs of Tober with DuPont coworkers.

Two matted photographs of Frank Tober, circa 1960-1991 [Box 1 F7]
Two matted photographs of Frank Tober.

Passports and notebook, circa 1945-1964 [Box 1 F8]
Includes two sets of passports, issued in 1948 and 1964, and a small notebook belonging to Ellen Brady Tober.

Other personal documents, 1936-1970 [Box 1 F9]
Includes Frank Tober's 1936 summer school grade card, a war ration book, death certificate for his mother, and birth certificate for Ellen Brady. A group of rabbit-related illustrations, including a Harvey coloring book, two large hand-made cards, and several newspaper clippings, removed to oversize.

**Subseries I.B. Yearbooks, diplomas, and organizations, 1933-1948**

**Correspondence, 1939-1948 [Box 1 F10]**

Includes B.S. diploma from Michigan College of Mining and Technology, Yale letter informing Tober of Ph.D. approval, and University of Buffalo award letter for fellowship.

**The Prospector, 1933-1938**

Yearbook from Southwestern High School in Detroit, which Tober attended from 1933-1937.

- **1933 [Box 1 F11]**
  - 3 items
  - Issue from January 1933, and two issues from May 1933.

- **1934 [Box 1 F12]**
  - 2 items
  - Issues from January and May 1934.

- **1935 [Box 1 F13]**
  - 1 item
  - Issue from May 1935.

- **1936 [Box 1 F14]**
  - 5 items
  - Three issues from January 1936, and two issues from June 1936.

- **1937-1938 [Box 1 F15]**
  - 2 items
  - Issue from June 1937, and Issue from January 1938.

**Keweenawan, 1938-1940**

Yearbook for Michigan College of Mining and Technology, which Tober attended from 1938-1940.

- **1938 [Box 1 F16]**
Series I. Subseries I.B.

1 item

1939 [Box 1 F17]

1 item

1940 [Box 1 F18]

1 item

Subseries I.C. Writings, 1948-1969, undated

Conductivities of Dilute Aqueous Solutions of Sodium Chloride and Lithium Chloride from 5° to 55° C, 1948 [Box 1 F19]

1 item

Bound copy of Tober's doctoral dissertation submitted to Yale University.

"Concentration and Purification of Uranium, Plutonium, and Neptunium by Ion Exchange in Nuclearly Safe Equipment", 1958 [Box 1 F20]

1 typescript copy of paper with brown paperboard binder


"An Essay on the Word", 1969 December 29 [Box 1 F21]

1 unbound handwritten draft on notebook paper

Paper written by Tober for course at University of Delaware, PHL 6005 taught by Prof. W. F. Bussee.

Tober essay on collecting Wise-Forman forgeries, undated [Box 1 F22]

3 items

Three copies of an undated one-page typescript Tober essay describing his interest in collecting Wise/Buxton-Forman forgeries

Personal notebook, undated [Box 1 F23]

1 item

Includes handwritten copies of poems, short quotations from various writers, extracts from books, excerpts of newspaper columns, sayings, and other items of interest to Tober.

Pins, tokens, and other realia, undated [Box 4]
Series I. Subseries I.C.

Includes three Du Pont pins, an Army-Navy award pin, Columbia University bronze plaque, a box of Tober's personal book plates, and numerous assorted tokens (sales tax, luxury tax, and public transportation) from Alabama and Connecticut.

Series II. Collections and collecting, 1791-1995

Subseries II.A. Collecting activities, 1791-1995

French coins, 1791-1815 [Box 1 F24]

16 coins

Tober's collection of French Revolution-era and Napoleonic-era coins of various denominations and sizes.

Other coins, undated [Box 1 F25]

23 coins and 1 locket part

Assorted coins from around the world. Includes a pair of 1929 puffins, and a commemorative medallion of Canadian geologist William Logan. Also includes one half of a locket with picture of unidentified child.

Correspondence with booksellers, 1974-1995 [Box 2 F26]

The majority of the letters are from Bob Fleck at Oak Knoll Books.

Delaware Collects, 1991 [Box 2 F27]

Includes loan agreements and catalog for the exhibition, Delaware Collects.

Delaware Bibliophiles, 1991-1993 [Box 2 F28]

Includes notices, newsletters, and meeting announcements for the Delaware Bibliophiles.

Newsletters, catalogs, and other documents, 1969-1991 [Box 2 F29]

Includes newsletters from booksellers, including The Book Press and Oak Knoll Books, notices for events and publications, catalogs, newspaper clippings, and other ephemera associated with books and book collecting.

Collecting ephemera, 1928-1989 [Box 2 F30]

Includes one 1929 Kalendarium Gregorianum from Dauber & Pine Bookshops, and a reprint of A Visit from Saint Nicholas. Also includes tickets to events, bookmarks, postcards, stamps, newspaper clippings, and other ephemera related to books and book collecting. Keepsake from 13th annual conference of American Printing History Association removed to oversize.
Collection records, 1958-1995

Tober maintained records of his collecting activities, expenditures, and valuation. These records include invoices and letters, as well as handwritten lists of yearly expenditures, estimated value of collection, and amounts owed to book dealers.

1958-1959 [Box 2 F31]
Includes invoices and letters related to Tober's collecting activities.

1966 [Box 2 F32]
Includes invoices and letters.

1968 [Box 2 F33]
Includes invoices and letters.

1971 [Box 2 F34]
Includes invoices and letters.

1972-1973 [Box 2 F35]
Includes invoices and letters.

1974 [Box 2 F36]
Includes invoices, letters, and other documents related to Tober's collecting activities.

1976 [Box 2 F37]
Includes invoices related to Tober's collecting activities.

1977 [Box 2 F38]
Includes invoices, letters, notes, handwritten inventories, and other documents related to Tober's collecting activities.

1978 [Box 2 F39]
Includes numerous invoices from Oak Knoll Books.

1979 [Box 2 F40]
Includes numerous invoices from Oak Knoll Books.

1980 [Box 2 F41]
Includes many invoices from Oak Knoll Books, one letter, and a handwritten list of purchases for 1979-1980.

1981 [Box 2 F42]
Includes numerous invoices from Oak Knoll Books.

1982 [Box 2 F43]
Includes invoices and handwritten estimates of collection value.

1983 [Box 2 F44]
Includes invoices and letters.

1984 [Box 2 F45]
Includes invoices, letters, and valuation of collection.

1985 [Box 2 F46]
Includes invoices, letters, and handwritten list of purchases for 1985.

1986 [Box 2 F47]
Includes invoices, letters, handwritten list of purchases in 1986, and handwritten asset valuation.

1987 [Box 2 F48]
Includes invoices, letters, and handwritten list of purchases in 1987.

1988 [Box 2 F49]
Includes invoices, letter from John Collins to Bob Fleck dated September 13, 1988, and handwritten list of purchases for 1988.

1989 [Box 2 F50]
Includes invoices, letters, and handwritten list of purchases for 1989.

1990 [Box 2 F51]
Includes invoices and handwritten list of purchases for 1990.

1991 [Box 2 F52]
Includes invoices.

1992 [Box 2 F53]
Includes invoices and letters.

1993 [Box 2 F54]
Includes numerous invoices from Oak Knoll Books.

1994 [Box 2 F55]
Includes invoices.

1995 [Box 2 F56]
Includes invoices from Oak Knoll Books.

Custom slipcase for *The Cup*, undated [Box 2 F57]
Removed from Wise forgery when book was catalogued as Spec. Coll. Z1024 .W57 Todd 399f

Custom slipcase for *The Falcon*, undated [Box 2 F58]
Removed from Wise forgery when book was catalogued as Spec. Coll. Z1024 .W57 Todd397f

Custom slipcase for *Sister Helen: A Ballad*, undated [Box 2 F59]
Removed from Wise forgery when book was catalogued as Spec. Coll. Z1024 .W57 Todd 192f

Custom slipcase for *Ticonderoga*, undated [Box 2 F60]
Removed from Wise forgery when book was catalogued as Spec. Coll. Z1024 .W57 Todd284i

Custom slipcase for *Verses*, undated [Box 2 F61]
Removed from Wise forgery when book was catalogued as Spec. Coll. Z1024 .W57 Todd193p

**Subseries II.B. Napoleon and the French Revolution, 1793-1965**

Tober also collected many books about this topic, which have been removed for cataloging.

French Revolutionary *assignats*, 1793 [Box 3 F62]
Includes one valued at five livres (issued October 31, 1793), and one valued at 50 sols (issued May 23, 1793).

French Revolution-era portraits, undated [Box 3 F63]
26 plates from books
Includes engraved portraits of Louis XVI, Marie Antoinette, Danton, Robespierre, Talleyrand, Napoleon, and others. One reproduction on board of Jacques-Louis David portrait of Napoleon removed to oversize.
French Revolution-era subjects, undated [Box 3 F64]

21 plates from books

Includes engraved images depicting various historical events in 1791-1795. Also includes images of the tomb of Napoleon.

*Scribner's* (two issues), 1887 [Box 3 F65]


*Life*, 1965 June 11 [Box 3 F66]

Vol. 58, no. 23. Contains article on Battle of Waterloo by Thomas N. Carmichael. Issue removed to oversize.

Boxed set of Napoleon medals, circa 1810 [Box 5]

Wooden box shaped like gilt-edged book (27 x 35 cm)

Set of ten medals contained in wooden, green velvet-lined box, in two trays with fitted recesses for the medals. The artist is Bertrand Andrieu. Subjects include the Siege of the Bastille, the Arrival of the King in Paris, the Battle of Marengo, and the Passage of the Great St. Bernard, as well as portraits of Napoleon, Josephine, and Marie Louise.

Napoleon realia, undated [Box 6]

6 objects

Includes six different depictions of Napoleon: a small wooden bust (9 cm), a pair of bookends (each is 14.5 x 11 x 8 cm), a painted ceramic standing figure (23 cm), a small painted cast metal figure (8.5 cm), and a painted wooden caricature (17.5 cm).


Tober founded a small personal press used to print annual Christmas cards, small pamphlets, and announcements. He also did repair and binding work for his church.

Tober sketches, 1964 [Box 3 F67]

4 items

Four unfinished still life sketches by Frank Tober.

*Manuscript & Proof*, 1943 [Box 3 F68]

1 book

Book written by John Benbow, published by Oxford University Press; was owned by Ellen Brady Tober.
Record book for printing and repair activities, 1963-1985 [Box 3 F69]

1 book

Account book used by Tober to record his book repair and preservation work. Also records various recipes related to repairs and preservations. Tober also recorded his printing projects with Pucca Press from 1967-1982. Includes letters, notices, invoices, and other material inserted into the account book by Tober.

Final versions, 1964-1981

Examples of the final version of Christmas cards and other items produced by Pucca Press, founded in 1964.

1964 [Box 3 F70]
9 items
Includes Christmas cards and Tober's calling card with collecting interests.

1965 [Box 3 F71]
3 items
Christmas cards.

1966 [Box 3 F72]
3 items
Christmas cards.

1967 [Box 3 F73]
5 items
Christmas cards.

1968 [Box 3 F74]
4 items
Christmas cards.

1969 [Box 3 F75]
6 items
Christmas cards.

1970 [Box 3 F76]
5 items
Series III.

Christmas cards.

1971 [Box 3 F77]
6 items
Christmas cards.

1972 [Box 3 F78]
4 items
Christmas cards.

1973 [Box 3 F79]
4 items
Christmas cards. Tober began recording the year of Pucca Press on his cards (1973 was the 10th year)

1974 [Box 3 F80]
4 items
Christmas cards.

1975 [Box 3 F81]
4 items
Christmas cards.

1976 [Box 3 F82]
6 items
Christmas cards.

1977 [Box 3 F83]
4 items
Christmas cards.

1978 [Box 3 F84]
5 items
Christmas cards.

1980 [Box 3 F85]
Series III.

4 items
Christmas cards.

1981 [Box 3 F86]
4 items
Christmas cards.

Trial sheets, 1965-1981
Includes trial sheets for Tober's annual Christmas cards, as well as paste-ups, sources for images and text, and handwritten notes. Also includes some trial sheets for other projects.

1965 [Box 3 F87]
1 item
Trial sheet for Christmas card image.

1966 [Box 3 F88]
1 item
Notecard with sentiment for Christmas card.

1968 [Box 3 F89]
1 item
Trial sheet for poem for Christmas card.

1970 [Box 3 F90]
7 items
Trial sheets for Christmas card.

1971 [Box 3 F91]
Numerous trial sheets for Christmas card. Includes paste-ups, sketches, and envelopes.

1972 [Box 3 F92]
Numerous trial sheets for Christmas card. Includes paste-ups, sketches, notes, and mark-ups.

1973 [Box 3 F93]
9 items
Trial sheets for Christmas card.
1974 [Box 3 F94] 
Numerous trial sheets for Christmas card, some on verso of 1972 card. Includes tracings and paste-up.

1975 [Box 3 F95] 
Numerous trial sheets for Christmas card, and several different paste-ups.

1976 [Box 3 F96] 
12 items
Trial sheets, paste-ups, and notes for Christmas card.

1977 [Box 3 F97] 
Numerous trial sheets for Christmas card. Also includes paste-up.

1978 [Box 3 F98] 
Numerous trial sheets for Christmas card. Also includes paste-up.

1980 [Box 3 F99] 
6 items
Trial sheets for Christmas card. Also includes paste-up.

1981 [Box 3 F100] 
11 items
Trial sheets for Christmas card. Also includes paste-up.

Other Pucca Press ephemera, undated [Box 3 F101] 
Includes cards, notices, letterhead for Pucca Press, and other items produced by Pucca Press. Also includes woodcut print of owl with its visual source.

Source file for Pucca Press, undated [Box 3 F102] 
Large collection of keepsakes, pamphlets, newsletters, clippings, cards, brochures, and other items for use as possible models.

Three woodcut blocks, undated [Box 3 F103] 
Three woodcuts made by Tober for Christmas cards, of which two are dated "12/5/71" in pencil on the back.

Two woodcut blocks, undated [Box 3 F104] 
Two woodcuts made by Tober for Christmas cards, of which one is dated "11/24/67" in pencil on the back.
Three woodcut blocks, undated [Box 3 F105]

Two woodcuts made by Tober for Christmas cards, both undated, and a woodcut of an owl, also undated.

Tober oversize, undated [Box 7]