Hoole Machine & Engraving Works Collection

Finding aid created by American Bookbinders Museum staff using RecordEXPRESS
American Bookbinders Museum
355 Clementina St.
San Francisco, California 94103
(415) 824-9754
collections@bookbindersmuseum.org
http://www.bookbindersmuseum.org/
2017
Descriptive Summary
Title: Hoole Machine & Engraving Works Collection
Dates: 19th and 20th centuries
Collection Number: ARCH0015
Extent: Approximately 17 linear feet.
Repository: American Bookbinders Museum
San Francisco, California 94103
Abstract: The collection includes over 1000 pieces of brass finishing tool designs and components, as well as some documentation, all from the American finishing tool company, Hoole Machine and Engraving Works.
Language of Material: English
Access
The materials are open for research use. All use of ABM materials must be requested 24 hours in advance and used onsite during a scheduled appointment. For more information on use or to schedule an appointment, contact the ABM librarian at collections@bookbindersmuseum.org.
Publication Rights
All requests to reproduce, publish, quote from, or otherwise use collection materials must be submitted in writing to the ABM Librarian, American Bookbinders Museum, San Francisco, California 94103. Consent is given on behalf of the American Bookbinders Museum as the owner of the physical items and is not intended to include or imply permission from the copyright owner. Such permission must be obtained from the copyright owner, heir(s) or assigns. Restrictions also apply to digital representations of the original materials. Use of digital files is restricted to research and educational purposes.
Preferred Citation
Hoole Machine & Engraving Works Collection. American Bookbinders Museum
Acquisition Information
Donated by Paul Brubaker of Bindery Tools, LLC.
Biography/Administrative History
From Tom Conroy: John R. Hoole emigrated to America from England, where he had been a bookbinders’ finishing tool maker, around 1830. This was very early in the history of specialist finishing tool makers (as opposed to general engravers, who had done the work in earlier centuries). The trade coalesced because of the great amount of work involved in engraving large dies for the stamping of edition bindings, not just the manufacture of small tools for one-off bindings. Hoole and his children built a flourishing firm in New York, and became a major retail bookbinders’ supplier as well as a manufacturer of finishing tools. Several other American firms had similar 19th-century arcs. Around 1890 the firm passed out of family hands and moved to Brooklyn, and surviving Hoole tools (which are common) show that the amount of machine work increased dramatically around the time of the move. With the 20th century the binders’ supplies side of the trade sloughed off, and the manufacture of finishing tools declined. Between the Great Depression and the 1960s all of Hoole’s American competitors went out of business, and after the 1960s Hoole itself probably made no finishing tools, though they remained available to make them. The firm survived because it had branched out into page-numbering machines and other metal stamps, finally declining to a one-man general machinist’s shop. Thus, the Hoole firm lived through the whole arc of the specialist bookbinders’ finishing tool maker’s trade; and all its American competitors disappeared half a century ago, leaving almost nothing to record their existence beyond the tools they made and their listings in city directories. In addition, it was at the top of the trade in America, both for size and for quality, for most of its existence. Any historical materials on the Hoole firm and how it worked are vital to understanding the finishing tool trade, which was a key supplier to the binding trade. Hoole Machine & Engraving Works New York and Brooklyn, NY 1832-1911 Addresses in Brooklyn: 29-33 Prospect Ave.; 30 Main Street. Directory of American Toolmakers Information While the “Est” date is 1832, this name and the Brooklyn address may be post-1900. The Hooles were America’s most prolific bookbinding toolmakers, including John R. Hoole and his son, William E. Hoole. Identifying Marks HOOLE/MACH.&ENG.WK’S./BROOKLYN, N.Y.
Scope and Content of Collection
Indexing Terms
Tools.
Book ornamentation -- Finishing.
Bookbinding -- Hand binding.
Fillet.
Gouge.
Rolls.
Stamp.
Pallet.

Hoole, John R. (d. 1884)
Hoole Machine and Engraving Works.
New York, USA.

Metal tools and designs.
Bookbinding.
Manufacturing.

ARCH0015