Finding aid prepared by Marie Silva
California Historical Society
678 Mission Street
San Francisco, CA, 94105-4014
(415) 357-1848
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2015
Finding aid to the Nelson C. Hawks papers, Kemble MS 3

Title: Nelson C. Hawks papers
Date: 1855-1918
Collection Identifier: Kemble MS 3
Creator: Hawks, Nelson Crocker, 1840-1929.
Extent: 7 flat boxes, 1 slipcase (3.3 linear feet)
Contributing Institution: California Historical Society
678 Mission Street
San Francisco, CA, 94105-4014
(415) 357-1848
reference@calhist.org
URL: http://www.californiahistoricalsociety.org/
Location of Materials: Collection is stored onsite.
Language of Materials: Collection materials are in English, with a few news clippings in Spanish and German.
Abstract: The collection consists of diaries, scrapbooks, correspondence, business records, printing specimens, publications, and other materials created or collected by the printer Nelson C. Hawks between the years 1855 and 1918. Papers document Hawks' childhood; his religious education and observances as a devout Episcopalian; his work as a job printer in Delafield and Milwaukee, Wisconsin; the 1874 establishment of the Pacific Type Foundry in San Francisco; the history of the point system for sizing types, first introduced by Hawks at the Pacific Type Foundry around 1878; and the business operations of the Pacific Type Foundry, Marder, Luse, & Co., Palmer & Rey, and other printing firms with which Hawks was associated. Also included in the collection is a portrait of Hawks, dated from the 1870s.
Access
Collection is open for research.
Publication Rights
All requests to reproduce, publish, quote from or otherwise use collection materials must be submitted in writing to the Director of Library and Archives, North Baker Research Library, California Historical Society, 678 Mission Street, San Francisco, CA 94105. Consent is given on behalf of the California Historical Society 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. Restrictions also apply to digital representations of the original materials. Use of digital files is restricted to research and educational purposes.
Preferred Citation
[Identification of item], Nelson C. Hawks papers, Kemble MS 3, California Historical Society.
Related Collections
The California Historical Society's copy of the Pacific Type Foundry's Handy book of specimens contains inscriptions by Hawks indicating which pages he personally composed.
Processing Information
Processed by Marie Silva in 2015.
System of Arrangement
The collection is arranged in three series: 1) Diaries and scrapbooks, 1855-1896; 2) Correspondence and business records, 1872-1885; and 3) Publications and miscellany, 1857-1918.
Biographical Information
Nelson C. Hawks was a San Francisco printer and originator of the American point system for type sizing. He was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, on August 21, 1840, grew up in nearby Delafield, and worked as a printer's apprentice in Waukesha. At the age of sixteen, Hawks began publication of the newspaper, the Young American, in Delafield; a few years later, he started the Free Press in Oconomowoc. Beginning in 1865, he worked as a job printer in Milwaukee, patenting Hawk's Iron Stand, a composing stand, in 1869. Hawks moved to San Francisco in 1874 in order to set up and manage the Pacific Type Foundry as an agent of the Chicago firm Marder, Luse & Co. In 1874, Hawks also started the Pacific Specimen, the Pacific Type Foundry's well-regarded typographical journal.
According to his diary, Hawks proposed the point system for which he became famous to his employer John Marder in 1877. The system was first implemented by the Pacific Type Foundry around 1878, and, thanks to Hawks' persistent advocacy, was widely adopted by type founders throughout the United States and England. Around 1882, Hawks left the Pacific Type Foundry and established his own printers supply house, N.C. Hawks & Co., at 532 Clay Street in San Francisco. He sold this
business to San Francisco type founders Palmer & Rey, and served as Palmer & Rey's superintendent for two years. In 1885, Hawks again established his own company, a printers supply house located at 410 Kearney Street and later at 320-322 Battery Street in San Francisco. In 1888, he and W.F. Shattuck formed a partnership, establishing Hawks & Shattuck, and publishing the Occasional Typograph. Hawks retired from the printing business in 1894, but remained a stockholder in the Pacific States Type Foundry, a firm he founded with W.F. and A.E. Shattuck, Samuel Martin, and T.G. Cantrell. A skilled photographer, he opened the California Camera Company at 124 Geary Street in San Francisco in 1896.

Scope and Contents
The collection consists of diaries, scrapbooks, correspondence, business records, printing specimens, publications, and other materials created or collected by the printer Nelson C. Hawks between the years 1855 and 1918. Papers document Hawks' childhood; his religious education and observances as a devout Episcopalian; his work as a job printer in Delafield and Milwaukee, Wisconsin; the 1874 establishment of the Pacific Type Foundry in San Francisco; the history of the point system for sizing types, first introduced by Hawks at the Pacific Type Foundry around 1878; and the business operations of the Pacific Type Foundry, Marder, Luse, & Co., Palmer & Rey, and other printing firms with which Hawks was associated. Also included in the collection is a portrait of Hawks, dated from the 1870s.

Hawks' diaries cover a wide span of his life, beginning in 1855 when he was fourteen years old and continuing until 1896, after he retired from the printing business. Journals contain daily, monthly, and yearly entries detailing Hawks' domestic life and professional activities; many include drawings, stickers, and humourous prefaces. Two scrapbooks contain news clippings and printing specimens documenting Hawks' contributions to the typographic and printing professions in Wisconsin and San Francisco between the years 1869 and 1896. The collection also includes correspondence written by Hawks, A.P. Luse, and others related to the business activities of the Pacific Type Foundry, Marder, Luse & Co., N.C. Hawks & Co., and Palmer & Rey in the 1870s and '80s. A ledger, dated 1872, contains approximately 130 specimens of printing issued by Hawk's Rural Press in Delafield, Wisconsin. Publications include Young America, a Delafield newspaper published by Hawks in 1857-1858, and Hawk's Explanation of the point system of printing type, published by the Island City press in Alameda, California, in 1918.

Indexing Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's public access catalog:
Hawks, Nelson Crocker, 1840-1929--Archives.
Hawks, Nelson Crocker, 1840-1929--Portraits.
Marder, Luse and Company.
Pacific Type Foundry.
Palmer & Rey.
Type and type-founding.
Printers--California--San Francisco.
Printers--Wisconsin.
Printing--Specimens.
Diaries.
Ledgers (account books)
Letter books.
Scrapbooks.

Diaries and scrapbooks 1855-1896

<p>| Box 1, Volume 1a | Journal! by N.C. Hawks 1855 January 1-1855 December 31 |
| Box 1, Volume 1b | Diary, edited by Nelson C. Hawks 1855 January 1-1856 August |
| Box 1, Volume 2 | Daily journal for the year of our Lord 1862 1862 |
| Box 1, Volume 3 | Daily journal for 1863 1863 |
| Box 1, Volume 4 | My book, for 1867 1867-1869 |
| Box 2, Volume 4 | Scope and Contents |
| | Includes a preface, written in 1867, and household accounts and daily journal entries for the year 1869. Journal entries for the year 1867 were never written. |
| Box 2, Volume 5 | Journal, 1870 1870 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 2, Volume 6</th>
<th>[Journal], 1871 1871</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box 2, Volume 7</td>
<td>Journal for 1872 1872-1880, 1888</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Scope and Contents**
Includes monthly journal entries for the years 1872 and 1873; daily journal entries for the pivotal year 1874 (during which Hawks moved from Milwaukee to San Francisco to manage the Pacific Type Foundry); and yearly summaries for the years 1875-1880. One of Hawk's children added daily journal entries for 1888 April 22-23.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 2, Volume 8</th>
<th>1882. Home plan and other memoranda. N.C. Hawks. Journal for 1883. 1882-1883</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box 3, Volume 9</td>
<td>Home memorandum expense etc., 1884 1884</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 3, Volume 10</td>
<td>Home journal and expense, 1885 1885</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 3, Volume 11</td>
<td>[Journal], 1886 1886</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 3, Volume 12</td>
<td>Home journal, 1887-88 1887-1888</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 3, Volume 13</td>
<td>Home journal, 1889-1893 1889-1893</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 3, Volume 14</td>
<td>[Journal], 1894-1896 1894-1896</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 5</td>
<td>Scrapbook of news clippings about Hawk's Iron Stand, etc. 1869-1883</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Scope and Contents**
Includes news clippings (1870-1873) about Hawk's Iron Stand, a composing stand patented in 1869, and Hawk's printing business in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Also includes accounts for Hawk's Iron Stand (1869-1870) and the California Bracket Stand (1883).

| Box 5 | Scrapbook of news clippings about Nelson C. Hawks 1874-1896 |

**Scope and Contents**
Includes news clippings about Hawks and the various San Francisco printing establishments he managed or owned between the years 1874 and 1894. Also includes articles about the California Press Association and Hawk's California Camera Company, established after he retired from the printing business in 1896.

| Box 6 | N.P. Hawks ledger 1872 |

**Scope and Contents**
Contains customer accounts for Hawk's Rural Press (Delafield, Wisconsin) for the year 1872. Approximately 130 specimens printed by the Rural Press, including billheads, broadsides, advertisements, certificates, and election tickets, are pasted in.

| Box 7 | Pacific Type Foundry letter book 1875 June 10-1876 September 16 |

**Scope and Contents**
Contains copies of business letters written by Hawks as manager of the Pacific Type Foundry.

| Box 4 | A.P. Luse letters to N.C. Hawks 1876 February 9-1881 December 1 |

**Scope and Contents**
Bound volume of business letters written by A.P. Luse of Marder, Luse & Co. to Hawks.

| Box 7 | N.C. hawks letter book 1882 February 16-1885 December 6 |

**Scope and Contents**
Contains copies of business letters written by Hawks as the owner of N.C. Hawks & Co. and superintendent of Palmer & Rey.

| Box 4 | Young America, Delafield, Wisconsin, edited by N.C. Hawks 1857 January 20-1858 September 8 |

**Scope and Contents**
Explanation of the point system of printing type with specimens in the office of the
Island City Press, Alameda, California, by Nelson C. Hawks 1918

Location of Materials: In slipcase on
General Note
Housed in custom slipcase.

Box 4 Proof of first type set on point widths undated
Box 4 Carte de visite portrait Nelson C. Hawks, by Abell's Art-Studio Car 1870s