
Charles and Louise Silverberg Inkwell Collection AR.019

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Language of Material: English

Contributing Institution: William H. Hannon Library, Archives & Special Collections, Art & Artifacts

Title: Charles and Louise Silverberg Inkwell Collection

Identifier/Call Number: AR.019

Physical Description: 3.67 Linear Feet(2) 13x10x3" boxes (1) 18x12.5x4" box

Date (inclusive): 1850-1910

Abstract: This collection consists of 32 inkwells (23 traveling inkwells, 8 Japanese yayate, and 1 inkstand) and 2 bamboo brushes.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged into two different categories: inkwells and yatate. They have all been labeled by the donors with individual numbers.

Biographical / Historical

Charles Silverberg was born in Buffalo, New York in 1932. He was raised in southern California, and graduated from Stanford University in 1953 with a B.A. and from Stanford Law School in 1955 with a J.D. He served as Law Officer at Eighth Army Headquarters Company in Seoul, Korea from 1955 to 1957, took and passed the California Bar while on active duty, and joined his father's general law practice in June 1957, promptly upon his military discharge. He practiced transactional entertainment law in Los Angeles and internationally from 1962 until his retirement in 2007 and formed a Century City-based law firm. He chaired the Stanford Law School Board of Visitors and the Los Angeles Copyright Society, writing and lecturing extensively on legal aspects of entertainment law. Published authors, and produced screenwriters became his primary clientele as his practice matured. His community volunteer services included weekly recording of law casebooks and treatises for law students with visual and learning impairments for 35 years. Silverberg's work frequently involved overseas travel for his clients. After years of buying other travel souvenirs, he began in the 1970s to collect antique and early twentieth century inkwells in his travels. He was drawn to collect inkwells by the images they evoked for him of pens dipped by candlelight by lawyers and other writers, in the centuries before the invention of fountain pens in the late nineteenth century. He was also inspired by his memory of writing his California Bar exam with a vintage Esterbrook fountain pen, and by the infinity of designs of inkwells. The most important factors in that decision were his legal representation of authors and screenwriters and the nexus between inkwells and his father's passion for the written word.

Throughout their marriage, his wife Louise has been an enthusiastic supporter of his inkwell collecting hobby and has delighted in the prominent and attractive display of their collection in their homes along the way. The couple were named "100 of America's Top Collectors" in the March 2002 special issue of Art & Antiques. Louise was born and raised in Los Angeles and is a graduate of UCLA with a B.A. in education, and of Antioch University with an M.A. in psychology. After raising their two sons, she maintained a private practice as a licensed marriage and family therapist in several southern California communities until her retirement in 2014.

Biographical information provided by Silverberg family and edited for clarity.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Charles and Louise Silverberg. Accession number: 2020.36.

Scope and Contents

Donated by Charles and Louise Silverberg, this collection features a variety of inkwells, including small traveling inkwells and Japanese yayate, along with one double well inkstand. Collected by Charles Silverberg during his business travels, they come from many different countries and feature various styles.

Conditions Governing Access

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Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Series number, Box number, Charles and Louise Silverberg Inkwell Collection, AR019, Department of Archives and Special Collections, William H. Hannon Library, Loyola Marymount University.

Subjects and Indexing Terms

Inkwells

Box 1

yatate and bamboo brushes

Physical Description: Bamboo brushes are contemporary and included by donor to demonstrate storage in yatate.

Box 2

double well inkstand 1860

Box 3

traveling inkwells