

Gift of Shelley Freeman, 2022

**Dates:** c. 1973-1979.

**Extent:** 1 box, 16 folders (15 letter-sized, 1 oversized). 6 mm.

**Biographical Note:**

Shelley Freeman is a visual artist based in Montreal, Canada. She first studied painting, drawing and typography at York University in Toronto, through a Bachelor of Fine Arts (class of 1974). After taking a typography course co-instructed by Stan Bevington (1943-) and Nelson Adams (1942-2019) of Coach House Press (CHP) in the fall of 1973, Freeman was able to secure a summer job at the press herself, from April 1974 to August 1975. During her time at CHP and beyond, Freeman kept in touch with Adams. In these postcards and letters, Adams reflects on his travels in Europe in the mid-1970s and his decision to enroll in Library School and become a Junior Fellow at Massey College, at the University of Toronto, beginning in September of 1976. He also shares updates on his ongoing printing projects and passes along samples of his hand-printed cards and pamphlets.

Nelson Adams grew up in Montreal and studied ancient Greek at the University of New Brunswick. By 1968, he had made his way to Toronto, where he found himself hanging around Rochdale College. He soon met Stan Bevington, the founder of the CHP, and was employed at CHP by 1969. Some of these materials were printed under Adams' own imprint, the Commonplace Press. After a long career, Adams retired in 2009. In 2012, he returned to Massey College as the College Printer. In this role he was responsible for supervising volunteers and classes held in the Bibliography Room at the Robertson Davies Library, including caring for a teaching collection of nineteenth-century iron hand presses, type, and ornaments. Adams was a beloved member of this community, mentoring students interested in printing and typography, just as he had all those years earlier with Freeman. This collection also includes samples of Freeman's printing projects, completed during her time at CHP as well as a selection of personal photographs of the space and fellow staff at CHP and York University in the early 1970s.

**Scope and Content:**

*Contains series:*

1. Handwritten correspondence from Nelson Adams to Shelley Freeman, c.1976-1979. Includes postcards, printed cards, letters and attachments including samples of cards and other materials hand-printed by Nelson Adams at the Commonplace Press.
2. Letterpress materials hand-printed by Shelley Freeman during her time as a student and employee at CHP, as well as related project materials.

Ms  
Coll  
00193C

**FREEMAN (Shelley) Papers**

3. Photographs of the space and staff at CHP and York University between 1973-1975.  
All black and white, unless otherwise noted. Extent: 23 photographs.

**Custodial history:** Donated by Shelley Freeman to the Thomas Fisher Rare Books Library in 2022.

**Notes:**

*Correspondence abbreviations:*

ALS: Autograph letter signed  
AL: Autograph letter not signed  
ANS: Autograph note signed  
AN: Autograph note not signed  
TNS: Typed noted signed

*Languages:* English and French

*Restrictions on access:* Open

<b>SERIES 1:</b> Handwritten correspondence from Nelson Adams to Shelley Freeman, c.1976-1979. Includes postcards, printed cards, letters and attachments including samples of cards and other materials hand-printed by Nelson Adams at the Commonplace Press.		
<b>BOX: FOLDER</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>DATE(S)</b>
Box 1: Folder 1	2 ANS, 1 AN: Written on postcards printed at Coach House Press. One is addressed to both Shelley and her husband Rod MacDonald [mistakenly addressed here as Clint].	[1976]
1:2	1 ALS: Describes Commonplace Press and Adams' plans to attend Library School at the University of Toronto in the fall.  1 AL: Follow-up letter.	March 23, 1976  March 24, 1976
1:3	1 ANS: Written on "Commonplace Press" stationary. Adams notes typeface used to print the stationary; "Monotype Poliphilus 10pt small caps."	April 4, 1976
1:4	1 ANS: Written on Commonplace Press stationary, addressed to Rod [MacDonald], with attached xerox of W. H. Auden poem and text by Bacon. See 1:2, mentioned in ANS.	[1976]

FREEMAN (Shelley) Papers

1:5	2 ANS: Written on cards hand-printed in 200 copies at the Commonplace Press, June 1976.  Sheet of visual card design samples. "Fifteen writing cards for Christmas & other occasions, hand-printed reproductions... Nelson Adams' Commonplace Press."	Summer 1976  [c. June 1976]
1:6	2 ANS: Postcards sent from Northern Greece.	[1979]
1:7	"Sonnet by William Shakespeare, hand-set in Poliphilus type, Nelson Adams" envelope containing:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 1 TNS: Commonplace Press publications subscription note and return-envelope</li> <li>- 3 copies of "Sonnets by Shakespeare" promotional broadsides to purchase prints</li> <li>- "XII Psalms" promotional broadside to purchase prints</li> </ul>	[1979?]
1:8	1 ALS: Reading list.	[197-]
1:9	Related and/or attached letterpress-printed materials:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- "On Wine" [pamphlet], printed at CHP</li> <li>- "Music at the time of Chaucer, performed by the Toronto Consort with guest reader Daniel de Matteis," printed with the assistance of the Olde Yorke Musick Shoppe.</li> <li>- William Blake "Mock on, Mock on, Voltaire, Rousseau" [poem]</li> <li>- "Jubilate Deo" [psalm]</li> <li>- Scans of copies of prints by Adams', which Freeman sent to Nicky Drumbolis.</li> </ul>	[197-] April 21, 1976  [197-]
Oversized Folder 1	Li-Po. "Poem by the bridge at Ten-Shin." Signed N.A.	March 18, 1976
Oversized Folder 1	A. M. Klein. "Krieghoff: Calligrammes." Hand-set in Janson type from the collection of Massey College. Printed by Nelson Adams at the Dreadnaught Press, Toronto.	[197-]

<b>SERIES 2:</b> Letterpress materials hand-printed by Shelley Freeman during her time as a student and employee at CHP, as well as related project materials.		
<b>BOX: FOLDER</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>DATE(S)</b>
1:10	French language letterpress-printed materials:  Victor Hugo, "A qui la faute?" Printed in French by Shelley Freeman at Dreadnaught Press, Toronto.  Charles Baudelaire, "Spleen,." Printed in French, with accompanying English translation by William Aggeler.	April 1975  [197-]
1:11	Artists' statement (including printed photographs) for folding artists' book <i>Coach House 'College' ... and Beyond</i> , by Shelley Freeman. The book reflects on her time at CHP. Created for the "Forces irrésistibles / Irresistible Forces" exhibition at Galerie de la Ville in Dollard-des-Ormeaux, Quebec.	October 16, 2016.
Oversized Folder 1	John Milton. Inscription in the Great Hall, Hart House, University of Toronto. Hand-set and printed by Margot Griffin & Shelley Freeman at the CHP. Number 4 of 4 limited edition copies.	March 1975

<b>SERIES 3:</b> Photographs of the space and staff at CHP and York University between 1973-1975. All black and white, unless otherwise noted. Extent: 23 photographs.		
<b>BOX: FOLDER</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>DATE(S)</b>
<b>1:12—Photographs of Nelson Adams and CHP staff, c. 1974-1975. Extent: 7 photographs.</b>		
1:12	Snowshoeing with Nelson Adams in Vanderplatts' Fields Hudson Heights, Québec. [2 photographs].	December 1974
1:12	Staff at CHP picnic table. Left to right: Margot Griffin, Glenn Goluska, John Ormsby, Sheila MacPherson, Kathy Doody and Diane Scally [2 photographs].	July 1975

**FREEMAN (Shelley) Papers**

1:12	Glen Goluska, John Ormsby, Sheila MacPherson, Margot Griffin and Kathy Doody gathered around picnic table at CHP.	July 1975
1:12	Bill Young, Rick Simons and John Ormsby sitting at picnic table at CHP.	July 1975
1:12	Shelley Freeman, Glenn Goluska, John Ormsby, Sheila MacPherson, Kathy Doody and Diane Scally sitting on picnic table at CHP. [Colour photograph].	July 1975
<b>1:13—Exterior views of CHP, 1975. Extent: 4 photographs.</b>		
1:13	CHP as viewed from the laneway, with view of Rochdale College in background.	1975
1:13	CHP front door.	Winter 1975
1:13	View of the CHP main building from the laneway.	1975
1:13	Laneway between CHP main building and the storage building, as seen from the laneway.	1975
<b>1:14—Interior views of CHP, 1975. Extent: 10 photographs.</b>		
1:14	Heidelberg Press at CHP.	1975
1:14	Vandercook letterpress at CHP.	1975
1:14	Linotype and letterpress at CHP.	1975
1:14	Margot Griffin at CHP, typesetting broadsides after work.	1975
1:14	Freeman's desk at CHP.	1974
1:14	Freeman's desk—light table, at CHP.	1975
1:14	Receptionist's desk near the front entrance of CHP—Diane Scally's desk.	1975
1:14	Paper stock at CHP.	1975
1:14	Printed book ready to go to binders, CHP.	1975
1:14	The washroom at CHP: The toilet was hidden behind the buckets.	1975

Ms  
Coll  
00193C

**FREEMAN (Shelley) Papers**

<b>1:15—Typography classroom at York University, 1973-1974. Extent: 2 photographs.</b>		
1:15	Typography Room at York University. Cases of fonts in the Typography course classroom where Stan Bevington and Nelson Adams taught Shelley Freeman.	1973-1974
1:15	Printing presses at York University in the Typography course classroom where Stan Bevington and Nelson Adams taught Shelley Freeman.	1973-1974