Reconstruction of a Wooden Common Press

PROJECT SUMMARY
The Cary Graphic Arts Collection challenged the team to produce a fully functioning wooden common press representative of a specific time period within the 18th Century.

PROJECT SPONSER: Melbert B. Cary Graphic Arts Collection
TIME SCHEDULE: 1770-1790
SCHEDULE: 32 Weeks
BUDGET: ~$15,000

TEAM MEMBERS (L-R):
Daniel Krull (Muse.), Seth Gottlieb (ME), Ferris Nicolais (ME), Veronica Hebbard (ISE), Randall Paulhamus (ME)
TEAM GUIDE: John Kaemmerlen

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RESEARCH JOURNEY
Today, fewer than 90 wooden presses pre-dating 1820 exist in the world. The team traveled across the northeastern United States as well as Canada to examine, document, measure, and photograph four existing presses and one reconstruction. These presses, in addition to documentation of presses held overseas, formed the basis upon which the final product was designed and produced.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
Melbert B. Cary, Jr. Graphic Arts Collection, RIT Library; Ron Schroder, Mackenzie Printery and Newspaper Museum; Stephen Sword; Karel van der Waarde; Susan Rigs, Earl Gregg Swem Library at College of William & Mary; Jackie Calder, Vermont Historical Society; Barbara Rimkunas, Exeter Historical Society; Gary Gregory, Printing Office of Edes & Gill; Bridget Sullivan and Jennifer Robinson, Newport Historical Society; Hugh Macfarlane; Paul Moxon, American Printing History Association; Dr. Mark Sanders, Emeritus, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University; Matthew Schofield, Ron Maguire, Geneseo Country Village & Museum; Stephen Spector, S. F. Spector Inc.; KGCOE Mechanical Engineering Machine Shop; Audrey Glasgow, Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums, Duke Besozzi, New England Naval Timbers; Brent Feldweg, Forest All Consulting.

CONSTRUCTION
The press was made using traditional construction methods such as woodworking and blacksmithing. All wooden parts were scraped with minor sanding and finished with oil for historical accuracy. Metal was forged from low-carbon steel and coated with a homemade mixture of linseed oil, turpentine, and beeswax.

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