Clara Toppan
The late Clara Toppan (1910-2001), who was married to Frederick W. Toppan (who died in 1966), has been the sole financial benefactor of the Toppan Rare Books Library. Clara Toppan donated more than 4,000 books that now form the core of the rare books library of the American Heritage Center: important collections of fishing, hunting, and British and American literature. Her monetary donations, after the initial bequest of the books, began when the new American Heritage Center was built in 1993. Her support continues with a generous endowment. Curator Anne Marie Lane says, “Mrs. Toppan gave the seed money to start the rare books program. We would not be here, the books would not be here, were it not for Clara. She was the absolute force behind this.”

Colket Room
The Colket Room is located inside the entrance to the Toppan Library. Charles Howard Colket (1859-1924) traveled the world beginning in 1879 when he journeyed by horseback from Beirut to Bagdad. Some of the archaeological and ethnological artifacts acquired during these travels, as well as those from trips with his wife Almira after 1890, are on display in colorful Egyptian-style cases. Everything was donated to the University of Wyoming through the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Tristram C. Colket, II, who had originally brought the items from the family home in Philadelphia when they moved to Sheridan, Wyoming.

Some of these can be seen on the Toppan Library Web site at http://ahc.uwyo.edu/about/departments/toppan.htm:

- A clay cuneiform tablet from Mesopotamia.
- A papyrus fragment from an Egyptian Book of the Dead.
- Several illuminated manuscript Korans.
- Several complete European illuminated manuscripts from the 1400s.
- Early exploration books by Captain John Smith, Sir Walter Raleigh, De Bry, Lewis and Clark, Hakluyt, Mackenzie, Parry, and Captain Cook.
- A fishing book with actual tied flies that are more than 100 years old.

Students studying one of the books from the Toppan Rare Books Library, American Heritage Center.

Illuminated Flemish prayer book from the 1400s.
Fore-edge painting on a book by Lord Byron, 1821.
Fringed buckskin binding on a book by Herbert Myrick, 1905.

Colket Room, adjacent to the Toppan Rare Books Library, American Heritage Center.

The Colket Room, American Heritage Center collections.
**Toppan Numbers**

- ca. 3000 BCE—estimated age of oldest item in Toppan Library, a cuneiform tablet from Mesopotamia.
- ca. 650 BCE—estimated age of oldest illustrated text in Toppan Library, a fragment from the Egyptian Book of the Dead.
- 1-1/2 x 1-1/4 x 1/2", 20th century—smallest book in collection, a Mexican Bible.
- 8,000—Toppan Library books currently cataloged on-line.

**Individual Collections**

Most of the material in the library is donated. Named collections are kept intact and include:

- Frederick W. Toppan Collection.
- Charles and Paul Clay Collection.
- Beatrice Beuf Collection.
- William Fitzhugh Collection.
- Lloyd Taggart Collection.
- Joseph Roebling Collection.
- Tristram and Charles Howard Colket Collection.
- Owen Wister Collection.
- Lewis Einstein Collection.
- C. C. Kuehn Collection.
- Maud Littleton Collection.
- Lewis Knapp Collection.
- Wilbur, Emma, and S. H. Knight Collection.
- Arthur and Helen Rippey Collection.
- Revilo Pendleton Oliver Collection.
- Walter Levy Collection.
- Louise Jackson Collection.
- Ed and Shirley Cheramy Collection.

**Service**

Walk-in visitors, as well as researchers, are encouraged and everyone is welcome to look through the collection at no charge. However, as classes and presentations are often held in the library, it is advisable to call or e-mail to make an appointment if you have specific needs. We ask that backpacks, large purses, food, and drink be left in the lobby lockers. Researchers will need to present a photo I.D. and no pens are allowed (pencils are provided).

**Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead fragment, Colket Collection.**

**Toppan Rare Books Library**

American Heritage Center

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**Business Hours**

Toppan Library
M-F: 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
American Heritage Center
M-F: 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

For questions not relating to donations of collections, contact our Reference Department
307-766-3756

Promotional brochure from the Northern Pacific Railway Co., 1885.

The Toppan Rare Books Library at the American Heritage Center is home to UW’s rare books collection, consisting of more than 50,000 items, including all of the University Libraries’ pre-1850 books. The majority of the collection consists of printed books, and also includes newspapers, magazines, illuminated manuscripts, and other materials. Subjects collected include the American West, British and American literature, history, exploration, world travel, religion, hunting and fishing, natural history, women authors, and examples of the book arts and book history.