Mimeograph vs Hectograph Printing

by Jack Kallmeyer with help from Greg Hand

If you've read the file explaining the variations in the "Cincinnati Fossils, Elementary Guide" book through time, you will have seen reference to two types of printing - Mimeograph and Hectograph. I had always heard that the original 1939 version of the Elementary Guide had been printed by mimeograph. Up until Greg educated me on this, I had always associated mimeographs with the stinky purple ink handouts from my early school days. Just so you know, here are the differences.

Both printing types use a stencil or master as the original. These could be typed on or drawn on. That is where the similarity ends.

The hectograph master was only good for a very limited number of prints. This is the process that used the smelly solvent and purple ink. This machine was commonly known as a "ditto machine" or "spirit duplicator."

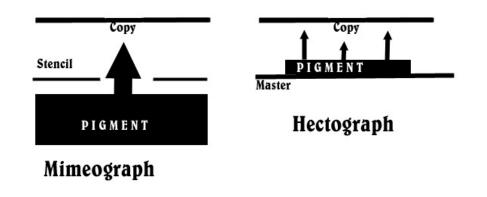
The mimeograph stencil was good for an almost unlimited number of copies making it quite useful for printing many copies of the Elementary Guide. The printing ink was black and the prints could pass for a modern Xerox copy although not as sharp. The early Dry Dredgers bulletins were reproduced by this method at least until Xerography became more widespread.

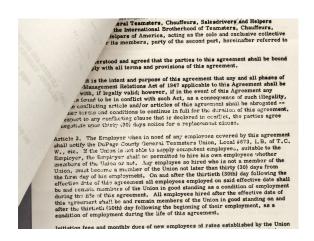




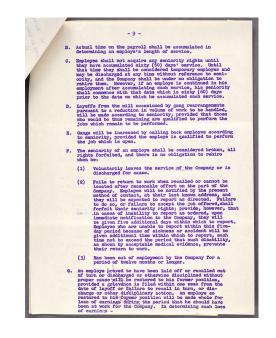
Mimeograph with blue colored stencil

Hectograph with cream colored master





Print example from a Mimeographic printer



Print example from a Hectographic printer