



Our History

How Panaprint Began

It was during the Reconstruction Era following the Civil War that John W. Burk ventured into the printing business in Macon, Georgia. A print shop in those days still resembled the primitive environment of Gutenberg, the inventor of moveable type. Fe presses were powered by anything other than a hand wheel or foot pedal, and type was composed by hand, one letter at a time.

The Burke Company built a good reputation and grew to become one of Georgia's leading printers. By the 1920's, they occupied a prominent building on Cherry Street and had installed electric presses. They did a full line of commercial printing, and book printing was their specialty. The skills of their craftsmen were well known.

Edward W. Burke, great nephew of the founder, spent most of his youth in China where his father WAS A Methodist missionary. As a young man, he came to Macon to work at the Burke Company. After an apprenticeship, he became a salesman for the company and later managed their printing operations. Upon the closing of the Burke Company in 1959, Edward and many of the company's craftsmen joined Southern Press. There he was held in high esteem and contributed significantly to that company's success through his sales efforts.

Southern Press was formed in 1954, when John Jenkins, Edward Fluker and Russell Zimmerman purchased the printing operations then owned by American Office Equipment Company. Jenkins was a publisher of the

Livestock Breeders Journal, Fluker was a talented graphic designer and functioned as their sales manager, and Zimmerman was a letterpress craftsman and served as general manager. The combined talents of these men led to rapid growth of the company. It was one of the first printers in the Southeast to utilize offset presses. The company gained prominence when it purchased most of the assets of the Burke Company in 1959, and hired many of the company's employees.

Wanzie Collins joined the Livestock Breeders Journal in 1961, where he worked in ad layout and composition. He also worked some in the bindery of Southern Press to earn extra money. In 1968, he transferred from Livestock Breeders Journal into Southern Press. Later that year, Mr. Burk retired and Wanzie assumed his accounts.

In 1973, the opportunity came for Wanzie to purchase a small, 4 man printing company. He named the company OmniPress, Inc. "Omni" is a Latin prefix meaning "covering all". Customers were loyal and the company prospered. In 1979, he was able to purchase Southern Press. That acquisition included a heat set web publication press. By 1985, the name had evolved to Panaprint, Inc.

W. Everette "Rette" Collins and Christian T. Collins both joined the company fulltime in 1988.