

## The Origins of the Friends of the Crawford Library

In 1983, The Crawford Family Library was founded at the Valve Manufacturers Association, thanks to a \$25,000 endowment from the Crawford Foundation of Chicago. The head of the foundation, William F. Crawford, was a long-time valve manufacturer who, as he stated in announcing the VMA endowment, spent a lot of “productive hours on valve industry activities both in VMA and in Washington, and abroad.” Crawford’s background in the valve industry was a significant factor in the development of the library, which includes many historical documents donated by Crawford’s foundation.

The endowment led the way for development of the Crawford Library at the headquarters of the Valve Manufacturers Association in Washington, DC. Initially, the library began with including industry reports, historical statistical information, valve company catalogs and VMA information gathered from the Crawford family files and the VMA office files. Over the years, the library has acquired material donations from valve manufacturing companies and valve-related organizations and companies.

In addition to the historical materials The Crawford Foundation donated to VMA, the Crawford family devoted time and expertise to both the association and the U.S. valve industry. Crawford’s father, William W. Crawford, was active in the valve industry from 1920 until his death in 1941. He was known for his post-World War I metallurgical research for high-pressure and high-temperature valves.

In keeping with his father’s involvement in the valve industry, the young William F. Crawford initially became involved in 1926 and retired from daily operations in 1974. He took over the presidency of the Edward Valve and Manufacturing Co., East Chicago, IN, from his father in 1941. In May 1945, the company was sold to Pittsburg Equitable Meter Co., which became Rockwell International. Crawford served as director of Rockwell from 1945-1979 and president of VMA from 1959-1961 and 1964-1965.

In addressing VMA members at the 1982 Fall Meeting, Crawford reflected on his younger days and his involvement in the valve industry:

*“Today, I suspect few in this industry have all the same opportunities I had early on - or the chance to travel much of the world peddling valves...As a youngster I was fortunate. I was able to wander about shops of founding, forging, machining, assembly and testing... I also, with my father, visited other valve factories. That’s something I’ve continued to do around the world for more than half a century.*”

*“I was raised on the fundamental that I should put my working hours only into a business or service that was honorable, or useful to humanity, and financially healthy and rewarding in the bad as well as in the good years. I surely had more good than bad years in your industry.”*

For more than a quarter-century, The Crawford Family Library at VMA has been a valuable resource to those wanting to learn about the valve industry, thanks to the dedication and generosity of the Crawford Foundation. William F. Crawford passed away in 2001, but his legacy leaves on.

*The above was adapted from an article published in the Winter 1982 edition of Valve Magazine.*