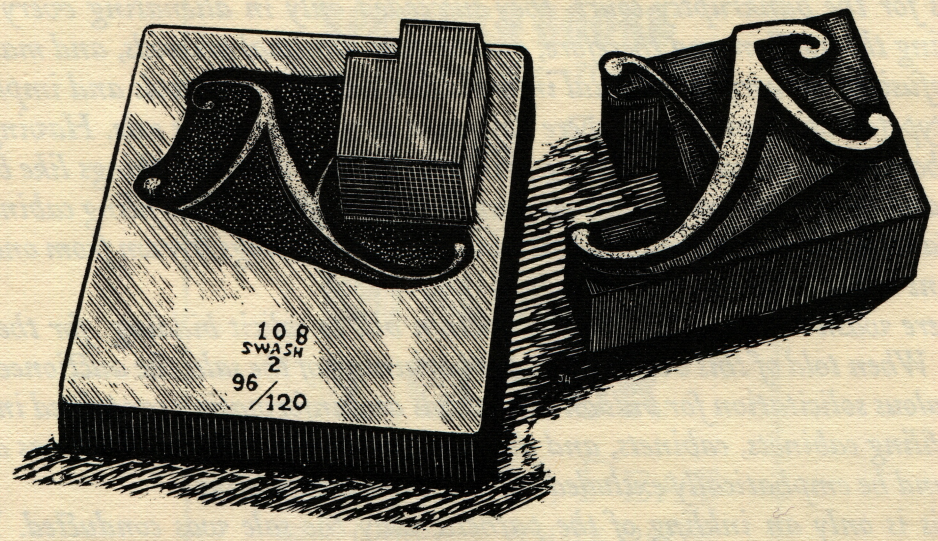
American Type Founders



A Final Farewell

American Typecasting Fellowship

Newsletter 17

A Painful Tale to Recount

Ten months after the ATF sale, I still am having bad dreams about how the event transpired, and still was putting myself through futile mental exercises of how it might have been done better. Never before had I been so close to such an historic archive; to witness its total and callous destruction at the hands of incompetent dimwits surely will continue to disturb my slumber for years to come.

The dimwits were the auctioneers, a father-son team perfectly matched to assure confusion, disgust, and repulsion. Though charged with maximizing cash receipts for the bankruptcy court, they succeeded only in alienating every person attending the auction and therefore, guaranteed minimal proceeds, and maximizing confusion. So very much vital information and so many tools and implements of the typefounding profession were destroyed as a result of the sale. Having spent many hours over the years studying primary research sources—things like business letters and company records—I was dumfounded to find ATF's filing cabinets and miscellaneous boxes of records, patents and patent drawings strewn from one end of the plant to the other.

There wasn't even a "lot" on the auction bill to solicit bidding for these materials. When told of this oversight at the beginning of the sale, the auctioneer made a ridiculous solicitation for bids on the records and information contained in all the boxes, filing cabinets, cabinets, and drawers throughout the building—as a single bid—and he emphatically excluded the containers themselves!

This is only an inkling of the pathetic way the sale was conducted. Yet the enormity of the facility at ATF, and its very apparent disorder and abuse over recent years surely made the auctioneer's job nearly impossible anyway.

I keep telling myself "What's done is done." Yet every single telephone conversation I've had with anyone who attended the sale has revealed that the affair profoundly distressed us all. It was just awful. No words will ever adequately interpret the event. Still, one must try, and that's the principal purpose of this issue of the ATF Newsletter.

—Rich Hopkins

This 18th issue of the American Typecasting Fellowship *Newsletter* is produced in June, 1994, by Richard L. Hopkins, P. O. Box 263, Terra Alta, West Virginia 26764. You may have your name added to the mailing list for future issues (produced occasionally), by sending $10.00 to the editor ($20.00 for overseas delivery). Bulk of the text in this issue is produced via Aldus Pagemaker 5.0 on the PC. The font used is Adobe Caslon, specially configured with ligatures, oldstyle figures, etc., utilizing a nifty (though perhaps flawed) piece of Monotype software called "Font Mixer." Because of the volume of material to be reported, this entire issue was done by offset. A wood engraving was done especially for this edition by Jim Horton of Ann Arbor, Michigan. The engraving depicts the original brass matrix from ATF, along with a cored 120-point N cast from that matrix. The block to fill the area of the "core," as you see, was actually part of the matrix. This matrix now is part of Rich's extensive collection of ATF, Lanston Monotype, English Monotype and original pivotal matrices.

American Typecasting Fellowship Newsletter

NUMBER 18 JUNE, 1994

July Conference in California a 'Go'

Next month's biennial conference of the American Typecasting Fellowship, scheduled for July 15-17 with technical sessions immediately following on July 18 and 19, will be staged at the International Printing Museum at Buena Park, Calif.

The museum, which has an excellent collection of *working* linecasting machinery, will naturally have emphasis on this equipment, with opportunity for hands-on experience. Mark Barbour, curator of the museum, is serving as host. He has promised demonstrations of early Linotypes, Intertypes, the Linograph, Thompson typecaster, the extremely rare Linotype Junior, Typograph, Unitype, Fotosetter, Monophoto and the Ludlow.

Mark has warned all that a block of motel rooms at the nearby Holiday Inn, will be held open only through June 21. A World Cup soccer tournament is scheduled for the Buena Park area at the same time, and motel facilities are in very short supply. You may contact the motel direct by calling (714) 522-7000.

The conference is open to all interested individuals. A fee of $150.00 covers all programs, continental breakfasts, lunches, and the Saturday banquet. An additional $50.00 will cover the technical sessions.

While still in the planning stages, the schedule already has confirmations for speakers including Corban Goble (speaking on Mark Twain's nemesis the Paige Compositor), Carl Schlesinger (speaking on Ottmar Mergenthaler's interesting and frustrating life), Bill Davis (from Monotype Typography, speaking on type design modern and old), Pat Reagh (photopolymer plates), as well as others including Mark Barbour, Rich Hopkins, Bill Berkuda (Linotype practical sessions), Paul Duensing, and others.

Theo Rehak has promised a video presentation regarding his revival of the legendary Barth typecaster and his continuation of the American Type Founders tradition at his Howell, N. J., facility. He has engraved a 72-point matrix for a keepsake emblem (shown oversized at left) on the last-remaining "adcut pantograph" bought at the ATF auction.

The keynote address on Saturday evening will be by Ernie Lindner, whose magnificent collection of linecasting equipment makes up a significant portion of the International Printing Museum.

If you haven't already made reservations, you should take action immediately.

If you plan to attend, don't forget the traditional exchange of keepsakes at ATF conferences. Print and bring at least 60 copies. And also, you're encouraged to bring slides of your shop for viewing Friday evening.

Inside this Edition

The American Type Founders Auction 2
Did It Have to Happen? 17
Odds 'n Ends Acquired at ATF 18
ATF Tools & Implements Preserved 19
Commentary on ATF Matrices 20
Earliest Lanston Patents Books Saved 21
On Hardness of Type Metal 22
Mac McGrew's 'Type Bible' Reviewed 24
Rehak's Practical Typecasting Reviewed 26
Typecasting Study Program Proposed 28
Statistical Report on Lead Poisoning 36
News & Comments from Correspondents 37
Jim Rimmer Revives 'Goudy Bible' 38

American Type Founders Company

A Troubled Report On Its Demise

THE GRANDDADDY OF EVERYTHING related to letterpress printing—and particularly hand composition—was laid to rest August 24, 1993, with the bankruptcy auctioning of the Kingsley/American Type Founders organization of Elizabeth, N J.

The event itself was attended by about 150 souls who were either deeply concerned about the great heritage up for sale, or were metal dealers and junkers who had descended on ATF like vultures waiting to devour the kill. Modesty prevents him from taking credit, but those closest to the situation realize that Theo Rehak of Howell, N.J., was chiefly responsible for the sale being held at all. The trustee initially had opted to abandon the plant and equipment by assigning it to ATF's landlord, the Purepac Pharmaceutical Company, which owned the premises; Purepac occupied the first two floors of the building and leased the top floor to ATF. Though the building had been erected by ATF's Kelly Press Division in the 1920's, ATF had lost ownership of the building many years ago. Kingsley/ATF apparently had not paid its monthly lease since March 31, 1991.

My first hint that the century-old tradition called American Type Founders was coming to an end was a call in the spring of 1993 from Theo. He was sure bankruptcy was looming—he just didn't know when. Then came his late-night call sometime in April, when he reported corporate executives from California had marched into the plant and announced closing at the end of work that day. Theo had been an employee for a dozen years and thus, was present when the announcement was made. (Chapter 7 bankruptcy papers were filed May 19, 1993.)



Symbol of a proud manufacturing organization thrown amidst the rubble of the foundry.

Apparently he was the only person within the company concerned about the future of the equipment, matrices, and "tradition" of ATF. Theo had made it his business to try to keep abreast of events at the foundry from various perspectives, including Kingsley corporate shenanigans in California, relations with the Purepac company (ATF's landlord), and indeed, with George Gasparik, the long-reigning, cantankerous general manager. Kingsley made an effort to move select pieces of equipment to California prior to declaration of bankruptcy, but either the landlord or bank officials halted the effort.

The landlord, obviously upset about delays caused by the bankruptcy and the prospect of never being reimbursed for many months of unpaid rent, moved in on the foundry right after it was closed, taking over the entire forward area originally occupied by ATF offices, randomly dumping filing cabinets, desks, and other office equipment into the aisles of the foundry and into the bathrooms, completely blocking access to many areas.

Once this was discovered, the trustee took legal steps to get the encroachment stopped, but an extensive renovation project was clearly visible (definitely off-limits) to those attending the sale. Theo was in close contact with all parties, trying to preserve as much as possible. At one juncture, he discovered absolutely no security at the abandoned facility, and found

The Barth casting area with pivotal molds in the foreground. Only about a third of the casting facility is shown in this view.



that vandals had entered and trashed one area, which included the specimen book collection.

The Trustee's First Notice

The first announcement of trustee action reflected an inflated appraisal of ATF's facility and "good will," which had served to underwrite loans against ATF assets granted to Kingsley in 1988 totaling $650,000. The trustee was seeking broad-ranging bids or proposals from parties on things such as the various copyrights and patents owned by the company, the digital type activities (which were largely botched and ineffective), the matrix collection, the machinery, and the cast type on the shelves. This announcement was sent to only a few persons and those names apparently were provided by Theo Rehak, whom the trustee consulted and employed to assist in the sale—one of the few intelligent moves made during the entire ordeal.

Hal Sterne of Cincinnati, who a year earlier had inaugurated a new business called NA Graphics (which among other things was selling ATF type), was very interested in acquiring the finished stock on ATF's shelves. On receiving the first announcement, he made an appointment to inventory the stock. When he arrived, he found all aisles blocked with materials thrown out of the office area by the landlord. It was well over 100 degrees in the closed, lifeless third-floor facility. He was unable to do more than gaze at the stock from a distance.

The auction was an on-again, off-again affair for several weeks. In the midst of all the turmoil, Stan Nelson and Elizabeth Harris of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington were trying to get possession of the foundry's matrices. Three possibilities existed. First was transferring all matrices to the Smithsonian. A second possiblity was that only designated "obsolete" matrices would go to Washington. And a final, very real possibility was that no matrices would go to Washington.

I confess I was greatly disturbed by the prospects of the entire ATF library going to the Smithsonian. In my estimation, such a move would guarantee that all ATF designs would be kept away from future utilization, and would totally void anyone's desire to have a Barth or pivotal typecasting machine from ATF, for there would be no prospect of having matrices to use with the machine. A tremendous collection of largely Victorian faces was donated to the Smithsonian several years ago by American Type Founders and to date, no way has been devised to enable access to these matrices for even the most limited revival. I cringed to think this might have happened to all remaining ATF matrices. But at the same time, I could only commend the Smithsonian for pursuing tenuous and treacherous negotiations, attempting to save the matrices from destruction.

On-Again, Off-Again "Deals"

In mid-July, a deal was "on," Stan said; the Smithsonian was to get *all* the matrices. He arranged to have skids, packing materials, etc., delivered to the ATF plant and a group of volunteers was to be there to get the wrapping done in preparation for shipment to Washington. This deal was cancelled literally within hours of when I was to leave for New Jersey. The legendary mystery, confusion, and intrigue in dealing with ATF was far from dead.

Personnel working at the foundry had shown only contempt for its irreplaceable holdings. On more than one occasion in the past, the thought of selling mats for their value as junk brass nearly prevailed.

During the period when White Consolidated Industries owned ATF, George Gasparic had drawn up a list of some 1,400 drawers of matrices he considered "obsolete" and pledged to donate them to the Smithsonian in good time. That transfer never took place and now the Smithsonian was feverishly maneuvering to at least get these mats before the sale.

The Auction Is Announced

A few days later I received word from Theo that an auction really was going to happen and he provided a tentative date: August 24, 1993.

Then Stan reported another deal was "on." Under supervision of a representative of the trustee, he would be allowed to remove only matrices pledged to the Smithsonian several years earlier by WCI. Stan and his volunteers

An Affair Begun in 1954

Television was a novelty in 1954 when I was in junior high school. I recall receiving my first ATF catalog in that year and lounging on the sofa beside the TV fleeting away literally hours and days studying that catalog trying to learn what *type* was all about. The rest of the family was enthralled with the TV.

I could see only the many lines *"Pack my box with five dozen jugs,"* wondering all the while what a "jug" had to do with type. Being an unsuspecting teenager, I didn't realize that sentence contained every letter of the alphabet; the text didn't pertain to typefounding. I made out my first order for ATF type (from the Cincinnati sales office) for about $30.00, buying it with funds earned as a carrier boy for the local daily newspaper. I still have all the fonts purchased back then—and they're in excellent shape.

were to be at the foundry to get the work done at 9 a.m. sharp on August 10th. How and when it was decided I would be a member of the team has now escaped me, but when asked, I decided I'd *have* to find a way to be there. Never before, and never again would I have the chance to actually work in the hallowed halls of ATF, or get a chance to look at the operation close-up.

A seven-hour drive on Sunday was uneventful. My destination was Howell, N. J., and Theo Rehak's home, where he graciously volunteered housing and hospitality for me, Dan Carr of Ashtuelot Village, N. H., Stan Nelson and Stan's son, Matthew, from Columbia, Md. Under other circumstances, it would have been impossible to pull me away from Theo's phenomenally well-equipped, orderly shop. But I confess we spent precious little time allowing Theo to do a "dog-and-pony show"; all of us were too concerned about what was soon to happen at ATF. Theo was unable to join us for the trip to ATF the next day, but he did all he could to brief us on what we would encounter. Conversation went far too late that night, considering the work ahead of us the next morning.

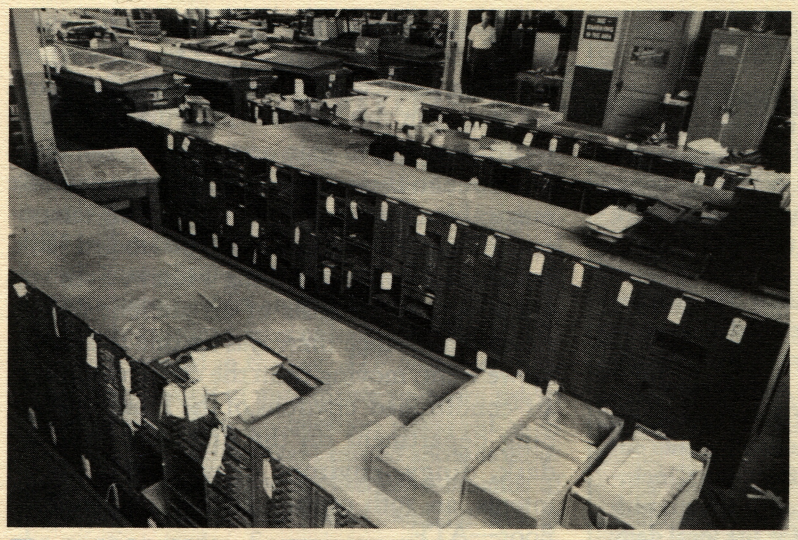
Stan was the driver. His teenage son, Matthew, Dan and I were the passengers. Stan had directions from Theo and much to our delight, he drove right to the ATF door without a single wrong turn. Anton, the trustee's representative, arrived almost the same instant, and we all began our hassle with Purepak's tight security, trying to gain access to the building. Someone in their organization finally gave the magical command and we were given temporary ID tags. I was amused to be labeled "Rik, Smithson Insn." Next thing I knew, Stan was grabbing the controls of an ancient freight elevator and since there was no one to stop us, up we went, moving from the clean, varnished, air-conditioned environs of the Purepak shipping department on the first floor into the dark, dingy, environs of what was for all intents, an 19th century factory, on the third floor—ATF.

Packing Up the Smithsonian Mats

We were eager to explore, yet we knew we had a job to do, and were at the forbearance of Anton, whom we all knew would be calling the shots. Stan led us directly to the matrix "vaults" and began spreading out the wrapping paper, tape, and other tools we were to use. The "vault" term always has been used in referring to ATF's matrix storage area, but in reality it was an unrestricted area near the rear of the very large room. Matrices were neatly arranged in four waist-high cabinets each between 30 and 40 feet long and made of steel. They contained thousands of half-inch-deep drawers arranged from the floor up. I hesitate to speculate on the weight these matrices represented, but ATF obviously was keenly aware of it, for each cabinet was strategically placed on an inch-thick steel plate which spanned from one major reinforced concrete joist to the next under this third-floor room.

After brief instructions, Stan left Matthew, Dan and me to work out how we would go about packing the drawers. Stan would work directly with Anton, pulling designated drawers and stacking them on top of the cabinets. Only a few minutes of their work revealed just how much work was ahead for us.

Once drawers were pulled, we were to wrap them in kraft paper, and stack them neatly on wood pallets for steel banding in preparation for shipment to Washington. Stan had



The matrix "vault" area at ATF, complete with auction tags labeling the various "lots." That's Stan Nelson barely visible in the background.

thoroughly studied the issue of weight. He'd calculated the average drawer to contain 12 pounds, and figured we should pack no more than 162 drawers on a skid. That would bring each to about a ton. He figured he would need to haul five tons spread over five skids.

There was a lot of work ahead of us, but we could not suppress the urge to at least glance at the goodies we were packing. One person would comment on a font in hand, and others would come to gawk.

A veritable history of typefounding in America was passing through our hands as we worked. "Drew" from Inland Type Foundry, the orginal "Bookman" matrices from the Bruce foundry. Numerous fonts from Barnhart Brothers & Spindler. "Cushing" from the Boston Type Foundry, and "Curtis Post" from MacKellar, Smiths and Jordan. Each was laid out in its appropriate drawer, topped with a detailed inventory sheet telling which foundry it came from, which mold would need to be used, and miscellaneous details such as when extra characters were added, or when a matrix was replaced or recut.

There also were ornaments—oh, so many ornaments. I was particularly intrigued with the 120-point "Colonial Printer" cuts which have graced so many printers' letterheads over the years. Included were two variations which I didn't recall seeing in ATF specimen books.

About 10 a.m., Barbara Henry (of the South Street Seaport Museum in New York City) arrived to help as we continued to wrap and stack the drawers on skids. Only a few years previously, a special casting of "Scotch Roman" had been done for her museum and Barbara wanted to see the matrices. They were included amongst those on Stan's list, so eventually she got her chance. I halted upon finding the complete "Authors Roman" series from BB&S. An overflowing case of 12 pt. Authors Roman purchased in 1952 was the first non-ATF font of type I'd ever encountered. For a brief instant, I had the matrices in my hands used so many years ago to cast that font of type (which I still have). Dan Carr halted on finding several drawers containing very large sizes (72, 96 and 120-point) of what he exclaimed to be "the ugliest typeface I ever have seen." I glanced and said it was "Publicity Gothic" from BB&S. Why I could recall the name in an instant was beyond me.

Benevolent Overseer

Anton was captivated by our intense interest in the matrices and with our knowledge of ATF's history. He was a good listener and quickly became aware of our desire to see more of the foundry. He was tolerant of our wandering away from the matrix area from time to time in order to get a better look at the facility. The auctioneer already had tagged items for the sale, but the sale bill itself wasn't available. Nevertheless, this short encounter with the facility helped us brief others concerning what an enormous, confused jumble we all would face at the sale. It was during the solitude of these forays into the foundry that I was able to take the still photos (and a video) until I exhausted my film/video supply.

Still, we kept to our task and by the end of the second day, had all matrices for the

Smithsonian stacked and banded on five skids ready for pickup later that week. Dan and I both departed, with very mixed emotions about what our individual strategies would be when the sale came. Dan was very seriously considering not coming at all. "It's just too much," he said, "and against all logic I find myself toying with getting mats and a Barth and a Benton pantograph and I don't think I can afford either the money or stress of bidding at the auction."

About Casting Type on the Barth

Theo had done a good job of explaining ATF's complex facility to us. Apparently some effort had been made when ATF was first established in 1892 to create standards for matrix drives, etc. But as ATF continued to merge in massive additional foundries, such as BB&S, the effort was diluted. Machines were moved in to accommodate specific matrices and drives. And in succeeding years if those machines didn't seem adequately utilized, new letter designs were cut to match the machines and thus, keep them busy. That's how ATF ended up with several 18 point machines, for example, with each being paired off only to specific matrices. Thus, to effectively cast on a Barth machine, one would have to acquire the specific machine designated for casting the matrices you might also have acquired. And italics always were cut to a deeper drive than their roman counterparts.

Eighteen point Baskerville Roman and Italic would require two separate machines. Theo also explained that changing a mold on a Barth caster was a complicated and tedious procedure that rarely was done. One should not expect to change the mold on a Barth, he admonished.

With this in mind, I resolved that I would not bid on Barth casters. Still, I entertained the idea time and again. A two-ton hulk with such limited use would not be very practical in my hobby shop—assuming anything already there could be considered practical. Instead, I would concentrate on finding a way to cast foundry matrices on my Monotype machines, and Theo counseled me on that matter too. In his shop he demonstrated the "Hacker Block Leveler" made by the Vandercook company years earlier. Originally it had been made for trimming the base of electrotypes and sterotypes, but typefounders found the machine capable of milling the feet of type to get type to .918". This was important in the 1950's when European type (which was taller than American type), was being imported to the U. S. ATF had such a machine for milling the fonts ATF imported, and I made it my goal to obtain that machine.

Already having over 200 fonts of foundry matrices on hand from my acquisitions in January, 1993, at the Kelsey Company, I busied myself during my long trip back to West Virginia mentally working out a plan for a matrix holder for my Supercaster.

I hardly recall the long trip, for with haunting intensity, I was going through the mental ordeal of trying to bring all my fantasies associated with ATF into perspective with the practical considerations related to the sale. Though saving the foundry in its entirety would be a laudable goal, it was not physically possible—either for an individual or a group of individuals. Financial considerations aside, it simply was too massive, too complex, and undeniably impractical.

Federal bankrupty auctions apparently are handled only by select organizations, and their experience seems to have little bearing on the issue. One would have expected an auction house specializing in graphic arts liquidations to have been selected, but that was not the case. The auctioneer hadn't the foggiest notion of how to seek out interested parties, and thus, leaned heavily on Theo to provide names and addresses. This put Theo in great difficulty, for no single person could hope to know—or instantly recall—all prospective buyers. This also precipitated my feverish effort to complete an *ATF Newsletter* containing details of the pending auction. That was accomplished, though I fear the post office failed to get most copies out in time.

Time to Go to the Auction

Being a solid eight-hour drive away from Elizabeth, I was forced to anticipate my success at the auction, and rent an appropriately

sized U-Haul truck before departure for the auction. As I bounced down the highway in that rattling 28-foot aluminum can, I was haunted by the thought of coming away from the sale empty-handed, with the rental cost and all that discomfort going for naught.

I was to drive to Allentown, Pa., where I would rally with Dave Peat and Dave Churchman, who would be traveling together from Indianapolis. I spotted Dave Peat's distinctive "TYPENUT" license plate as I rolled along Interstate 78 near Harrisburg, but unable to rouse his attention, opted just to follow him the last harrowing 70 miles to Allentown. The highway is one of several designated by Pennsylvania as an Interstate, though it isn't built to Interstate standards and the heavy night-time truck traffic on this direct-to-New-York corridor was feverish, moving at speeds far above the legal limit. My only option was to "go with the flow" though it was quite uncomfortable in the unfamiliar surroundings of the U-Haul.

We rallied as planned at Allentown, and spent a few hours discussing the next day. Dave Peat would lead in his van because he had a map reader (Dave Churchman). I would follow in the U-Haul. We crossed stretches of the Garden State Parkway we discovered restricted "no trucks." No alternate route was known, so we gambled (and weren't stopped).

"A bitchy matron was sitting at the top of the stairs, handing out lists of the 714 lots along with equal doses of heartburn. After much yelling and cursing, we all got registered and were issued a bid number. Little were we to know that this was the kindest encounter we were to have with the auctioneer and his staff."
—Dave Churchman

In Elizabeth, we found that Elmora Avenue circled the whole town and was a major artery. Though Dave Peat and I both had visited ATF previously, we were disgusted with ourselves at not being able to locate such a large building. An hour later, we finally found it and were delighted to see parking facilities had been set aside for auction attendees.

Quickly inside, familiar faces greeted us from all corners. It was a veritable meeting of the American Typecasting Fellowship. Everyone wanted to visit, but we also were aware we'd need every minute available if we were to delve into what actually was contained in the 714 designated lots.

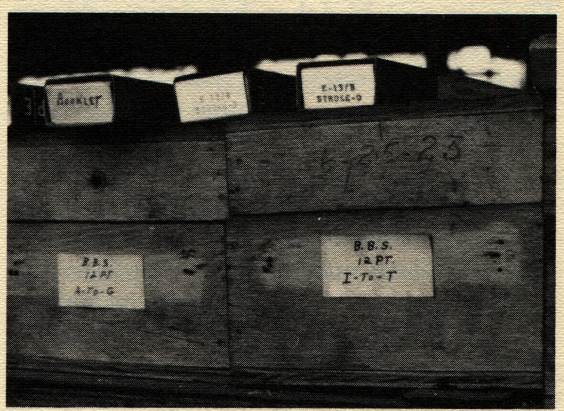
The "Viewing"

Pausing, looking out over the immense, quiet foundry, dual emotions haunted all of those who had reverence for this long-

"It was a case of sensory overload and a mild depression, knowing that by the morrow it would all be broken up and hauled away."
—Dave Churchman

standing giant of a typefoundry. First was the feeling of disbelief that we were actually within the facility, freely wandering around, looking into drawers, fiddling with machines, and peering into the workings of an organization we'd revered from afar. In many instances, we'd spent much of our adult lives poring over ATF catalogs, fondling ATF types, and fantasizing over somehow gaining a more intimate relationship with the people, the tools, and the equipment that had become so important to us.

All were astonished that so much of the foundry still existed, yet we were stunned by the chaos we discovered. Bankruptcy papers put the room's size at 50,000 square feet, and every square foot was thoroughly occupied. The foundry had suffered immense abuse and neglect in its final years. Copies of ATF's film about typemaking were thrown irreverently in



Plainly labeled BB&S implements found on a shelf, carrying the date 6-25-23.

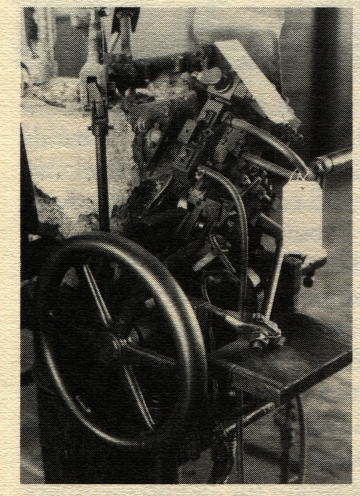
the corner of a junky cabinet. Dave Churchman found a matrix ATF had cut in the 1940's commemorating printing's 500th anniversary under trash on the floor in the women's restroom. Precision tools so essential to type-

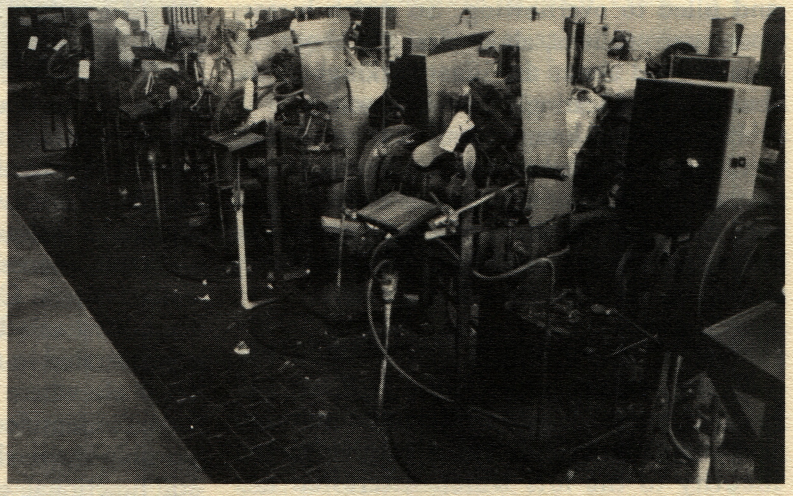
"All I saw was a handful of hopeful bidders and a long room full of doomed machinery awaiting the sledge hammer of progress. It boggled my mind that in 24 hours it would be little more than a footnote in history—a magnificent technology responsible for the dissemination of knowledge now sadly consigned to the dung heap of a scrapyard in eastern New Jersey." ***—Dave Churchman***

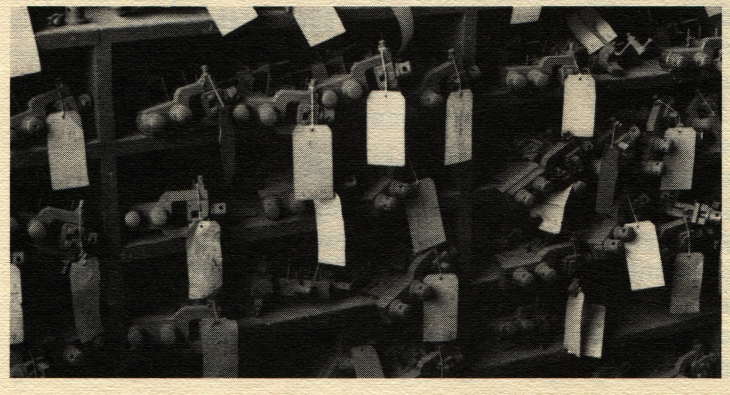
making were stashed in drawers, on shelves, and under litter throughout the facility.

Some had come from as far as California (Dan Solo, for example) for this rare opportunity and it was an overwhelming experience. Who ever would have thought that he might get the chance to look into cabinets containing alignment characters for every font of type ever manufactured by Barnhart Brothers & Spindler? Hadn't all that been destroyed in 1929 when the Chicago foundry was closed? Matrix fonts out of the Keystone foundry still existing? ATF never listed them. Weren't they destroyed when Keystone closed in 1919? And those fascinating stories about Laurence Johnson getting matrices for Caslon Old Style driven from original punches in England around 1858 (so they'd be precise duplicates of the originals)—those historic matrices surely had long-ago been replaced. *Not so!* In all the instances noted, everything was still on hand.

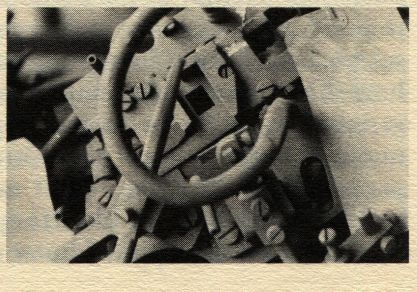
And the records? Yes, all the records were there too. But the landlord had brazenly hauled everything out of the office area, dumping filing cabinets and boxes of records from one end of the foundry to the other, wherever there might be an open corner. A huge quantity of this material was literally dumped in the two large rest rooms. Searching

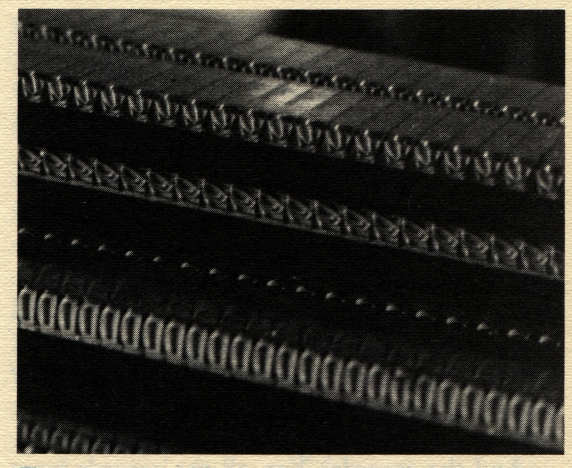






A pivotal caster close up, a row of pivotals, shelves of molds for the pivotals, and a mold close-up (it's not out of focus—it's covered with a very heavy layer of dirt).







Type always was delivered from the Barth caster onto long "sticks" which were piled onto racks for eventual delivery to the dividing department where packaged fonts would be assembled. These many sticks filled with Park Avenue and News Gothic Condensed (enlargement above, full rack shown right) were doomed never to reach the fonting stage.

there was an odious task, to say the least, for commode facilities nearly all were inoperable and filled to overflowing. So much history about personalities, about designs, about designers, and about the innerworkings of the foundry was uncaringly thrown asunder.

Hired guards hung over us as if we all were criminals, yet failed to detect pilfering (surely not at the hands of any typecasters!) in many lots. Fortunately, they kept a good eye on the matrix collection—until things got completely out of control when the sale was over.

McGrew's Book—A Vital Reference

"I simply must get hold of myself and quit being distracted," I said to myself as I returned to the auction bill and tried to give greater identity to the lots which interested me. "What's really in this one labeled Piranesi?" Though I had prepared lists of ATF matrix holdings from Mac McGrew's book, and had made serious study of the auction bill which I received prior to going to Elizabeth, the research helped little in coming to grips with how things were broken into lots, and where various lots might be located. By late afternoon, I had scrawled notes on dozens of pages—dumb stuff like "don't miss lot 457," and intelligent things like "forget 345—the machine is cannibalized." I knew even cursory study of the lots would be impossible as the sale would unfold the next day, so I would make sense of all my notes at the motel that evening. For now, I'd concentrate on studying the lots as well as I could.

It was impossible. Specimen books were in desk drawers. Cabinets filled with trash also contained select tools. Finished fonts were concentrated in three separate areas, but scattered elsewhere too. Two of these locations weren't identified on the sale bill. Who could possibly know which of over 100 machines was still functional, or where the required components might be? Theo Rehak was our only clue, and he tried valiantly to help us all—individually—to make some sense of this bewildering jumble of trash and treasure.

Simply Not Enough Time

A single day simply wasn't enough for anyone to grasp the extent of the holdings, or to map out any logical plan for acquisition or preservation. Astonishment at what we were seeing, coupled with bewilderment about the pending sale turned us into zombies, wander-

ing aimlessly as we stared glassy-eyed at the immense facility. Against this setting loomed the menacing reality of auctioneer flunkies shouting threats of bodily harm if we didn't leave the place. Inspection time was over. "Come back tomorrow with your cash money in hand," they snarled. "We're 'gonna sell all this stuff even if it takes us 'til midnight."

Slowly, we moved away, turning our backs on a newly discovered yet long-cherished friend. We went back to our motel rooms to ponder what was to happen the next day. The few hours remaining would be consumed by last-ditch efforts to correlate hastily written personal notes with a confusing, imprecise, and arbitrary arranged list of auction "lots" provided by the auctioneer.

Sale Day Agony Begins Early

The sale was to begin at 10 a.m. August 24, and the doors would open at 9. With a tenseness of anticipation, nerves and muscles tight, and sweat on the brow, folks began to line up at 8 for their first taste of what would be devastating bombardment of abuse and mockery at the hands of the auctioneer and his crew. Never mind that we'd not slept that night because of anxiety over the sale. Never mind we had spent every waking moment checking and doublechecking the sale bill, trying to glean more information about the lots, and how the sale might be conducted. "Get your face outta' here and don't come back 'til we tell 'ya." They weren't going to open until 9 a.m. regardless of how many people were standing in line.

Filing into ATF that morning was a somber, silent, extremely tense and anxious group of devotees, intermixed with junk dealers and their cronies, joshing with each other about their misbegotten ancestors and boastings of their sexual conquests the night before. It was these individuals whom the auctioneer knew, and it was their relationship with him that set the disastrous tempo for the day. The auctioneer never had a hint that the occasion was anything more than the sale of a dismal, overwhelming bunch of junk.

Virtually every aspect of the sale was arbitrary, clumsy, and above all else, offensive. The metaphor of a bull in a china shop is not at all out of place. The auctioneer knew nothing about what he was selling, and one could only wonder whether he knew anything about auctioneering. He caused massive confusion as he very arbitrarily established procedures, then changed, and changed again. The lots were described wrongly, and since he was ignorant of everything in the plant, the auctioneer repeatedly referred to his lots incorrectly—inconsistent even with the confusing sale bill. Those who dared to ask questions received only one clear answer. "We're in charge. Got that?" We haven't the foggiest notion of what we're doing, but we're in charge!

In piteous bureaucratic ineptitude, the federal bankruptcy court restricted selection to an "approved" auctioneer—one who apparently had *bought* the sacred privilege in high-level New Jersey shenanigans. His contempt for the bankrupt company, and everyone associated with the sale, especially potential buyers, was crystal clear. The arrogance of the father-son auctioneer team was exceeded only by their manifest incompetence.

"The auctioneer—a father-son team from hell—was loud, bellicose, rude, antagonistic, overbearing, boorish and not very bright. While he had a loudspeaker that would peel paint from walls, he would brook no conversation when doing his spiel. Every other word from his mouth was 'sshh' and if buyers continued to talk and not pay attention to him (or his loutish father), he would become apoplectic and threaten explusion for the next miscreant who opened his yap. Chuck Klensch was kicked out for talking to me during the middle part of the sale."

—Dave Churchman

We knew what we were in for when, realizing he had not assigned a lot number to the thousands of documents contained in the facility, the auctioneer decided to sell them all—as one lot—at the beginning of the sale. He admonished, "Just the contents. The cabinets, desks, safes and filing cabinets will be sold separately and if you win the bid, you must remove everything from the containers immediately." Mission impossible had just been described. No one *dared* offer a bid.

When he didn't think things were moving quickly enough, the auctioneer would throw two or more lots together, constantly admonishing all bidders that they were responsible for removing everything they were winning. "I want the mat facing machine. I don't want the two other machines you just threw in with it," I pleaded. "Take them all or quit bidding," was his retort. Such antics surely reduced the bounty significantly, and caused both "saviors" and "vultures" alike great disgust and profound grief. Jack Boggs, a metals dealer from Ohio who attends several auctions across the country every week, boiled with anger saying he'd never before attended such a poorly run affair. His records of successful bids differed with those of the "official record" and when he demanded to hear the audiotape of the sale (required by law), they insisted there was none.

"When hollered at by the crowd," notes Dave Churchman, who described attendees as quiet, orderly, and moderately competitive, "he cursed them and said that he was responsible only to the trustee and not to the buyers. His inartful disdain for us and what he was doing was pathetically apparent. One of his minions confided to some of the malcontents that at one auction his buyers had revolted, one grabbing the microphone and threatening to shove it where the sun didn't shine if there was any more verbal abuse. I would love to have seen this happen at the ATF sale."



Park Avenue and Murray Hill designs top the huge pile of patterns in the massive "heap" described by Greg Walters.

Greg Walters describes two of many problems relating to how the sale was organized.

Clumsy, Impractical Lots

"The sale of quills for the Benton pantographs is a typical example. An engraving machine needs at least three quills—the cylinders which hold the cutting tool. The auctioneer had rounded up all the quills and put them in one lot, even though there were six machines which use the quills. We were faced with one lot, which everyone needed....

"Engraving patterns: again the auctioneer did a great disservice to our community of casters and historians. They put most of the patterns in one lot. It is difficult to gauge the weight of the lot, but I did a rough clculation and guessed at 18,000 pounds. If the guess is accurate, then a mixed metal price of 10 cents a pound would total $1,800. This is a major investment for someone like you or me. It is a pittance to a scrap dealer, so the bottom line was that only scrap dealers were involved in the bidding. The winning bid was $2,100 by a loathsome scrap dealer known as John. He promptly began selling the patterns for $2.00 each, and a pattern weighs about one pound. Had the auctioneers broken this one big lot into a few smaller ones, others might have offered bids. Had the auctioneers allowed people to buy patterns for $1.00 each on inspection day, they could have sold many hundred. As it was, the court and creditors got the lowest price possible, the collectors paid the highest price possible. The only one making money was John."

Bids on Casting Machines

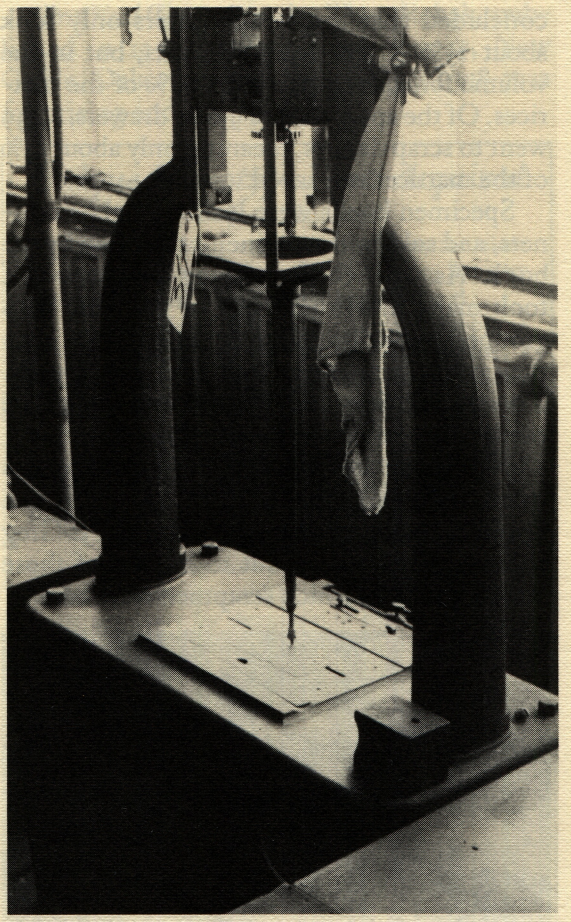
Every typecasting machine was marked as an individual lot and that's how the bidding started. Greg took the very first antique pivotal caster for $50.00, but there were far more machines than bidders. Junkman John took most for $5.00 each and bidding changed as the auctioneer began seeking "per machine" bids for entire rows, with the winning bidder then being able to name the casters he wanted. The balance of the casters then went to the junk dealers. Of course all the pivotal molds were thrown together into three lots, with no one

having a clear knowledge of which mold went with which machine. Fortunately, all molds were purchased by either the Smithsonian, Theo or Greg.

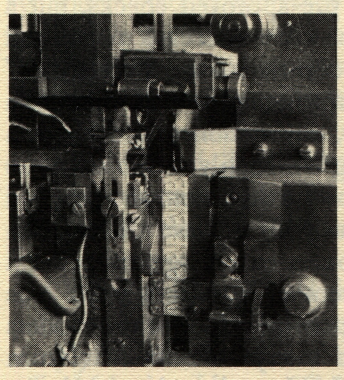
Regarding the Barth casters, Greg reports that of the 96 listed, 67 went to junkman John for $10.00 each. Greg bought six for $20 to $25 each, and Theo Rehak bought 17 at prices from $20 to $50. The only other purchaser was Kingsley, which bought six machines which had been used to cast zinc type, and paid $100.00 for each machine.

In the matrix department, things weren't arranged in a manner pleasing to the junk dealers. At least in theory, they were listed by family and some choice families had 40 drawers, which would need at least $120 to reach the scrap dealer's price range of from $3.00 to $5.00 per drawer. After most choice fonts were sold, junkers prevailed and bidding was switched from "per lot" to "per drawer." This tripped up my fragile mental presence and caused me to pull out of bidding prematurely, simply because I couldn't do the necessary recalculation to determine where I was with my budget. As it turned out, I stopped far short of my allotted money supply, and many fonts went to the junk heap which I could have saved, had the auctioneer not tripped me up by his change in procedure midway through selling the mats.

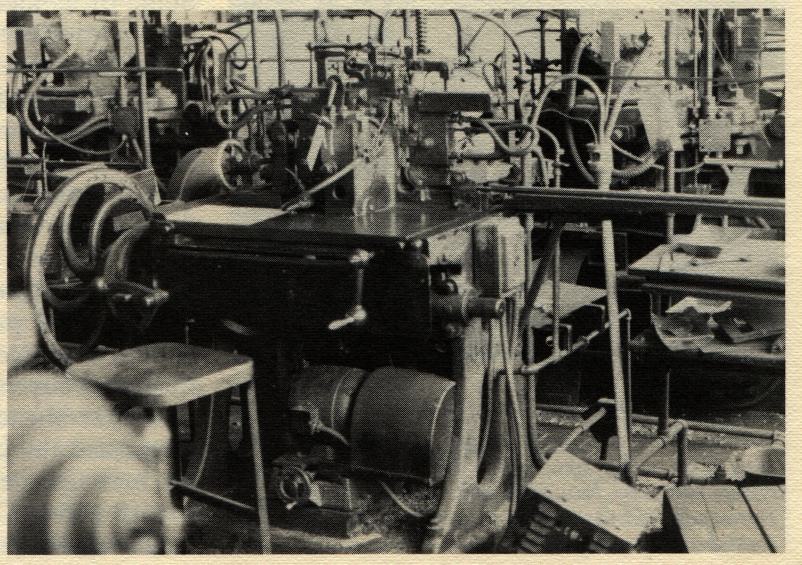
How did we fare against the scrap dealers? Greg kept far better records than I, and has



One of the Benton pantographs, so vital to the development of typography and typesetting in the twentieth century, stands stripped of its essential tools, awaiting the auction.



One Barth caster—over 100 were included in the sale—amidst a snarl of water, air and electrical connections so prominent throughout the foundry area. Above are last-remaining casts in the delivery channel of the 96-point machine.



concluded that the scrap dealers only took about 25% of the desirable fonts, but in the volume fonts, scrappers took 78% of the matrices. Of the approximate 9,600 drawers, 8,439 went to scrap dealers, meaning only about 14% of the matrices was saved.

Specimen books were locked in glass cabinets, and sold by the cabinet rather than by the book. As with the engraving patterns, this took many individuals out of the sale, with grouped books bringing far less money than they could have brought if sold individually. Their condition and identity—couldn't be easily discerned through the glass cases.

Hal Sterne and Tom Bell of NA Graphics submitted an $11,000 bid covering most of the finished, packaged type in the facility. As Greg observed, this turned out to be one of those rare instances in which scrapmen were beat.



Sparsely occupied shelves in the enormous section of the foundry devoted to storage of finished fonts, this area was accessible during the auction, thanks to an extensive cleanup effort by the auction crew. Can you imagine how fully these shelves must have been filled back in the 1930's and 40's? Fortunately, NA Graphics acquired all cast stock which remained at the foundry.

Staying with the auctioneer was a horrible strain on one's nerves because of his offensive behavior, and the screeching blast of what had to be the worst amplification system ever conceived. Several of us suggested it was unnecessary, but you couldn't convince the warrior that he didn't need his armour. I stepped away on several occasions simply to regain my composure and give my ears a rest, and know I missed items I had planned to bid on. Fatigue was setting in and rather than concentrating on what was yet ahead, many of us admit to becoming troubled by the prospect of moving our equipment out of the facility.

"One of my worst memories is of the auctioneer being pulled through the place in his aluminum chariot, like Nero through the Forum, whilst the blaring P.A. system was propelling his shrill and hissing sarcasms into our withering ears. Such was the ultimate example of the defilement of a hallowed place. I felt it was a very special site to those of us who revere not Gasparik and his latter-day Stalinesque cliques of flunkies, but those who came before and created a manufactory of the finest types in the world." —*Theo Rehak*

"Give Me Your Money Now!"

To say procedures were clumsy is an understatement. Soon as an individual won a bid, a cash deposit was demanded and the sale was delayed until the money was forthcoming. Some of us had pre-approved checks, but a large portion of the sale was in cash money and the auctioneer dismissed as "ridiculous" requests from many that receipts for their cash be given. Further, the auctioneer did his own clerking, meaning his hastily scribbled notes were the only record to document the bids and the bidders. Worse still, as Dave Churchman notes (Dave's been in charge of several auctions and attended hundreds), "he was looking at his paperwork and not the bidders and thus missed many earnest bids from frustrated buyers." When the sale ended at 4 p.m. (far ahead of the midnight deadline threatened the previous day), some of us got the message they were closing down and we had to leave. Others were told they could remain and settle their bills immediately.

Your Word Against Theirs

Of course, most of us kept notes on our own bids, but as Jack Boggs discovered, it was your word against the auctioneer's. In that way, Jack's bids were recorded higher, in some instances, than the winning bid. When I settled up, I was listed as having won three lots I didn't even participate in, and there were other discrepancies too. But their bottom line and mine were within $75.00, so I decided not to argue. My principal concern was getting my mats safely tucked away before the junk dealers began their wholesale assault on the drawers.

Chaotic Clear-Out Begins

When we arrived back the next morning, we were forced to stand in one inter-mingled line. Some of us were lined up to settle our accounts, while others were waiting to have an auctioneer representative assigned to them so they could go through the facility, claiming their lots. The idea may have been good, but my immediate observation was that the junk dealers were running freely through the facility, while I was being closely supervised. Many other typecasters came to the same conclusion and the auctioneer's flunkies soon became totally baffled by our cooperative spirit, working on each other's equipment when needed. I gave one matrix milling machine to Ed Rayher and another to Theo. I stripped another off its stand, realizing there was no way possible for the auctioneer to identify as mine remnants which I opted to abandon. In the meantime, Dave Peat was helping by disassembling another machine for me. My "supervisor" was more than eager to take off my hands the few matrix drawers I had won in "lot" bids which I really didn't want, and this gesture gained me added freedom in breaking loose from him and getting things done. It was a frantic rush to get my lots assembled and wait my turn for the single elevator designated to get stuff out of the building.

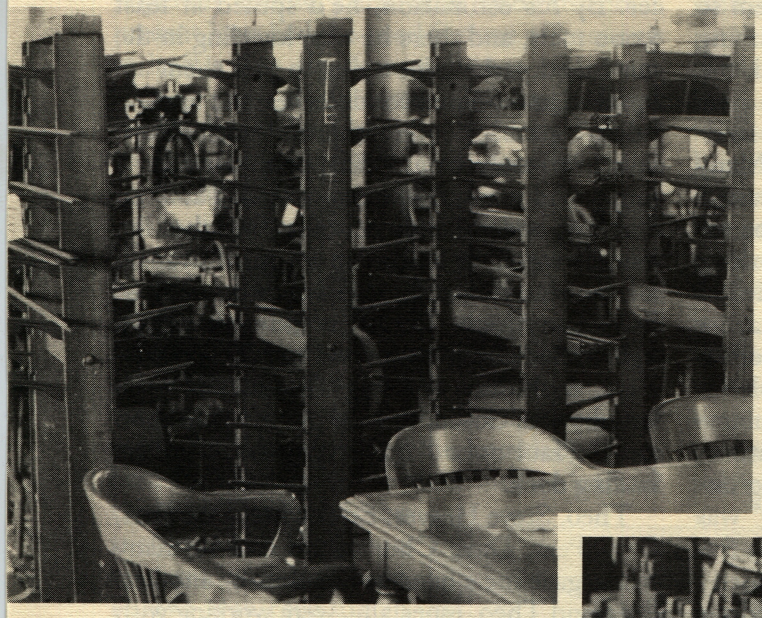
The mad rush didn't end with the elevator. Downstairs at the loading dock, the Purepac people were trying to maintain order, but there was simply too much demand. Most of us brought moving equipment, but not even a simple dock plate was available to us and thus, many outrageous deals had to be struck to get forklifts (from Junkman John) to move things from the dock to our vehicles. It was a hectic process of riding the elevator, trying to get your truck to the dock, and then rushing around the building and up long flights of stairs to continue the ordeal. My throat was dry, I was sweating profusely (it was in the 90's), and filthy beyond belief. I must have been looking pale too, for others stopped me and asked if I was OK. Frankly, my heart was pounding. Like everyone else, I was working against all sorts of obstacles and time seemed to be the biggest of all.

Greg Spills About 6,000 Mats

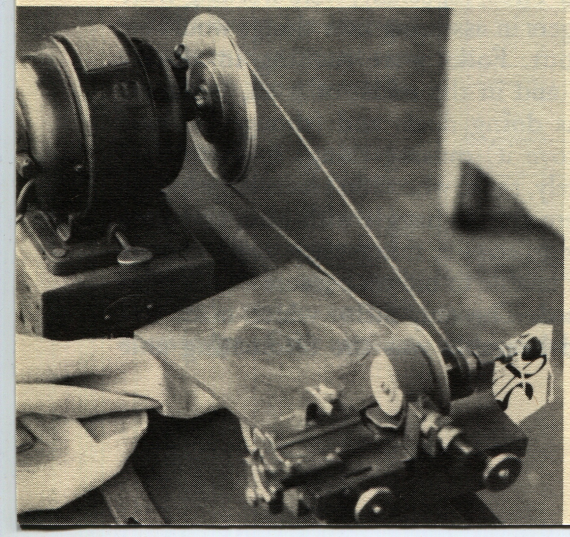
On one of my many trips into the parking lot, I came across Greg Walters, who had just spilled an entire handtruck loaded with matrices. By his estimation, he'd spilled at least 6,000 mats, and there he was, kneeling in the sun-baked parking lot trying to pick them up. I paused and offered condolences, but knew if I didn't get back to my unprotected stuff upstairs, it surely would disappear. Further, I simply had to get checked out, loaded and out that day, and the only certainty was that the foundry would be locked up at 4:30. Fortunate for me, Stan Nelson and his Smithsonian associate, Larry Jones, weren't working on such a tight schedule; they helped me in so many ways, including sticking around after the foundry was closed, to help get my stuff onto my U-Haul once I finally got access to the loading dock.

Theo, Steve Heaver, Ed Rayher, Dan Carr, Dave Peat, Dave Churchman and so many others gave me a hand at one time or another. Greg and Theo, especially, were working with their riggers in assessing how things would be moved out. Folks were rushing in all directions, and in the midst of it all, Junkman John was doing deals and (though no one could prove it) causing things to disappear. Fortunately, those who didn't have large lots to claim were able to haggle with him, and thus were able to acquire things they really wanted but were unable to bid on because of the processes used. The only factor which made the situation bearable was the fascinating and





Additional views of the foundry. *Above is a second view of the Barth caster area looking toward Elmora Avenue. Over 120 casters lined both sides of the aisle, which extended all the way through the foundry. At left are several racks designed to hold numerous "sticks" of type coming direct from the caster. Most, as you see, remained unused in the latter years of the foundry though in earlier years, there often was a shortage of sticks. Below left is one of several specialized tools devised at ATF over the years. This one was used to prepare the engraving quills used with the Benton Pantograph, which was used either to engrave punches, or directly engrave matrices. Below is a cabinet located midway through the foundry, found to contain packaged type probably made (and forgotten) in the 1930's or 1940's. Note, too, the endgrain woodblock floor which was found throughout the huge foundry facility.*





wonderfully cooperative spirit among those of us who have assigned ourselves the task of saving typecasting for the future. Borrowed tools, lent jacks, extra hands to ease heavy equipment onto skids, sharing and splitting up of oversize lots all took place in a friendly atmosphere which absolutely baffled the auction crew.

My Last Farewell

I pulled away from ATF for the last time about 5:30 p.m. August 25. An overriding consideration all through the sale was fear of acquiring too much weight to safety carry in my U-Haul, but everything fit on the truck easily, and I probably could have carried another ton at least. Greg Walters wasn't as lucky. He had to abandon Barth casters simply because his rigger couldn't handle the added weight (he hauled about 60,000 pounds). I returned to the motel a few miles away where several of us had stayed during the ordeal. Stan, Larry and I got together for dinner, but many others already had departed. I left the next morning at 6, knowing I had to be back at the office before the end of work that day.

Those with larger lots were forced to remain longer and reports from both Theo and Greg indicate matters got completely out of hand, with Junkman John demolishing Barth casters that didn't even belong to him; much other equipment simply disappeared. There was precious little time available for orderly removal, and tension was intensified by the fear of having equipment destroyed or stolen before it could be moved out. Though in theory everything in the plant had been sold, the trustee ended up paying $17,000 for removal of abandoned materials and general cleanup of the room after everyone had gone.

A Dismal Failure

By financial measures, the sale was a dismal failure. The Alan Atkins Appraisal Corp. had placed a "forced sale value" on the foundry at $149,484. Gross sale proceeds were $77,863. Charged against this were costs for the auctioner, trustee, legal counsel, the appraiser, miscellaneous expenses and final cleanup costs. All this left net proceeds at approximately $26,000—not even enough to pay the salary of one highly skilled employee for a year.

Those of us who bought matrices and equipment tended to perceive our lots in relation to the overwhelming size of the facility, concluding that most of the foundry was lost. But in succeeding months, as we have shared our inventories, our conclusions have proven premature.

As Theo has noted, despite "the heat of the moment, the hostile environment, and with little time (we would have needed a month at least to do it right), still the essence of ATF has been saved. The right people saved the best of the faces and thus, the ability to make foundry type is still on the planet. God gives us what we need, not always what we want."

Did It Have to Happen?

Obviously, Kingsley/ATF filed for bankruptcy and that set off the chain of events which ended the 101-year history of American Type Founders. Legal terms such as secured creditors, unpaid rent, and abandonment of property all would suggest the foundry couldn't possibly have survived. Perhaps not.

Theo Rehak indicates that Chapter 7 reorganization on the part of Kingsley Machines, Hollywood, Calif., precipitated ATF's demise. Obviously, the folks in California didn't attend to ATF's financial concerns with much interest. When filing for bankruptcy, they claimed no secured debtors. Yet the trustee found two: the National State Bank in Elizabeth, and the New Jersey Economic Development Authority. These two organizations had loaned Kingsley/ATF $650,000 in 1988. Curiously, both debts were personally guaranteed by a principal member of the Kingsley organization, Michael J. Rawson.

Remarkably, ATF had made significant payback on these two loans to where, only six years after taking out the loans, just $182,000 still was owed. The fact that the rent hadn't been paid since March of 1991 would suggest that ATF was in deep trouble. But other figures suggest inattention perhaps was the culprit.

With such a significant payback already accomplished, one can hardly avoid the speculation that ATF, under proper management, could still be alive today. The world market for type, perhaps, has not totally disappeared.

Odds 'n Ends Tell of ATF's Far-Flung History

By accident, the morning of the auction, I discovered a cabinet in a corner near the matrix collection, which contained many matrices for cored ornaments and all the Caslon swash caps from 84 to 120 point. Those mats I wanted, but tied with this cabinet in the same lot was another cabinet and a desk. I won the lot, so I had to take it all.

The desk and cabinet provide clear evidence that (a) ATF had a long and interesting past including much involvement in evolving technology—for a while, and (b) that everything in the foundry was hopelessly mixed up.

Some of the items retrieved: Six chemical cartridges for filtering out sulphur dioxide via a breathing apparatus—apparently something used back when ATF was busy electroplating matrices. In the same drawer, a bunch of triangular type mold components carrying the H (Hansen Type Foundry) pinmark, one of the original foundries that merged in 1892 to form ATF. They appear to be parts of an angle-body mold.

Both a promotional booklet and a plastic line gauge depicted the ATF Typesetter, "a photomechanical system for text composition 5 to 14 point in lines up to 7½ inches wide." The system was introduced in the late 1950's or early 1960's as I recall; it produced extremely high-quality work. In appearance, it resembled the Friden Justowriter and had two units. One was used for punching paper tape, and a second was a photocomposition unit, working from a spinning disk not too unlike the old Varityper disk used for dialing display type. Why didn't ATF's system catch on? Probably, it was poor marketing.

Other items reminiscent of ATF's involvement in more recent technology: A hand full of litho plate erasers with ATF stamped on the side. Three bundles of 4"x4" cotton pads for offset press cleanup, clearly marked ATF on the side. Also present: a catalog of "ATF Spectype," dry transfer lettering made to match ATF foundry type. The product resembles Formatt and other more recent products. ATF apparently had a good product but again had little marketing success.

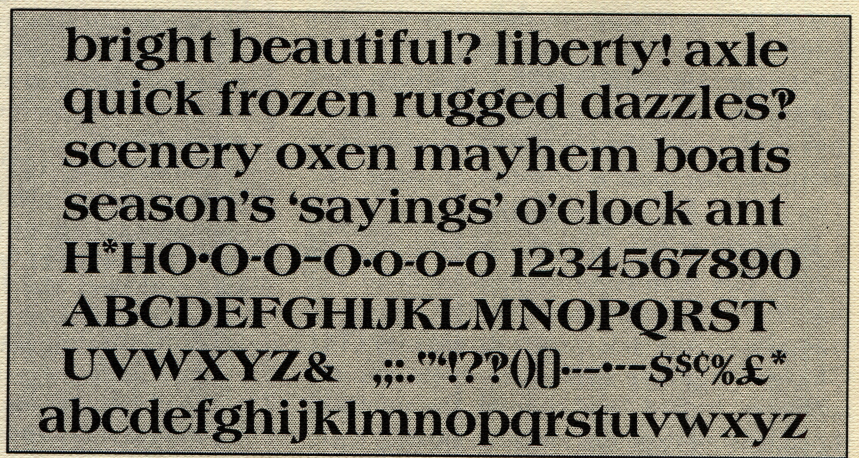
Though ATF acquired most of what remained of Lanston Monotype, Theo Rehak says they did a "purge" of the plant in recent years to rid it of all materials related to Lanston Monotype. They weren't totally successful, for the desk contained a Lanston leaflet plus two orphaned matrices.

In a drawer was a font of 8 pt. Univers figures "manufactured for ATF by Deberny Peignot, Paris." ATF dabbled in the type importing business but that fact was little known to many users of type.

Two specialty type products appeared in the cabinet. One was a font labeled 12/14 Kimball Sero, a font which had a special flange near the foot of each letter, obviously made to hold it in a stamping machine. Another item I speculate to have greater historic interest. It was a pied package of sort lines of multi-nicked 8-point characters. Each letter carried a different nicking combination, and I speculate the type was made many, many years earlier for use in a Unitype machine (or something similar) which featured automatic type distribution by means of special nicking on the bodies. Also found: 12 sort lines of 6 on 4 Lightline Gothic—this 4-point type is the smallest in my shop (though I do own a 3-point Monotype mold).

Also there: alignment proofs for 42 point Americana Extra Bold, dated May 7, 1970, and alignment proofs for 42-point Brush, dated March 3, 1942. And two quarts of hydraulic oil!

How would you have liked the job of straightening out the entire 500,000-square foot facility?

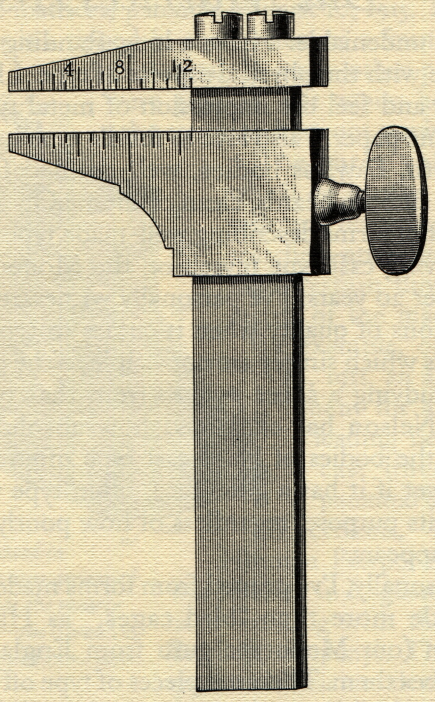


Trial proof of 42-pt. Americana Extra Bold, dated May 7, 1970, found in the desk drawer. Note Martin Speckter's interrobang (? ! combined) was included in this font. Sadly, it has not carried forth.

ATF Tools & Implements Preserved

One of the great rewards of being a participant in the auction at American Type Founders was the opportunity to acquire some of the tools and implements of typefounding, found scattered through the plant like leaves after an autumn windstorm.

Thanks to sharing on the part of several "kindred souls" who won lots at the auction, I was lucky enough to acquire several tools, including a type gauge as depicted here, with the illustration being taken out of Theodore DeVinne's book, *The Practice of Typography,* first printed in 1902.



Though this illustration is from a book published in 1902, it's an accurate depiction of the type measuring tool from ATF.

DeVinne suggests it's an implement for measuring type, but doesn't explain how it works. The tool first landed in my drawer of "nifty treasures from ATF" but since I pulled it out and used it the first time, it has taken a permanent place on the work-tray of my typecaster. Remarkable in its simplicity, it's a measuring tool which I now find indispensable, especially when casting repetitive border elements which require such absolute consistency in casting.

How it works: You start with a piece of type you know to be precisely accurate. If casting an 18x18 piece, for example, you know your body size is fixed at 18 points, so you set the tool on that fixed dimension. The two "jaws" of the gauge are virtually parallel, but not quite. There's a taper of approximately one ten thousandth from outer end to inner edge, and when setting up, the piece of type being used as a standard should fit snug at the center point of the jaws. Once locked with the thumb-screw, the variable dimension—the 18-point width—can be checked in an instant. You don't even need to look at your type to test it and know instantly whether it's too wide or too narrow.

Successfully reading a micrometer requires concentration; accuracy hinges on whether you close it loosely or snugly against the cast type each time you measure. But using the type gauge simply requires fitting the new letter between the set "jaws." If it passes all the way to the inner edge, the letter isn't wide enough. If it barely fits, it's too wide. If it becomes snug at the center line, then your cast letter is right on the money in set width.

Using the gauge is so hassle free the caster is much more likely to use it frequently and thus, detect minor variations in set width long before it becomes troublesome. Variations in mold temperature will change the size of the type quickly—and the variations will be far beyond acceptable tolerances. Such variations are instantly detected with a type gauge.

How I was able to cast type for over 20 years without this nifty device is beyond me. The saint who went before—the man who made this gauge for "ATF Foundry No. 2" (St. Louis) so many years ago—hopefully will rest well knowing his tool is of inestimable value even in 1994 to this struggling typecaster.

The Barth Was One Reason for ATF's Quality But Matrices Also Played a Crucial Role

It's undeniable: I have a long-standing romance with the physical aspects of type. I love to see and feel the impression of metal types into fine paper. I also love to fondle type itself. Smooth, flawless bodies, well-defined feet, nicks, smooth beards, clean counters. On goes my list of terms describing well-made type.

Having cast type myself on the Monotype for over 20 years, I've personally witnessed all variations of quality when it comes to type—aspects which simply are not visible to the person studying a sheet *printed* from that type. Stan Nelson has explained how absolutely lousy the bodies of hand-cast type often appear, yet if it has a good face, often type will fulfill its purpose, regardless of how poorly its body appears.

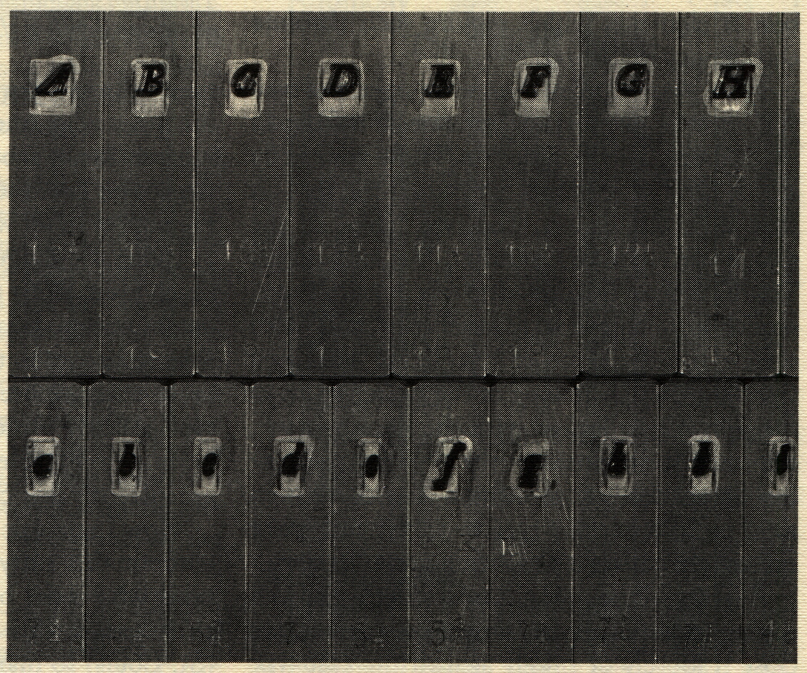
Personally, I've printed from forms made up of little more than "bird cages," as Harry Wearn (our Monotype guru from England) describes them. These are pieces of type off the caster which have little more than a face and a skeleton for a body—mainly hollowness.

With all this zest for type, it shouldn't be surprising that I always considered the product turned out by American Type Founders was literally head and shoulders above anything ever produced on Monotype equipment; ATF types usually combined flawless faces with smooth, flawless bodies. I had always attributed this superior appearance to the Barth caster and its ability to move large quantities of metal quickly, under great pressure, with an absolute minimum of trapped air in the mold cavity.

Never before had it crossed my mind that there was something else in the equation. That all changed the first time I cast type on my Monotype Super Caster using genuine ATF matrices, acquired when ATF was liquidated in August, 1993.

Suddenly the letters coming out of *my* caster looked surprisingly like those I thought could only be produced on a Barth caster. Suddenly, I realized ATF matrices themselves were a critical component in producing superior type. The deeper drive and near-vertical beards somehow give more emphasis to the letter form itself. And since ATF frequently chrome plated the inner core of its matrices, the letters seem to release from the mold and take on a more shiny, smooth appearance.

It still is an unreal feeling when I find myself casting type from the genuine original. I've fantasized over someday having the full range of sizes of ATF Caslon 471, for example. Never did I dream that I would own all the matrices themselves.



The brighter inner core of these Caslon 471 matrices is created by chrome plating as an initial step in electrodepositing matrices. This assured longer life for the matrices, as well as creating a more superior product!

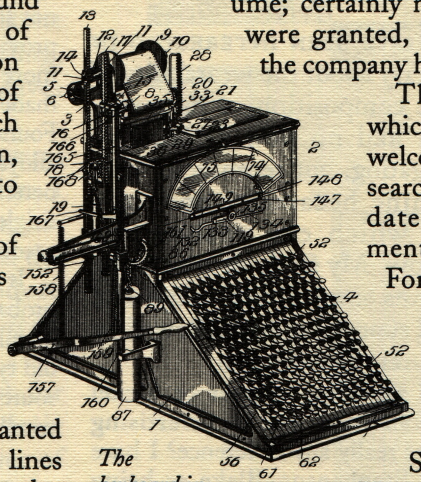
Earliest Lanston Patent Books Saved

A belated, unexpected, and altogether cherished item from the American Type Founders auction has come into my hands: three bound volumes containing copies of many (or all?) of the early patents assigned to the Lanston Monotype Machine Company. Dave Peat of Indianapolis acquired the volumes in a much larger "lot" of specimen books at the auction, and graciously has allowed the books to come into my hands.

ATF, you will recall, acquired much of Lanston Monotype when the company was liquidated in 1969. Later, according to Theo Rehak, ATF purged its holdings of anything related to Lanston Monotype, but somehow these volumes survived.

They begin June 7, 1887, with a patent granted to Tolbert Lanston for producing justified lines of type. Therein his unit count system was detailed. On that same date, Lanston was granted a patent for a "type forming and composing machine." This device was a "cold metal" machine wherein the types were to be pressure formed out of lead instead of being cast. Of course, Lanston later moved to using molten metal in his typecasting machine.

The last patent in volume 3 relates to a machine for the production of type matrices, patented August 10, 1915. Thereafter is a tipped-in sheet refers to a fourth volume; certainly many other patents were granted, but copies held by the company have not survived.



The keyboard in 1900 was arranged as was the matrix case—the QWERTY *keyboard came later.*

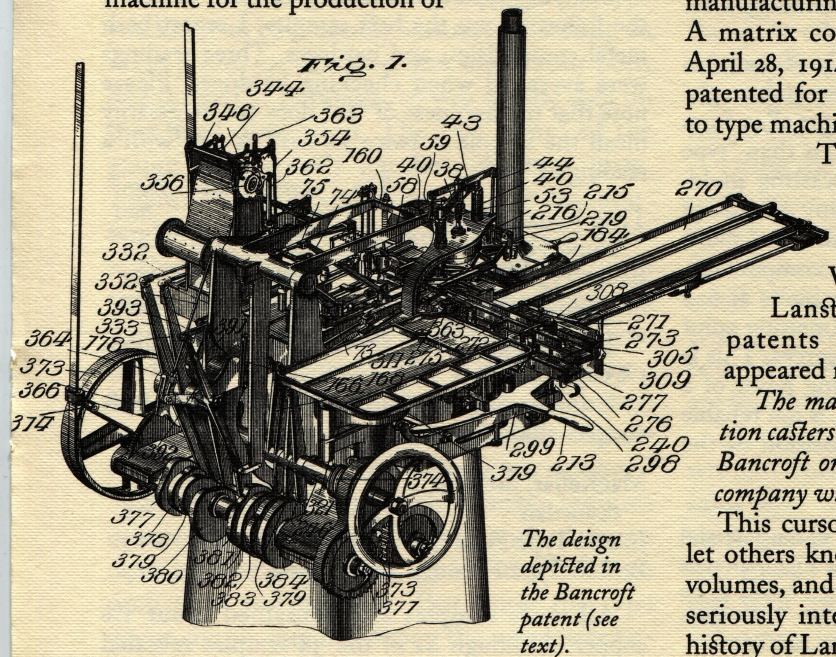
The three volumes which do survive give a welcome resource to researchers attempting to date certain developments of the machine. For example, on Jan. 10, 1911, an attachment for adding leading between cast lines was patented by a U. S. citizen, Frank Hinman Pierpont (who was residing in England, perhaps working with the new English company). The low quad mold was not developed initially; an early version patented April 18, 1911; the short type mold for casting Multigraph type was patented April 30, 1912.

Patents for the peripheral devices used in manufacturing casters and matrices are included. A matrix coneholing machine was patented April 28, 1914. On Nov. 14, 1911, a device was patented for applying the identifying markings to type machine (cellular?) matrices.

The company's first address was in Washington, D. C. Many early patents were granted to the Lanston Monotype Machine Co. of Washington, D. C., with Tolbert Lanston himself as the inventor. As patents proliferated, Lanston's name appeared much less frequently.

The machine which most resembles composition casters as they evolved was issued to J. Sellers Bancroft on May 30, 1899, and assigned to the company which still was in Washington.

This cursory report is provided primarily to let others know of the existence of these three volumes, and an offer to share them with anyone seriously interested in documenting the early history of Lanston Monotype.



The deisgn depicted in the Bancroft patent (see text).

Wild Suppositions Give Way to Scientific Study

On the Hardness of Type Metal

By David W. Peat

For years I have been interested in the controversy about the wearability of type vs. the composition of its metal. Until recently, I had no non-destructive method of investigating, but recently a "state of the art" machine became temporarily available to me which can analyze the composition of alloys. My study of type using this equipment gives some direct analysis of the many claims of superior metal bellowed by the type manufacturers of yesteryear.

Was type metal featuring copper or nickel something of substance, or was it advertising hoopla? Or was there really any difference? I have regarded ATF and Stephenson-Blake as being manufacturers of the finest type as far as its hardness and appearance. I now have attempted to verify that assumption.

Actually I have done two studies. First was a study of the composition of type metal alloys. Secondly, assuming hardness has a direct relationship to wearability, I studied the hardness of metal using samples as old as 130 years to type cast relatively recently. My testing was done with a Wilson Hardness Checker and an EDAX (Energy Dispersion Analysis by X-ray) machine.

Type metal is composed primarily of lead, tin and antimony. The tin is for hardness and toughness, whereas the antimony prevents the alloy from shrinking (and therefore becoming less than "type high") upon solidifying in the typecasting mold. An interesting phenomenon is that any mixture of lead and tin, lead and antimony, or all three, melts at a temperature less than any of its components. An alloy of 87 per cent lead (which melts at 620 degrees F) and 13 per cent antimony (melting point of 1,166 degrees) melts at only 247 degrees. This is called the eutectic point. The melting point of a ternary (three metals) alloy, however, is not reliable as a means for assessing the composition of the metal.

David W. Peat is a long-time type enthusiast and maintains one of the largest collections of Victorian type fonts and pre-20th century type specimen books to be found in private hands in the United States. He resides at 1225 Carroll White Drive, Indianapolis, Ind. 46219.

One might wonder why foundry type metal was not standardized. The simple matter of economics provides one answer. Tin and antimony are far more expensive than lead, so cheaper type could be made by using an alloy with a higher lead content. Founders also have alluded to the fact that certain alloys "flow" better than others, and thus, they used better flowing alloys for smaller types sizes. Thus, a single founder might stock more than one alloy to accommodate casting various sizes.

It must also be pointed out that 100 years ago, it probably was difficult if not impossible to analyze metal. How did a foundry verify its "melt" when old type from a variety of sources was the principal source of metal? I don't know whether they even tried!

Metal Composition

From the samples I studied, metal makeup varied significantly:

	Average	*Low*	*High*
Lead	52%	36%	69%
Tin	17%	9%	30%
Antimony	29%	21%	38%

The "Best" Types

Studying type made during the past 30 years, the following are the best samples; I report both metal composition and hardness. Three readings were averaged when checking hardness. Please note that the hardness of "80" does not necessarily mean the sample is twice as hard as one with a reading of "40."

	Tin	*Anti-mony*	*Lead*	*Hard-ness*
Theo Rehak's Dale Guild Foundry	17%	36%	46%	80
Bauer Type Foundry	18%	38%	43%	82
Stephenson-Blake	17%	32%	50%	86

Interestingly, all the above alloys included about 1% copper.

Considering the older foundries, the best samples studied were:

MacKellar, Smiths & Jordan	17%	28%	54%	78
Inland Type Foundry	25%	38%	36%	83
Boston Type Foundry	26%	37%	36%	87

All these samples also contained about 1% copper. Although 11 of the 38 samples revealed

copper content of about 1%, only one had nickel and that was Cleveland Type Foundry, not Keystone, which boasted of superior nickel alloy in its specimen books and advertising.

American Type Founders type seems to have "softened" since the turn of the century.

	Tin	*Anti-mony*	*Lead*	*Hard-ness*
Foundry "E" (Marder-Luse)	31%	36%	34%	87
Foundry "A" (Boston)	23%	33%	44%	80
1966 casting*	15%	29%	56%	44

Older Types Were Poorer

Some of the poorest type seems to be from foundries making their type prior to the introduction of the point system (about 1880).

Johnson	15%	30%	55%	27
Conner	17%	32%	51%	33
Unknown (ca. 1850)	12%	24%	64%	30
Union (ca. 1890)	16%	28%	56%	36
Farmer (ca. 1890)	14%	27%	59%	29

Single sample tests can be misleading for they might not be representative of the millions of types cast by a founder over the years. However, in several cases I analyzed more than one sample and got very similar results. Still, for a truly scientific study, additional samples would be necessary.

Foundry	*Number of Samples*	*Results*
Boston	3	All good
M. S. & J.	2	Both good
BB&S	2	Both fair
Cleveland	3	All fair
Cincinnati	2	Both fair
Union	2	Both poor
Farmer	2	Both poor

It would be interesting to make checks studying the products of more foundries, and to compare small sizes with large sizes. Comparing Thompson and Monotype cast type from different sources also might be revealing.

TYPE METALS PRODUCT SPECIFICATIONS (ALLOYS)

All alloys must be clean and smooth and free from dross and discoloration due to oxidation and overheating. Quantites as shown are percentage by weight.

Alloy Spec.	No. 1 Regular	No. 2 Italic	No. 4 Hard	No. 5 Soft (Lino)
Lead Nom:	62.00	64.00	50.00	54.00
Max:	62.25	64.25	50.25	64.25
Min:	51.75	65.75	49.75	53.75
Tin Nom:	12.00	14.00	20.00	44.00
Max:	12.25	14.25	20.25	44.25
Min:	11.75	13.75	19.75	43.75
Antimony Nom:	25.00	21.00	28.00	2.00
Max:	25.25	21.25	28.25	2.10
Min:	24.75	20.75	27.75	1.90
Copper Nom:	1.00	1.00	2.00	
Max:	1.10	1.10	2.10	NONE
Min:	0.90	0.90	1.90	
Zinc Max:	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE
Arsenic Max:	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10
Impurit.* Max:	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10
Identification No.	1	2	4	5

* Maximum allowable of other impurities.

There were in all 9 classifications of type metal alloys: of little value to the foundry at the present are No. 3 used for Quads; No. 6, used for metal furniture; and the last three antimonial leads Nos. 8, 10, & 14 indicating the amount of antimony in the alloy (%). The Guild uses No. 1 as Primary which is suitable for the finest casting and for charging a heat of smelted metal to improvement. The No. 2 is used for all other casting. The No. 4 used only on customer demand, and the Lino only for special casting; as for an electro specimen and large ornate initials, etc.

Type metal alloys from Theo Rehak's book, PRACTICAL TYPECASTING, *reviewed on page 24 of this* NEWSLETTER.

In Summary

Observation: Generally, the better the composition (high tin and antimony percentages) the harder the type. Types cast before 1890 tested softer; they also had lower tin and antimony content.

Curiosity: All the Stephenson-Blake type that I have (perhaps 75 fonts) has a slight coating of corrosion. I thought metal analysis would provide an answer for this phenomenon, but it did not. There was nothing unusual in the makeup of S-B metal so perhaps there's another reason. Perhaps they used no protective coating on their type and exposure to sea air during shipment to the United States precipitated the corrosion?

Conclusions: There definitely is measurable copper in the "best" type. Moreover, there is a great deal of difference in the composition and hardness of foundry types. Your comments are solicited.

*I can verify this date for I actually witnessed the type being cast.

Obviously the Work of a Lifetime:

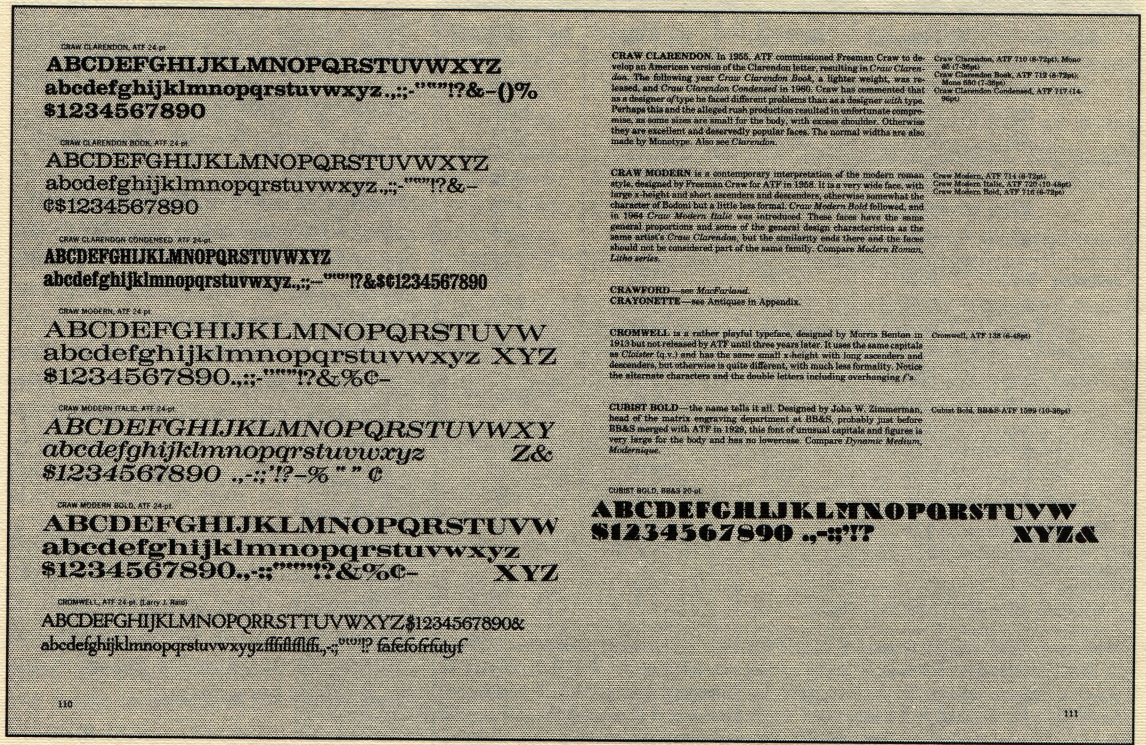
Monumental Type 'Bible' Now Available

MACMCGREW'S NEWLY RELEASED book, *American Metal Typefaces of the Twentieth Century*, published by Oak Knoll Books and put into print as a finale to a preliminary edition released several years ago, puts this typophile somewhat in a compromising position. Frankly, Mac's stolen my thunder! Heretofore, the massive information contained therein was to be found only in a piecemeal fashion (if at all), and was just something one gained over many, many years of experience using and studying type and talking with people who know type.

For example, the late Steve Watts told me about Repro Script being designed to align with and match the weight of News Gothic Condensed and I thought I was the only one in the world having that fleck of knowledge. So how'd it get in Mac's book? Virtually every page is crammed full of solid information about type. I have known of Mac's obsession with type for at least 25 years, and had a hint of his meticulous way of filing away information on the subject. But precisely how well he was organized, and how exhaustive was his research—well, it didn't reveal itself totally until this edition came into print.

The book is styled with specimens on the left-hand page, and complete discussion of the specimens on the right-hand page, including designer, manufacturer, what sizes were made, who made copies or "forgeries," dates and miscellaneous information to absolutely delight the aficionado. Mac even credits the many folks who pulled repros of fonts in their collections right along-side the specimen.

Prior to this edition, the only "bible" typophiles had to work with was Jaspert, Berry


CRAW CLARENDON, ATF 24-pt

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz.,:;-'"'"!?&–()%
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CRAW CLARENDON BOOK, ATF 24-pt

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CRAW CLARENDON CONDENSED, ATF 24-pt

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CRAW MODERN, ATF 24-pt

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$1234567890.,:;-'"'"!?&%¢–

CRAW MODERN ITALIC, ATF 24-pt

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abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz Z&
$1234567890 .,-:;'!?–% " " ¢

CRAW MODERN BOLD, ATF 24-pt

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVW
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
$1234567890.,-:;'"'"!?&%¢– XYZ

CROMWELL, ATF 24-pt. (Larry J. Ruhl)

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRRSTTUVWXYZ$12345678908&
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyzfffiflffllfi.,-:;'"'"!? fafefofrfufyf

110

CRAW CLARENDON. In 1955, ATF commissioned Freeman Craw to develop an American version of the Clarendon letter, resulting in *Craw Clarendon*. The following year *Craw Clarendon Book*, a lighter weight, was released, and *Craw Clarendon Condensed* in 1960. Craw has commented that as a designer of type he faced different problems than as a designer *with* type. Perhaps this and the alleged rush production resulted in unfortunate compromise, as some sizes are small for the body, with excess shoulder. Otherwise they are excellent and deservedly popular faces. The normal widths are also made by Monotype. Also see *Clarendon*.

Craw Clarendon, ATF 710 (6-72pt), Monotype 66 (7-36pt)
Craw Clarendon Book, ATF 712 (6-72pt); Monotype 580 (7-36pt)
Craw Clarendon Condensed, ATF 717 (14-96pt)

CRAW MODERN is a contemporary interpretation of the modern roman style, designed by Freeman Craw for ATF in 1958. It is a very wide face, with large x-height and short ascenders and descenders, otherwise somewhat the character of Bodoni but a little less formal. *Craw Modern Bold* followed, and in 1964 *Craw Modern Italic* was introduced. These faces have the same general proportions and some of the general design characteristics as the same artist's *Craw Clarendon*, but the similarity ends there and the faces should not be considered part of the same family. Compare *Modern Roman*, *Litho series*.

Craw Modern, ATF 714 (6-72pt)
Craw Modern Italic, ATF 720 (10-48pt)
Craw Modern Bold, ATF 716 (6-72pt)

CRAWFORD—see *MacFarland*.
CRAYONETTE—see Antiques in Appendix.

CROMWELL is a rather playful typeface, designed by Morris Benton in 1913 but not released by ATF until three years later. It uses the same capitals as *Cloister* (q.v.) and has the same small x-height with long ascenders and descenders, but otherwise is quite different, with much less formality. Notice the alternate characters and the double letters including overhanging *f*'s.

Cromwell, ATF 128 (6-48pt)

CUBIST BOLD—the name tells it all. Designed by John W. Zimmerman, head of the matrix engraving department at BB&S, probably just before BB&S merged with ATF in 1929, this font of unusual capitals and figures is very large for the body and has no lowercase. Compare *Dynamic Medium*, *Modernique*.

Cubist Bold, BB&S/ATF 1098 (10-30pt)

CUBIST BOLD, BB&S 30-pt

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVW
$1234567890 .,-:;'!? XYZ&

111

Typical two-page spread (reduced) providing complete alphabet specimens on left-hand page, and extensive background information on the right-hand page. From the second, revised edition of AMERICAN METAL TYPEFACES OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY *by Mac F. McGrew.*

& Johnson's *Encyclopedia of Type Faces*, published in various editions over the years and professing to cover the whole world with regard to type design. Neither its reproduction quality or the quality of its text can hold a candle to Mac's edition. One of the most fascinating conversations I ever had was with The late Mike Mycoff in England at the ATF Oxford meeting, wherein Mike expounded on the hundreds and hundreds of errors in the *Encyclopedia*. This was somewhat of a revelation to me, for I had blindly worshiped the edition and used it as an unquestioned authority for so many years. Mike said he even volunteered to help correct some of the wrongs before a new edition was published, but the publisher opted to go to press without making *any* effort at revision. Mike, in England, certainly could have been the European edition of Mac McGrew but, unfortunately, his death has prevented that from ever happening.

Our extreme good fortune is that Mac's goal was to get the thing done and done right. Likewise, it is our good fortune that Ben Lieberman, publisher of the preliminary edition, urged that such an edition be done, enabling Mac to integrate additional specimens and hundreds of revisions into this edition. In this regard, time has worked to our favor, for it's a far better book now than it would have been five years ago.

This is an edition filled with incidental information which, as far as this typophile is concerned, is of tremendous historic value. It documents a world which simply doesn't exist anymore. It's a tribute to the hundreds of individuals who made type happen in this century, and it's a memorial to everything and every player who stepped onto the typographic stage in this century. It comes at an excellent time, because there are so many folks dabbling in type on the desktop platform these days who have the impression it's all happened within the past couple of years—that prior to Postscript and Adobe, simply nothing existed. Mac's book will put that notion to rest in an overwhelming way.

There's an anonymous quote on the dust jacket: "This volume belongs in every typographical library." I agree enthusiastically. Indeed, I have used the preliminary edition so very often in my own pursuits. But having that edition is a far cry from having the final edition. You simply must have this edition because it so much more complete, so much better put together, and is remarkably well produced, especially with regard to the actual specimens.

The synopsis of type-making which precedes the specimens is a very concise, thorough discussion of the subject and covers all kinds of matrix manufacture and utilization.

Likewise, the appendices are excellent and painstakingly accurate. Where else will you find a complete list of ATF or Ludlow or Lanston or Mergenthaler fonts?

If you're a type nut, you *must have* Mac's book. Sized 8½x11 inches, 376 pages plus 20 introductory pages, the book is available from Oak Knoll Books, 414 Delaware Street, New Castle, Delaware 19720. Call them at (302) 328-7232 for pricing and availability.

Lead Ain't Dead!

Regarding the level of interest in letterpress printing in his immediate area, Jim Rimmer of Vancouver, B.C., is pleased that in 1994 alone, he has been able to put five people in touch with presses and typecasters, which they all have purchased.

"There is a pronounced enthusiasm for the look of letterpress, possibly brought by the fact that almost all of the small printers here 'print' on variants of photocopiers, possessing not even a 1250 Multilith or AB Dick," Jim says.

There is that type of person—and there always has been—who can feel the difference instantly between mass garbage and the grace of good printing.

Jim continues: "Over the past six months, I have conducted five workshops in metal typography and lino cuts. These classes were sold out the first hour they were announced at the colleges. I find this re-affirming and heartwarming. It makes me feel I am not really so very odd to have 12 tons of stuff in my basement after all!"

A Reference Every Typecaster Will Cherish

Long-Awaited Rehak Book is Published

THE WELL ORGANIZED APPEARANCE OF Theo Rehak's new book, *Practical Typecasting*, is deceptive to a fault. All of us who have ever run or tried to run a typecasting machine know the really important information is found in scribbled notes, old photostats of technical drawings, confiscated letters from technicians of yesterday, and dirty manuals that long ago lost their binding.

In his "Afterword," Theo notes, "We have not merely arrived at the end of an era ... something of the grandeur of ancient times is about to be lost." His book is an excellent attempt to preserve some truly *practical* aspects of our ancient craft for generations which will, hopefully, follow. Those of us who carry on at present have had the good fortune of knowing at least a few old-time craftsmen who were able to pass along some of their practical knowledge to us. Opportunity for such face-to-face acquaintance with professional typecasters is literally at an end.

On page 61, Theo alludes to an attitude: "Do not show the new man *anything!* He will have your job soon enough anyway: the less he knows, the longer you will remain valuable." All of us have had such experiences, often with the craftsmen who used to operate the machinery we now own. Obviously they had some difficulty acquiring the knowledge they had, and they wanted to make sure we learned the hard way too—by trial and error. More than one craftsman I have known was resolute in withholding his knowledge even if it meant carrying it to the grave with him!

Now that American Type Founders is history, never again will there be opportunity for any individual to pick, nag, cajole and otherwise extract knowledge of the ancient craft from the few long-time employees of ATF who remained literally until the foundry's death. It's our collective good fortune that Theo Rehak devoted 12 years of his life to working at ATF (an undertaking representing great sacrifice, and even greater forbearance), making a valiant (and successful) effort to learn the trade while there still was an opportunity. This book documents much of what he was able to dredge from foggy memories and neglected (now lost) files. Most of the technical information presented matter-of-factly in the appendices and throughout the text simply is unavailable anywhere else. It represents thousands and thousands of hours of research, study, and experimentation and even if not a single word in the text had any value, the technical information is well worth the cost of the book.

You hear Stan Nelson talk of going back to Joseph Moxon's *Mechanick Exercises on the Whole Art of Printing*, done in 1683-84, to learn the process of hand typecasting. A principal reason is that little practical, revealing, and useful information has been published in the interim—until Theo's book was published. The ancient apprentice program passed information from the craftsman to the neophyte (if he played his cards right). It simply wasn't something which was written down, let alone published.

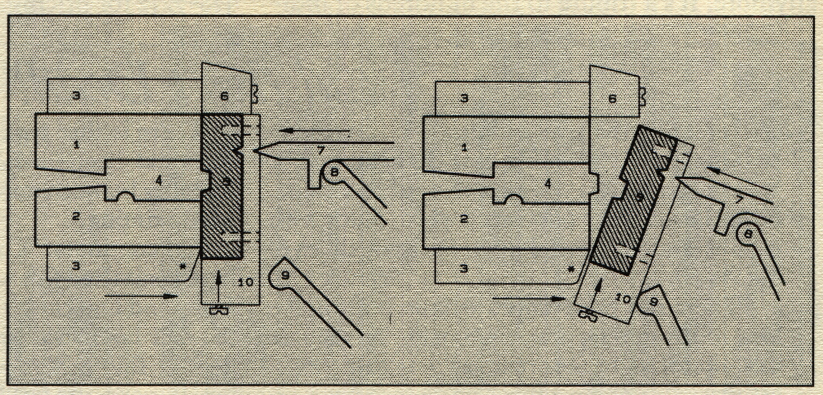


Diagram showing how the matrix is handled in a pivotal caster, one of many practical drawings and photographs to be found in Theo Rehak's PRACTICAL TYPECASTING.

What use is Theo's book? It's only of passing, ephemeral interest to the armchair typographer or person who fantasizes about someday becoming a typefounder. But if you're about to roll up your sleeves and delve into actually *becoming* a typefounder, you'll find Theo's book the kind of item quickly soiled and intently studied, word-for-word, propped open on the workbench by a hammer or screwdriver. Literally, it contains *essential* information, and along the way, also drops in a bit of humor, philosophy, and some real-world experiences worthy of not being repeated.

It's my personal conviction that *doing* is the best way of learning, especially when it comes to running machines. But it sure is a big help to have someone standing beside you advising you, giving you all the formulas, and telling you the ups and downs of the process. There's no way to duplicate the 12 years of intense study Theo invested in typecasting, but his book certainly is a laudable effort at recording the most important information.

Yes, his book indulges the Barth, pivotal, and other equipment peculiar to American Type Founders, but two points must be made: (a) the equipment might be unique, but the *process* is common to all typecasting and therefore quite valuable, and (b) ATF represented the paramount achievement in mass production of perhaps the best type made in the world and certainly any serious student of typecasting would benefit by knowing as much as possible about how ATF practiced the trade. And one also could complain that Theo indulges in discussion of highly specialized and extremely rare implements as if they were as common as lead. But it's better to know of a tool or process and seek to replicate that process, rather than to try to reinvent it totally from ignorance.

I knew of Theo's book long before it was published and I also know much was omitted simply in an effort to trim the book to an affordable size. I lament these omissions, but I praise and strongly recommend that you acquire your copy now. There'd be no indignity greater than heading down the trail of becoming a typecaster sometime in the future—and not having a copy of Theo's book to guide you!

Practical Typecasting by Theo Rehak, published in 1993 by Oak Knoll Books, New Castle, Delaware. Call them at (302) 328-7232 for pricing and availability.

Unique Monotype Fonts Acquired

By John Eickhoff

We frequently see new typefaces, for electronic production or for instant lettering, but new letterpress faces? That's something different!

I was offered 12-point Littleworth among a host of other faces by a firm in Bedfordshire. I examined the Monotype specimen sheet, decided the face was "different," and bought it along with half a dozen other fonts. A second face came with a box of Times bought from Cambridge University Press which looked interesting enough to cast, even though only capitals were available.

Later, I visited Duncan Avery, at Monotype, and asked for layout sheets (providing essential tables of character widths and machine components necessary for composition casting) for both faces. To both the name Littleworth and to a drawing of the second face, Duncan replied, "That's not one of ours." I assured him they were, for I had the mats, so he began a search.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz &
£1234567890 fiff ffffiffl .,-:;''!

Littleworth was found among the specimen sheets but the only other evidence of its existence was the production record. This showed one font of 12-point had been struck in 1929 and sent to the Monotype Printing Department, and that two fonts of 16-point had been struck in the early 1930's. Mats and punches probably were sold at a rationalization sale in the 1960's, but the firm had no idea where they went. I had bought the *only* composition font of a very rare face.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

The second face is officially known as Latin Open Face Roman, which I have changed to Acorn Outline, a name suggested to me when I first cast it. Duncan found it was not designed as a jobbing face but for the 4-line Maths Series. I do not know how it is used, but it is now available on film and so must still be used somewhere. The only characters cut are all of the capitals, five lowercase letters, and the figure 1. There is also an italic font, which I do not have, which contains only the capitals. Printers who have used it say it makes a good secondary display line on business stationery.

John Eickhoff a spare-time typefounder, operates under the name *Acorntype*. He may be reached at 28 Honey Hill Road, Kingswood, Bristol BS15 4HJ, England. Phone 0272-677903.

Study Program Proposed For Typecasting Aspirants

Prefaced by a Story of How a Collection Came to Be

June 20, 1971—On that date I mustered enough courage to fire up a Monotype machine and try to cast my own type. It been in my garage—where a car should have been parked—for many months while I procrastinated because I was fearful of what the machine *might* do.

Somehow I finally gathered the courage to turn it on, and the exhilaration of the moment has carried me a full 23 years as one of the small band of hearty souls who calls himself a "private typecaster."

My initial goals were quite modest. A single family of type matrices and a single machine. Somewhere those goals got buried under tons of additional equipment and now I find myself with a letterpress shop which would have been the envy of nearly all professional printers back in the 1950's and 60's.

First I will attempt to record the effort which has gone into assembling my plant. Then I'll explain the proposed 1995 workshop.

I Blame My Father

It's all my father's fault. He had a tremendous fascination with machinery, and especially precision instruments. This pitiful son had to stand or sit in his basement workshop while he explained things to me. He had a lathe, a drill press, grinder, jig saw, table saw, and all sorts of tools and instruments used for making components for his model railroad and model airplanes. He not only assembled kits, he did things "from scratch," including turning out an O-gauge Hudson locomotive in brass on his lathe, and doing all the finishing work including placing all the miniature rivets wherever they were supposed to be.

My interest in printing was instantaneous when I entered a printing classroom in the seventh grade. I had illusions of being a big-time writer or editor. Being able to do the publishing myself really turned me on. By the eighth grade, I was hooked. My printing instructor did nothing to dissuade me—he gave me my first composing stick and my first case of type.

Santa Didn't Bring a Press

Dad encouraged my activities. He built my first typecase stand, drove me to old shops across Charleston, W. Va. (where I grew up), and allowed me to set up in a comfortable basement corner close to his tools. The next Christmas, I was the most unhappy kid alive. Santa knew all I wanted was a printing press but didn't comply. I cried all day.

Mom tried to explain the difficulty in finding such an unusual gift for a child, but that did little to appease me. She promised to go half-and-half with me (I carried newspapers and therefore had a source of income) if and when a printing press could be found. Indeed, it was mom who spotted the classified ad the next summer, and it was dad (using Grandad Hopkins' truck) who went after the beast with me when we bought it. This was a 7x11 Pearl and I still use that neat little gem—clear evidence that I don't easily abandon projects once they're undertaken.

I did a modest amount of commercial work through my high school years, printing invitations to parties, programs, business cards, and most anything else folks would entrust to me.

Probably the biggest job I took on was printing 20,000 charge receipts for the neighborhood grocery. It took me a week to hand-feed them one-up and this made me realize for the first time that type could wear out.

An adequate supply of type always seemed to be my problem. I made my first type purchase from American Type Founders in 1954. Even then, it was expensive. There was a Monotype sorts caster at my high school which the instructor used during summer to make the type students had in their cases. I daydreamed about getting a chance to work with him and possibly make some type for myself, but it never happened.

I Skipped Our Date—for Printing

My years in college took me away from home and my shop (except during holiday breaks), but I quickly became acquainted with the typography instructor in the journalism school and soon had free run of that shop, including a Heidelberg letterpress and Linotype machine. I became adept at running both machines. While at school, I met a neat girl who was at least tolerant of my growing affliction. I stood her up one evening in favor of working with my instructor on a printing project he was undertaking. She should have gotten the message about my priorities then, but instead, became my bride and has put up with me—and my printing—for over 33 years.

In 1964, I discovered a Monotype caster at Mathews Printing in Charleston and arranged to have a case filled with type cast on the machine. The operator quoted $23. When finished, the bill came to $64. I got the bill adjusted, but this was the beginning of a lifetime of over-extended financial resources in pursuit of boundless typographic lusts.

I had a strong fascination with hand-set type and after Lynda and I were married, I stored typecases on top of the refrigerator in our apartment when I was in grad school. (The landlord probably never figured how we managed to scratch up the top of the refrigerator!) Back then, much was said about the superiority of hand-set type, and I believed it. Therefore, I didn't take Linotype too seriously as an instrument for my beginning private press projects, though I did use it frequently. I consummated my first "deal" with the Lanston Monotype Company in 1967 when I bought special roman *ſt* and *ſt* matrices for Garamont. Typefounders of that day said the characters didn't exist. I knew better, so I bought the mats and sent them off to be cast.

Constant moving in our first years after marriage prevented extensive private press activities, even though I always seemed to have a press and a case of type nearby. The big chance came when Lynda and I bought our first home near Morgantown. I was just getting out of the Army and the Government paid for moving all my personal stuff from my childhood home in the Charleston area, where Lynda had lived while I was overseas. I managed to include my teen-age collection of typecases and press in that move, so at last, I was to have it with me and I could really get serious about having a private press.

At the time, my intimacy with a Monotype consisted of three afternoons at a Monotype keyboard in Hempstead, New York, where (while in the Army) I managed to gain part-time employment making up forms and doing general shop work for a one-man operation that specialized in limited editions. Had I not been sent to Vietnam, I possibly would have remained there and become owner of that shop, for the owner was astounded by my interest in the machine and knowledge of it—gained simply from reading about it.

Displaced by a Four-Color Press

Offset was making tremendous inroads in the commercial world and Rose City Press (which had taken over Mathews after bankruptcy) decided to go big-time with a four-color press and a bunch of new Compugraphic equipment. That giant step eventually caused RCP to file for bankruptcy too, but a short-term result was a homeless Monotype —and I was asked if I wanted to buy it. Naïve as I was, I made my $200 offer and ended up owner of the whole Monotype department. It had not been used for several years and all operators had retired.

At this point I hasten to note that I had my eye on many other shops too. This just hap-

pened to be the first one where I was able to negotiate a deal. On numerous occasions, the shops ended up being junked simply because their owners refused to let a "hobbyist" have the equipment. These were the tools they'd worked with all their lives and they feared the equipment would be put to use in competition against them.

I called long-distance and asked my dad to arrange for a U-Haul. I would be down Friday night with a student (Frank Parke). He was going to drive the truck back and I would follow in my Volkswagen. The folks at Rose City had everything skidded and on the loading dock ready for my arrival. Things went too well. Forklifts, pallet jacks and stuff like that made loading incredibly easy.

A pattern would emerge with our late-night arrival back at home with a truck to be unloaded. This predicament was explained to fellow members of my Sunday school class the next morning, and several men volunteered to help after church.

Some of them had moved heavy stuff before and knew how to use crow bars, blocks of wood, and brains (rather than brawn) to ease the top-heavy monster to the concrete floor without even a heavy thump.

Safely inside the garage, the Monotype remained for several months while I planned and made all the connections. I needed to run a gas line, an electric line, water, drainage (into a bucket) and I needed compressed air.

My dad figured I should get the machine running. Thus, every time my folks called, dad would inquire. My excuse: I needed an air compressor. I could have cast sorts without the air compressor, but I didn't know that at the time. Finally, dad gave up, bought a compressor and shipped it to me. He knew money—more than anything else—was inhibiting progress. To his credit, the same compressor serves well even today in my hobby shop.

An Explosion That Didn't Happen

In my high school days, I'd heard students talking about metal pots exploding when they were heated up because of expansion—that you never turned them off without emptying them. Mine was full of metal, so I was quite fearful of what might happen when I lit the gas flame for the first time. I even asked Kathy, my daughter, not to go into her bedroom above the machine during this first test. Experience has since shown me that this fear was totally unfounded, but at the time, I kept a safe distance from the machine until I could see the metal had turned to a liquid with no explosion whatever.

I also feared I would overheat the mold, so a flow of water was moving through the mold sufficient to cool a steel foundry, but what did I know? I knew that in the "neutral" matrix position the machine would cast an 18-unit quad so I replaced the quad matrix with a nifty border element which I would surely cast in huge quantities before the day was ended.

A Day's Work: One Letter

Cautiously, I turned the machine by hand and to my astonishment, I cast an *fff* ligature instead of the border piece—with the face half off the body and hardly a body anyway because of the chilled mold. Heavy water flow instantly froze the nozzle and to my disgust, I went to bed several hours later without getting another piece of type out of the machine. The 200-mile move, coupled with several idle years, had gotten adjustment out of whack, and I was unable to conquer so many problems at once. But at least I had cast my first piece of type. *My day of infamy had arrived.*

Getting familiar with the machine didn't happen overnight. My ancient (1921, I believe) operator's manual was sufficient to do the job even though it was written with the assumption that you'd been to the Monotype School at Philadelphia. I confess that it took two full days to figure out how to remove the mold for the first time, and I ran the machine nearly three months before I found the lever which sent the cast type to the galley.

Soon after I got the first Mono, I started pursuing a second career as a weekly newspaper publisher. This diversion kept me away from my Monotype and basement shop more than I care to admit. Always having a bent for doing "a better job," I found myself pulling repro proofs of headlines and ads (hand-set in my basement shop and then inserted in the

paper, which was offset-printed). Otherwise I had little time for the hobby shop.

When I found time to work on the caster is a mystery to me, yet I fought and eventually subdued it. By 1973 I made my newspaper career full-time, and ended my teaching job at West Virginia University. With total disregard for the prospect of failure, I uprooted my young family and moved to Terra Alta, W. Va. The hobby shop was moved piecemeal (I commuted to TA twice a week, and took a car full of stuff with each trip). But I left hauling the Monotype and my Pearl Press to professional movers who were to bring them with our household goods. This was the only move ever done for me by professional movers, and the only move which nearly ended in disaster.

My Only "Professional" Move

The mover had unloaded almost everything at our new home in Terra Alta by walking down an aluminum ramp extending from the back of the truck. When he came to the tailgate with my precious Monotype, I expressed concern over whether the ramp would hold everything. "No problem," he assured me. I instructed everyone to jump clear of the machine if the ramp did go. Sure enough, halfway down the ramp it folded up like a cardboard box and I watched in horror as my Monotype crashed to the ground. The men did jump clear, but one had the presence of mind to immediately swing around and steady the machine after it hit bottom. The result: nothing broken, no one hurt!

I hadn't thought much about matrices when I bought my Monotype, and to my displeasure, the only "decent" face I had was Century Expanded. The machine had been used chiefly for tabular work and there were about seven fonts of 6-point Modern Condensed with Gothic 49 as a boldface, but who in his right mind would want to cast that stuff? (I still haven't.) So a never-ending search for additional matrices began.

Mother Appreciates Baskerville

One occasion particularly haunts me. My parents arrived for a weekend visit to see the grandchildren. That same Friday, a sale flier had arrived from Erie, Pa., announcing the liquidation of a Monotype plant. I had called and found the Baskerville 353 series could be had for only $200.00. I went through the motions of hospitality all weekend, but the prospect of acquiring Baskerville matrices distracted me. Mothers have a sixth sense about things of this nature. Mom knew I would be hard-put to come up with the money, so near the end of their stay, she volunteered to give me a check in lieu of my birthday, Christmas and other traditional gifts for the year. I was elated; mom and dad probably were just relieved.

Another early acquisition was also assisted by dad, who bid on and won a "Monotype smelter" advertised by the school board back home. I got all the matrices and other paraphernalia from the high school shop where I had learned printing; the instructor had retired and they could find no one capable of continuing what once was an excellent program.

Disasters in New York

Trips to New York to attend auctions never worked out too well, but I went anyway. I attended one auction in lower Manhattan and was a successful bidder on a few manageable lots. I was to return the next morning to pay the bill and pick up my goodies. Lynda and the girls would relax in Central Park until I returned and then we'd drive home. The auction was unbelievably disorganized and all buyers were outraged. I had no way of calling Lynda, nor would anyone hold my place in line if I left. When I arrived to retrieve the family—over three hours late—Lynda was so steamed she didn't say a word to me until we'd driven clear across New Jersey.

On another occasion in New York, I got all the preliminaries out of the way only to find the building's elevator inaccessible and the loading dock blocked by un-attended trucks. I searched until near exhaustion; suddenly a shadowy "advisor" pulled me aside saying $40 would solve my problems. It was $40 I didn't have, but that's what it took for me to get my stuff on the elevator, and my pickup truck to the dock to load up my first Thompson machine and a bunch more matrices. When I arrived back home I stopped first at the office.

Folks observing my arrival asked what was on the truck, and before I knew it, volunteers were following me to my home to help unload the truck. Money? They wouldn't consider it. And you ask why I chose to live in a small town?

On All Fours—Searching for Mats

My family was constantly drawn into my expeditions. I documented my first major matrix acquisition in a little booklet entitled, *In Quest of Typographic Treasures at the Archabbey.* I still can see my two lovely daughters crawling on their hands and knees through those dark, filthy hallways searching for loose matrices. But because of their efforts, several incomplete fonts became complete fonts.

On another occasion, Lynda and I drove cross-country to Chicago in a 13-year-old Volkswagen, surviving two breakdowns and a flat tire, detouring to meet a guy at 6 a.m. in Dayton, Ohio, so I could pick up a treasured "type notcher" I found available there. By this time I had ended my newspaper career and started a commercial *offset* shop. But still I was obsessed with Monotype.

Pittsburgh Is Mine!

My first full shop was from a legendary typography house in Pittsburgh, Edwin H. Stuart, Inc. The company's owner was phasing out Monotype primarily because of the high cost and unavailability of qualified workers. Over two years of negotiations finally landed the "deal." Everything in Monotype was mine and what I didn't take would be junked. When I arrived for the pickup, the man in charge—a long-time employee with an overwhelming devotion to the craft—refused to accept the fact that any sale might be made. He tracked the boss all over Pittsburgh and finally got confirmation. Reluctantly, I was allowed to start the move. I took only one of the six casters (there have been dozens of casters not taken in my "deals"). This man was so devastated by the affair that he died of a massive heart attack one week later as he awaited the Grant Street trolley, which he rode home every evening.

I have nearly all the Monotype ever housed at Pittsburgh, beginning with the Stuart shop and ending—in early 1990—by picking a few loose matrices off the floor at what once was a massive in-house plant at Westinghouse Electric. In between, I acquired equipment from Herbick & Held, William G. Johnston, Davis & Warde, Carnegie-Mellon University (the legendary typography laboratory), and probably other shops I've forgotten. A pattern had developed. I had gained the reputation as being the only idiot in three states silly enough to go after Monotype equipment.

Probably the most bizarre situation developed around 1979-80 when I received a call from Ron Harlowe, owner of Harlowe Typography in Brentwood, Maryland, a Washington suburb. He'd somehow gotten my name as a person interested in obtaining Monotype equipment. I was in the throes of moving my commercial plant and a dozen other projects, so I gave him less than my usual burst of excitement. He insisted on sending me a list, which arrived the next day. The headline read "Over $100,000 of Equipment for Sale—Only $10,000"; it was the most detailed list of machines, parts, and matrices I have ever seen in such a situation. Included were two Monomatic II casters and three Monomatic keyboards, all bought new in 1975.

Mono Shop Closed by a Gunman

The demise of this Monotype department was, indeed, a sad one. The firm had been established by Ron's father years earlier in Washington, D. C., and had earned the reputation as the premier typesetting firm in the region. Ron had taken over management while the firm was still all hot metal. One afternoon, a drug-crazed intruder burst into the plant, robbed all the employees and held everyone at gunpoint for an extended period. Ron resolved to immediately move the plant away from the city. In assessing use of equipment, he concluded that even though over $100,000 had been put into updating Monotype just a couple of years earlier, he could not rationalize reinstalling Monotype in Brentwood. He kept the equipment in storage and had been attempting to sell it for nearly three years.

I visited several days after his call and we agreed on a sale—$1,000 for everything. I was

embarrassed, but that was the best I could offer. When I arrived a few weeks later on a Saturday afternoon, Ron was there with three employees ready to help. Believe me, this was unusual. Generally, you're left to fend for yourself, and face nothing but hostility from anyone that might be around. That's why I had two employees, Pat and Chris DeLauder, with me. I intended to take only two casters, a keyboard and all the matrices and parts, but before I knew what was happening, Ron had talked me into taking a total of five machines, three keyboards, and several other shop implements. His folks put everything on the truck while the three of us stood watching. I never stopped to think just how overloaded the 28-foot U-Haul was until we were high in the mountains of Western Maryland. Fortunately, we got back safely.

Manure Forks Come In Handy

Unloading was a unique situation too. I'd arranged with George Ringer, who owns a farm nearby, and he met me with his tractor equipped with manure forks on the front. The forks went right under the skids and in less than an hour, all machines were safely in my garage and out of the falling snow. Inspection revealed most of the matrices were new. Monomatics are radically different from standard Monotypes (they were Lanston's last hurrah, introduced woefully late in the game, totally eclipsed by cold type equipment), and I've not been able to devote time to learning how to operate them—yet!

Only on one other occasion did I run into help when attempting to move a plant. I had negotiated with Bill Darney, a man who'd cut his teeth on Monotype and though he'd moved into photocomposition, he had a strong interest in preserving the Mono department at Davis & Warde, Pittsburgh's other major typographer. Mac McGrew, a professional and hobbyist in Pittsburgh, told Bill to call me.

I expected it would be a difficult move, because all the equipment was still connected and on the fifth floor of the building. Upon arrival, I was told everything was *mine except the matrices.* I was mortified. Keybars, wedges, machines—nothing was worth anything without the matrices. "Well maybe if you talk to the boss yourself you can convince him," I was told. But the boss was busy with customers. Finally, at 2:30 p.m., I got my chance. Nearly 1½ hours later, I won the argument and received a go-ahead to make the move.

Bill and I rushed out of the office, knowing I had only an hour before closing. I was desperate, thinking I had rented a truck and made the three-hour trip for nothing. To my surprise, Bill had anticipated the outcome and had workers completely dismantle the shop. Everything was on the loading dock ready for me to haul it away. Indeed, I did make a second trip, but only because I had totally underestimated what was there. Sadly, I had to leave all ten casters for the wrecking crew.

Worst Experiences: USGPO

My worst experiences at making deals and moving equipment were with the U. S. Government Printing Office at Washington. The GPO's procedure for disposing of equipment is cumbersome and involves sealed bids, so you're at a total loss as to what you should offer or who you might be up against. And, of course, you must wade through hundreds of monthly sale mailings for a tremensous variety of equipment in hopes you might find something of relevance. Even getting on the bidding list was difficult. A steady flow of surplus equipment lists passed through my hands—so frequently that I started neglecting them. Wouldn't you believe it? I missed the critical listing. Fortunately, Stan Nelson, who works with the Smithsonian's printing exhibit, called from Washington, alerting me.

Two Bids Won—No Merchandise

What remained of Monotype (the GPO once had over 150 casters on its floor), was still set up. I had a great chance to see what was there and bid accordingly. The problem, however, was that though I had asked for clarification, after the fact, I learned they were offering only the cabinets, etc., and not their contents. Thus, I ended up with machines and cabinets, but nothing else (such as molds, spare parts and matrices). In fact, I bid on and won the molds in the next sale too, but never

got them because of inefficiency and pilfering at the GPO.

On loading day, they took forever to process very simple paperwork and again I was up against deadlines when the truck loading began. They literally chased me out of the loading area so they could close the gates. I found myself bouncing down Pennsylvania Avenue with a truck fully loaded with unsecured top-heavy equipment in the back. Of course, a taxicab cut me off. I could hear the machines and cabinets tumbling in the back when I hit the brakes. Thankfully, nothing crashed through the side of the truck. I was in the Virginia suburbs before I was able to pull over and assess the damage, which was extensive. I had no way of lifting the equipment upright, so just I came on home.

Acquisitions have spanned over three decades. When I began, Monotype and especially Linotype were still the predominate means for setting type. I was literally taking working tools away from craftsmen caught in the transition. I adhere to my original idea of using the equipment I have acquired. I taught myself to use the Monotype, the Sorts Caster, The Super Caster, the Thompson, and even the Material Maker. And I have done a lot of letterpress printing too.

Manufacturing "Birdcages"

Until the ATF organization came about, I was forced to function independently, with little knowledge of what others might be doing as typecasters. The professional type-making world was still falling apart and the amateur typecaster hadn't become recognized as anything legitimate. Fortunately, the thrust of the ATF group has changed that.

We've benefitted greatly from visits to our meetings by Harry Wearn, who worked in various capacities with Monotype England for over 40 years. It's absolutely astounding how much we don't know about our machines, and Harry has done a lot to ease that situation. When he was at the Hill & Dale in 1988 for the ATF Conference, helping me cast (for the first time) on my English Composition Caster, he initially was getting quite awful results. He made constant reference to "birdcages." The term plagued me until I finally saw the parallel. A piece of type which had only flimsy fins of metal for a body is what Harry was calling a birdcage. Over the years, I have been quite adept at birdcages. Indeed, that first piece of type I cast in 1971 was a excellent birdcage.

My Changing Objectives

By the mid 1980's, I found myself with more than enough equipment, but I then was being asked—begged—by those professionals who still had equipment to come and rescue what I could. That's when my shop grew extensively, and my concerns necessarily shifted from printing to sorting and inventorying the materials I was acquiring. The largest single acquisition of matrices was, by far, made when I acquired what remained of Baltotype from Herb Czarnowsky in the late 1980's. He had picked up additional equipment after Baltotype folded, and it took me over a year to haul the mats, machines and other stuff from Baltimore, a van load at a time.

From the beginning, preserving letterpress equipment was my hobby goal, while my professional goal was to keep up with technology. All sorts of systems passed through my hands as things accelerated—from the ancient Friden Justowriter and typewriter-like Varityper to the more recent Compugraphic Editwriter and Varityper 6400 digital system. Late in 1984, Linotype brazenly adopted the Postscript language for its typesetters. Now, every manufacturer offers Postscript and laser-generated type, graphics and photos. The entire photocomposition world disappeared in six years. They don't even call them typesetters anymore. Now they're imagesetters.

Today's Pace is Incomparable

Compare this pace of change against a backdrop of Monotype machinists and operators who spent their entire working careers—often spanning 40 and more years—working on and operating literally the same machines. With this slower pace of development, typography, letter design, machine improvements, and careful study of æsthetics, all were a developed into a wonderful body of knowledge. Now, there seems to be absolutely no time for

such information and that unrecognized body of knowledge is totally neglected on the back shelves of musty libraries.

I'll be the first to admit total fascination with the do-it-yourself aspects of modern composition and page makeup (desktop publishing), yet I know first-hand that the disciplined, planned, thoroughly studied ways of letterpress production still have lots to offer—especially when put to use producing volumes wonderfully described as "typographic books" in yesteryear.

Much has been lost with today's speed and impersonal computer-generated production. Compositors (even the term is now lost) no longer have the intimate feel of perfecting their product while working out widows, orphans, bad breaks, too many breaks, lines that are too tight, lines that are too loose, and "rivers of white." The compositor of yesteryear was an intimate extension of the author and made a significant contribution in helping that author communicate most effectively.

A Goal for the Next Ten Years

It has been only recently that I came to the realization that I possess both the equipment and a body of knowledge that few others retain. Having gone through the period when skilled typographers adamantly refused to share their knowledge with anyone, I am quickly realizing I must make a solid effort to share my knowledge with others. Otherwise, the skills will disappear.

For that reason, I have decided to devote a full month each summer offering to and working with a newer generation of individuals seriously interested in using and preserving the ancient processes. Each year, I will work with three to five individuals, offering them my knowledge of machines and other tools, and availing them full use of my equipment in producing their works while learning the processes. That body of knowledge will include design, copyfitting, Monotype keyboarding, Monotype composition, display casting, imposition, makeup, makeready, and letterpress printing using the Heidelberg 10x15 "windmill," the Heidelberg 15x20 cylinder letterpress, and Vandercook Model 5.

Three Objectives

There will be three objectives. First will be to acquaint new individuals with the old processes through a strong hands-on experience. Second will be to carry to completion a booklet, small book, or other similar project which represents a strong interest of the "learner," and meets my requirements as a "teaching project." Third will be to help and assist these "new converts" in the acquisition of equipment so that they will be able to continue their newly learned skills in their own home shops.

Individuals will come to Terra Alta and will live in nearby commercial lodging for the month. Each individual must provide his/her own lodging and meals and must pay $200 toward materials to be used during the sessions. There will be no other fees.

Sessions will be both one-on-one at the Hill & Dale Press and Typefoundry, in a classroom setting, and also as independent work at the Hill & Dale. Days (including evenings) will be long and intense, for the objective will be to pack as much in as possible.

If you're interested in becoming a student in one of these summer sessions in the cool hills of West Virginia, you're encouraged to write to me for further details.

Only with the success of such an endeavor will my acquisition and careful inventorying and sorting of all my letterpress paraphernalia come to some meaningful conclusion. It's an amazing technology. The machines are absolute mechanical marvels. Being successful at making one run is a major reward in itself. Success of this program will assure a working knowledge of our letterpress tradition will be carried into the 21st century. I only hope there are folks out there who share my interest in preserving the past. If you're one, I hope to hear from you.

Where to Write

Write to Richard L. Hopkins, Post Office Box 263, Terra Alta, West Virginia 26764. It's best to call in the evening—phone number is (304) 789-6153.

U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 1925 Report:

Lead Poisoning Is Statistically Remote

A wave of absurd paranoia is taking the United States by storm regarding an unrealistic view that anything even remotely hazardous should be done away with totally, regardless of whether the hazard is real, controllable, or imagined. Of course, we amateur typefounders are gravely affected by real, but mostly imagined fears of lead poisoning.

Advice offered in the last *ATF Newsletter* suggested simple ways of minimizing your own risk in handling lead. But the question remained as to whether a real health hazard existed and was tabulated back in the days when literally thousands of persons made their daily wages handling lead in the printing trades. Some interesting insight is gained from a U. S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics publication done in September, 1925, entitled *Survey of Hygienic Conditions in The Printing Trades.* (I've had the volume in my library. I just never really looked at it before!)

Approximately 1,000 plants were visited in all, and detailed reports were made of surveys of 536 establishments employing 81,314 people in the following trades: composition (typesetting, machine composition, hand composition), typefounding, plate making (photo-engraving, stereotyping, electrotyping, wood, copperplate and steel-die engraving), presswork (platen, cylinder, rotary magazine and newspaper, and others), binding, ink grinding, roller making and auxiliary work.

From the summary on page 2: "Practically all the hazards created by the various operations can be eliminated by sensible precautions, and there is really no necessity for any more danger to the health of the workers in the printing trades than would be encountered through employment in office work or any other indoor occupation."

Lighting and ventilation were considered major problems. Some plants still were utilizing gas lights when the survey was taken. The majority of the plants depended on natural ventilation, principally by opening the windows. Obviously, this was not considered satisfactory.

Tuberculosis and lead poisoning were listed as the top two problems in the industry. Tuberculosis cases totaled 29; only 14 cases of lead poisoning were reported from among the 81,314 individuals surveyed.

From page 203: "Acute and violent cases of lead poisoning were seldom found or heard of during the survey. The rarity of these cases is borne out by the mortality statistics issued by the U. S. Bureau of the Census, which gives the death rate for lead poisoning per 100,000 enumerated population ... as 0.2. This is significant when one considers that over 100 different occupations are engaged in industrial use of lead, some of which are constantly exposed to lead.... The lead used in the printing process is in metallic form which is relatively insoluble, except when oxidized by exposure to the air...."

As indicated, there were 14 reported cases: 8 compositors, 5 stereotypers, and 1 lithograph artist.

Page 205: "In one of the two type foundries surveyed it was stated that only one case of lead poisoning had occurred, 15 years ago, and the other one stated that no case had been found during the past five years. Among the employees in one of these plants 14 trade workers were found past 60 years of age, and in the other plant, 16. All, except two, claimed they had never been afflicted with lead poisoning. One of the two, a 64-year-old type dresser, stated he had an attack of alleged lead poisoning for two weeks 44 years ago, and ... the other, a 62-year-old type inspector, mentioned an attack of lead colic over 40 years ago. Both of these establishments had the employees examined regularly for possible affliction."

Fumes, dust (especially in cases of old type), were cited, as possible risks, but it was concluded the most likely exposure was deposit of oxide on the hands being conveyed into the mouth. Eating in the workroom and carelessness in washing the hands were cited as the most likely reasons for contacting lead poisoning.

This information has been reproduced for two reasons: (1) to allay growing fears we ourselves might be developing (because of the hysteria prevalent throughout the country) and detailing some sensible precautions, and (2) to provide everyone with some solid details to pass along to distraught friends regarding the remoteness of lead poisoning when simple precautions are taken.

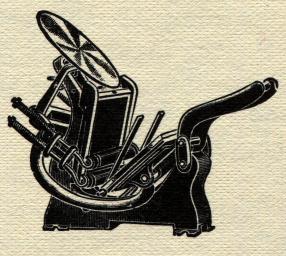
A final thought: keep in mind the thousands of people covered by this report worked at printing full-time and that meant a lot more than 40 hours a week back in 1925. Their exposure surely was several times more intense than any exposure we might have as part-time typecasters and hobbyists.

Our Readers Write!

In hand as a response from Laurence Pion of Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, Canada, is a four-page full-size newspaper which he publishes monthly titled *The Reviewer*. He does it on a pony Miehle (circa 1892) and the publication features an ad for "up-to-the-minute typographic services featuring the latest in 1920's type machines: Intertype, Monotype, Ludlow and Elrod."

"I especially enjoyed the Kelsey story, as I had a Kelsey press when I was 10 years old."

—Gordon K. Rouze, Houston, Texas



"The day after I read your Kelsey article, my son, came in with a little gift—a cut of a Kelsey press he picked up at an antique store in Annapolis. It's pretty old but in rather decent condition. I do believe it's the model press my dad bought for me (a used 5x8) when I was in the seventh grade and had just taken printing. That was in 1939." —Jim Kapplin, Baltimore, Md.

"I must admit I reacted most to the Kelsey story. I picked up my first press, a 5x8, at the plant in Meriden in 1949. We (I) cut short a vacation on Cape Cod and Martha's Vineyard so I could pick it up early. My wife still hasn't forgiven me. ... Regarding Ed Rayher's problem: OSHA wants everybody to live in a hermetically sealed cocoon. Phooey!" —Al Fick, Cottonwood, Ariz.

"What a typographical treat! No. 17 brought back memories to me, especially on page 14 where you picture a 5x8 Kelsey hand press and cabinet. It was in 1925 when I bought one of these and to a large extent learned my printing trade with it. Lamentably, the press is gone, but the cabinet is still in use at Graphic Crafts, Inc. (my commercial shop, now run by my son). Our company is now 68 years old, so you can guess if I established it in 1925, I'm no youngster (84 years) and I love this business as much as ever."

—Richard Huss, Sr., Lancaster, Pa.

"Thanks for latest *ATF Newsletter*. Again a beautiful piece of work and indeed labor intensive to say the least. The presswork is immaculate but I, who once complained that the book was printed offset, would not only forgive you for doing the whole thing offset, I would praise you. Letterpress seems harder all the time, more difficult to do right—without the industry backing you. Or is it that I'm getting old?"

—Vance Gerry, Pasadena, Calif.

"Just got to page 14 of latest *ATF Newsletter*. That cut is a picture of *my* Kelsey cabinet. Only difference is that the 5x8 is bolted to an additional plywood top which is clamped to the cabinet. Mine contains a drawer, one blank ⅔ case, and nine ⅔ Yankee cases."

—Ed Weber, San Francisco, Calif.

"It was worth the wait to see my Lydian Bold wooden ABC, XYZ on your cover."

—David Kent, Austin Tex.

Editor's note: David loaned the wood type characters to me for use with the Chappell article many years ago. I publicly apologize to him for holding the letters so long, and then forgetting to acknowledge the source of the letters in *Newsletter 17*. I apologize again. —Rich

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"I am one of the few 100% letterpress commercial production shops. No fax, no film, no copy, no chemicals, no blankets, no computers, and if necessary, no electric, for I have foot treadles and oil lamps. Bring on the ink and paper!" —Francis Stanley, Richmond, Ind.

"Andy (Birsh) and I are setting up a letterpress shop here in New York City and plan to have hot metal. As of yet, I can't give any details, but we're interested in getting into Monotype casting. If you have any leads on shops being sold in our area, let us know!"

—Howard M. Bratter, 85 East 10th St., Apt. 6-Q
New York City 10003

"Thank you for the beautiful designed and printed newsletters. I can only imagine the time and effort you put into them. That makes them so much more special. I'm 64 and started in a job shop at 18.

—Joseph Blass, Mount Carmel, Pa.

"Things are really hectic here in the shop—the Linotype is red hot trying to cope with a workload that is increasing as Christmas draws ever nearer. Who said lead was dead? My experience certainly disproves that statement; may well have to expand yet again to keep pace with demand."

—Bruce Anderton, Shipley Slugset,
Bingley, West Yorkshire, U. K.

"Warren Chappell's "Reminiscences" (in *Newsletter 17)* cover a time that I knew. His three factors of letterpress printing are understandable to letterpress workers: shape of the alphabet, means of translating it into type, and the integrity of the impression. I might wonder how an ordinary pressman would react to being admonished to watch the integrity of his impression."

—Emerson Wulling, LaCrosse, Wis.

Jim Rimmer Uses Lanston Punches To Strike 'Goudy Bible' Matrices

By Jim Rimmer

In the late 1920's, Frederic Goudy produced a typeface named Goudy Newstyle, which was used by his Village Typefoundry in supplying fonts to patrons—until the entire facility was destoyed by fire.

Bruce Rogers was commissioned to design the *World Lecturn Bible* in the 1930's and decided Goudy's Newstyle face should be used. Considering the size of the project, it was only logical that the design be made to work on the Monotype Composition Caster. Working with Sol Hess, and with Goudy's blessing, the design was reworked to fit the unit rows of the die case. In the process, certain small revisions were made to the design, resulting in its being renamed Goudy Bible. It was sympathetic to the original, and was cut only in 18 point.

Original Mats Were Large Comp

It is my understanding that only the one die case of matrices was ever struck, although it is possible others were made and sold. According to the current holder of the Lanston material, Gerald Giampa, the former is true, though there may have been a set of rough and unjustified strikes made when the punches were in the possession of Mackenzie-Harris.

Giampa kindly lent me the punches so that I could make a set of flat mats for use on the Monotype sorts caster. In going through the box of punches, we noted there were three small capitals in the box: ORD. We went on a search for another box that might hold the balance of the small caps, but after a lengthy search, we gave up.

I remembered that a local Bible supply store had a large Bible on a lecturn in its front window and on inquiry was delighted to see find it was a copy of the very same Bible. On studying the Bible, I realized wherever it appeared (which is quite frequently, by the way) the word Lord was set cap and small caps. Thus, it's likely the remaining small caps never were cut.

To make my matrices, I bought a length of 1¼"x⅜" copper bus bar and cut it up into one-inch lengths. I milled the side and head bearing surfaces to a perfect right angle and filed off the slight corner burrs. Since I intended (initially) to cast my fonts on the Thompson caster, I stripped the backing shoe out of the Thompson matrix holder so it would accommodate my matrices (which were going to be much thicker than standard Monotype display matrices). My reason for the thicker matrices was a feeling that the extra thickness would minimize the chance that the blanks would curl up as the punch was driven in. I milled all the blanks to .303" and lapped them on cutting cloth and then polished them on denim with copper polish to have a mirror finish for the image surface of the matrices.

Side Bearings on Wrong Side

Because the side bearing built into the punches was intended for composition matrices instead of display matrices, I had to account for this when I built a striking jig to punch the mats. (Side bearing is fixed to the right edge of composition matrices; just the opposite is true for display matrices.)

It stood to reason that a narrow letter punch like "i" would have some deadwood on the non side-bearing side of the punch. To make up for this, I shifted the matrix blank a little on each of the narrower letters to eliminate the need to have to mill off a lot of metal when side fitting the mats.

I made it so the widest letters (m, w, M, W) would have about a 9 point side bearing and brought all the narrow letters as close to this (a point or so) to get them into rough justi-

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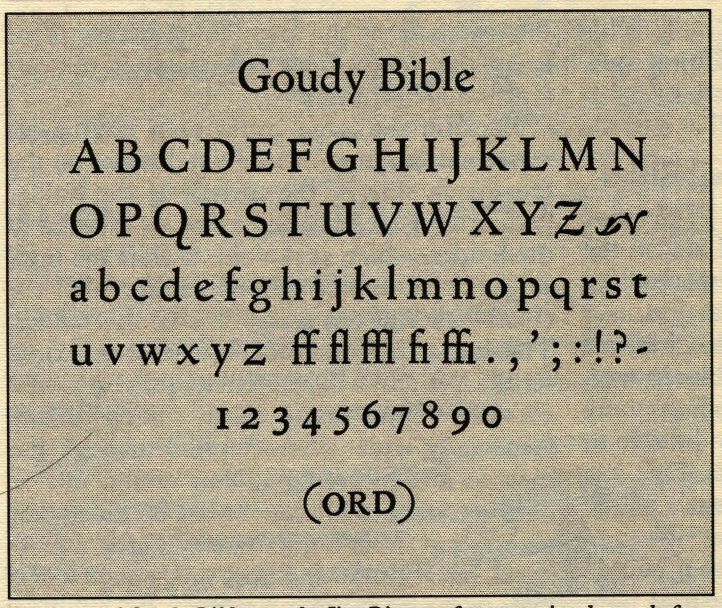
Jim Rimmer, a resident of Vancouver, B. C. (Canada) is an innovative and skilled artist when it comes to type design. Working exclusively in the hot metal/letterpress arena, he has done various original designs (one named Fellowship after our organization), as well as various revivals and adaptations. The following quote reflects his enthusiasm: "I just turned 60 and I don't feel any different than when I was 20. This type thing is just the greatest. I hope I live to be 100!'



Specimen of Goudy Bible, cast by Jim Rimmer from matrices he made from original Monotype punches.

fication. This left me room to second-guess the setwise fitting of the mats.

I made my striking jig on my *hobbyist* milling machine—that name appropriately reflects my machining skills. The striking jig works well. That fact that it produces a slightly rough finish is of no concern to me.

When striking mats, I made up a feeler gauge .052" thick, which I placed between the piston of the hydraulic press and the stop plate. I pumped the press so that the punch was pressed slowly into the copper, and when my feeler gauge was just trapped by the piston of the press, I knew I had a depth of drive of .052" or thereabouts.

The next step was to re-mill the side bearing to take off the side swell created by the punch displacing copper as it was pressed into the blank. Similarly, I took off the surface swell, which was removed by rubbing on a file held in the vise. I don't own a needle depth gauge, so I did trial casts on the Thompson to check the height. In most cases all I needed to mill off the surface was .001". The rest was lapped again and recast until the depth of drive was .050", making the type .918".

Unfortunately, no specifications were to be found in Lanston files regarding die case arrangement or the unit values of each character, so I proceeded to fit each letter of the font according to dimensions of the neck of the punch. It was easy to see on each punch that the sides of the shoulders (setwise) had been run through an accurate milling or grinding device to eliminate any wideness of fit created by the angle of the punchcutter's point. Both sides had been milled off to an exact 90 degrees to the shoulder of the punch. I checked these with my micrometer and noted a tentative letter width, casting samples to those widths. The point-wise alignment of the font was built into these incredibly accurate Lanston punches, so I needed to do little to check alignment. All letters lined up well!

Doublechecking Set Width

After I had enough type cast to set a line to match the one example of the type I had, I set a line to match. It was a measure of about 25 picas and I was a little disappointed to find my line came out about a pica wider. The problem was not word spacing. I could see that each word in my line was a point or more wider than the example. Thus, I went back and altered the widths a little until my line matched the example precisely. Everything seemed to fit well using ¼ point as a minimal increment, thought this possibly is not accurate to the wedge of the composition caster.

I cast a few fonts on the Thompson and then decided it would be a good idea to make the mats work with my Supercaster as well. To do this, I took a spare Supercaster holder and used my milling machine to remove the raised spline in the bed of the holder. Then I used a key slot cutter to mill slots in the bottom and top edges of my new mats. Since there was now no spline to keep the type in alignment, I made certain that the lengths of all the mats were such that they were a press fit into the body of the holder.

This modification of the Supercaster matrix holder was altogether successful and I have

cast several fonts from my new Goudy Bible matrices. If you're interested in acquiring fonts or have need for a more extensive casting of this face, I would welcome your call or letter.

Punch/Matrix Cutting Possibilities

After some years of owning a Weibking/Ludlow pantograph, it looks like I am on the verge of being able to use it. I have worked out the problems of scaling and distortion, and have finally obtained a cutter grinder. I have a large number of collets and cutter blanks with the pantograph, so it made sense to have some parts made for the cutter grinder to be able to grind these points to their collets. This has been done, and now I await the repair of the grinder's motor.

I also have been given still another pantograph of a more generalized industrial purpose. It is a Taylor Hobson, made in England. It seems that the company no longer exists, so again it was necessary to have parts made for it. The device will scale 18 to 1, and is still very accurate and tight; I attempted to engrave a 72-point leaf to cast on the Supercaster using only a pattern made of cardboard (coated with shellac to make it stand up to the abrading of the follower. The pantograph scales nicely and there seems to be no distortion. The edge of the leaf seemed sawtoothed and the finish of the face was rough. I cast some, though, and was happy to see that the pantograph was ok—the problems all are with me!

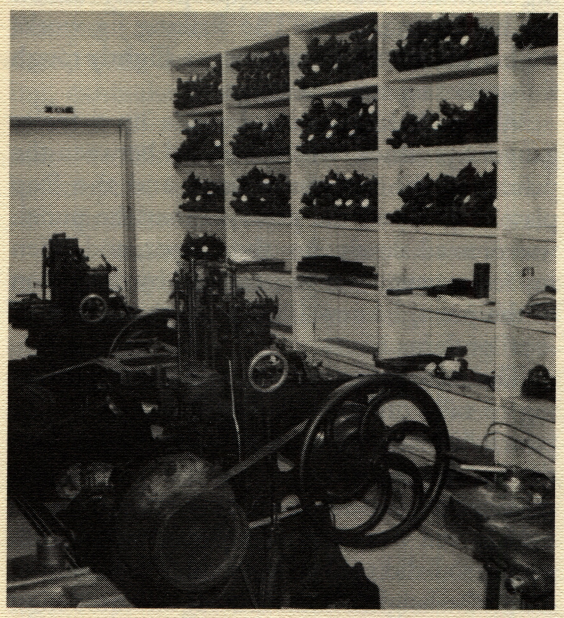
On the threshold of being able to produce another type of my own design by the use of the pantograph makes me all the more eager to continue on with this adventure.

Other Projects

I have some large comp matrices which I wanted to cast on the Supercaster, feeling I would get better type than off the Composition Caster. To do this, I made a holder of the same width, height and thickness as the regular English display matrix holder. To make it hold the large comp mats, I milled a channel running the same direction as the mold blade from the back to the front of the holder. Into this channel I place a small carrier which has a screw with a pin on the end which goes into the side hole of the large comp matrix. This keeps the matrix from falling out as the cast type is pulled from it.

Because the large comp mats have a reversed sidebearing, I made a scribe line on the crossblock side of the surface of the holder body. I have an adjusting screw on this end of the holder, which allows me to shift the mats to get the image of the mat in line with the crossblock and the scribe line of the holder. This is a bother, and failure to get it very close for the first cast will result in a squirt on matrices where there is not much sealing surface (especially wider characters). I arrange the mats in lots according to unit values, so it is only necessary to line up setwise on the first of each group. This holder also is a little unpolished, but it works and does no damage to the mats or the bridge of the caster.

If you are interest in Jim's processes, or in acquiring his type, contact Jim Rimmer at 1182 Hastings St., Vancouver, B. C. V6A 1S2 Canada. Phone (604) 522-5321.



***New, spiffy home**—shown here are two complete Barth foundry casters (and corners of two others) cleaned up and installed in absolutely pristine conditions (especially when compared with their former home) at The Dale Guild Typefoundry, Howell, N. J. On the shelves are numerous molds for pivotal casters. All equipment was acquired by Theo Rehak at the auction of American Type Founders.*

WANTED

TYPEFOUNDERS
SPECIMEN BOOKS
Catalogs of Printers Type — Prior to 1920

Antique Type
Wood or Metal
ESPECIALLY
2 COLOR

DAVID W. PEAT
1225 CARROLL WHITE DRIVE
INDIANAPOLIS, IND 46219
317 357-6895

John Eickhoff of Acorntype Typefounders, 24 Honey Hill Road, Kingswood, Bristol BS15 4HJ, England (Telephone 0272-677903) submits the following:

SPACE NEEDED. English Monotype parts, manuals, cellular mats offered for American Monotype display mats, dingbats. No lists of parts. State your requirements.