

ATF NEWSLETTER

The Occasional Publication of the American Typecasting Fellowship

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ONWARD, METAL SOLDIERS

A New Team Takes Charge of this Irreplaceable Publication

Welcome to the 46th issue of the *American Typecasting Fellowship Newsletter*. This effort comes from a new team, taking the reins from Rich Hopkins and continuing the publication of this invaluable resource. The “youngsters” taking charge of the ATF Communications Committee are Val Lucas, Fritz Swanson, and Sierra Brown. Val began typecasting in earnest in 2021, and after working with Rich Hopkins at Monotype University Ten, realized just how much information was contained in these pages— not only technical advice and tips, but history, connections, and the entire story of American typecasting. Fritz and Sierra attended Monotype University Eleven, and joined the Com-

mittee as experienced editors. With the backing of The Printing Stewards, this new team hopes to continue publishing useful tips, deep dives into history, and new research in all areas of typefounding.

Articles, news, letters, classified listings, and general typecasting stories are welcomed for future issues. Submission queries (as well as suggestions, comments, or complaints) may be sent to newsletter@americantypecastingfellowship.org. Selections from the print editions will be hosted digitally after publication on the updated website,

americantypecastingfellowship.org.

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The cover of this issue was set and printed by Val Lucas from new 24 point Frond Deco corners that she designed, engraved and cast with Jim Walczak's help, and from Powell types previously cast by Jim. The paper is French Poptone Blu Raspberry in 65lb cover. The interior was digitally set in Kennerley.

The Next ATF Conference Will Be Hosted by the C. C. Stern Type Foundry

Mark your calendars, the next ATF Conference is tentatively scheduled for July 31 to August 3, 2025 in Clatskanie, Oregon! The C.C. Stern Type Foundry will host four days of fellowship, including technical sessions, a panel of presentations, a banquet, a swap meet, and an auction.

Technical sessions will occur at our new purpose-built facility, located five miles from the town center, which houses operational Monotype composition and sorts casters, a Thompson sorts caster, Linotype and Ludlow line casters, and a Monotype material maker. Presentations will be held downtown at the Clatskanie Cultural Center, a restored historic Odd Fellows Hall and theater that has a spacious ballroom and a 170-seat performance hall. The center is within walking distance of the conference hotel and various local dining options.

The official conference hotel will be the Clatskanie River Inn, which has forty guest rooms and also offers an RV Park for those who wish to camp by the river and still be centrally located. A discounted rate at the official hotel will be announced in early 2025. A limited

number of Airbnb, Hipcamp, and private lodging options are also available in the area. Other nearby hotels can be found in Astoria, Longview, Kelso, and Kalama.

The town of Clatskanie, Oregon is just over an hour's drive from Portland (PDX) International Airport and 2 hours and 30 minutes from Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (SEA). Clatskanie is 30 minutes from the Kelso-Longview Amtrak train station. The mouth of the Columbia River and the Pacific Ocean is less than an hour's drive west of Clatskanie on Highway 30.

Final dates, registration, and a call for conference presentations will be announced early in 2025.

For more information check: americantypecastingfellowship.org/conference/ or metaltype.org/american-typecasting-fellowship

The C.C. Stern Type Foundry
Brian Bagdonas, Chris Chen, Connie
Blauwkamp, Joseph Green, Rebecca Gilbert
museum@metaltype.org

Meet the New Communications Committee

Val Lucas is the proprietrix of Bowerbox Press, and has been hauling home heavy letterpress equipment since 2005. In 2021 she began working with Jim Walczak of Sycamore Press and Typefoundry and has become smitten with engraving and casting new type of her own design. She teaches letterpress and bookbinding at Towson University.

Sierra Brown is a poet, technical writer, letterpress printmaker, and wannabe typesetter living in Grand Rapids, MI. They have been volunteering with The Printing Stewards since its inception. They are honored to learn from you.

Fritz Swanson has been a writer, publisher, editor and teacher for nearly 25 years. He is the publisher of the quarterly poetry journal *The Index* (theindexpress.com) and the village weekly newspaper *The Manchester Mirror* (themanchestermirror.com). He is the co-founder of The Printing Stewards (printingstewards.org), a non-profit currently focused on preserving Greg Walters' typesetting legacy. When Fritz was eight years old, an old farmer, and former Heidelberg pressman, impressed him by casting his name on a Ludlow. Fritz teaches writing at the University of Michigan.

This newsletter is being published with help from The Printing Stewards, a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving the tradition of casting and printing from metal type. For more information and to become a supporter, visit printingstewards.org

Monotype University Held Twice in 2023

Monotype University Ten, August 6-12, 2023

by Val Lucas, Bowerbox Press

In August 2023, I was invited to attend a small session of Monotype University with Rich Hopkins at his Hill & Dale Private Press and Type Foundry in Terra Alta, West Virginia. I had heard of these sessions, as my mentor Jim Walczak and many other typesetting acquaintances had attended and taught at previous Mono U sessions. I had worked with Rich previously, helping to cast a run of Sapphire from foundry mats on the Super Caster. This was a valuable experience for me - learning how the Super Caster worked and the intricacies of adjusting characters to match an existing font. I was eager to learn more, and when the idea of a new Monotype U session was floated, I jumped at the chance.

The session included Terrence Chouinard and Kris Branco, and we planned for five days of intense casting. We all arrived in West Virginia on Sunday, and descended to the basement shop to plan the week. The three of us all had some typesetting experience but in different ways, and we each wanted to focus on a particular process.

My goal for the session was to get more familiar with the Super Caster, and to cast foundry mats using Rich's custom mat holder. We spent some time going over changing the mold. Then, I selected a font of 12 point Incline Gothic from the extensive collection of foundry mats in Rich's collection. The foundry mat holder needed adjustment for each different mat, so I got plenty of experience placing and shimming mats to fit. I spent much of the next few days casting four small fonts. I hope this experience will help me figure out how to cast foundry mats with the Sorts Caster using a similar method.

While I worked on the Super Caster and drooled over Rich Hopkins' collection, Kris and Terrence worked on getting the Composition Caster running from the Welliver interface. While I'm very interested in this machine, I am



Terrence Chouinard, Val Lucas, instructor Rich Hopkins, and Kris Branco at Mono U 10 in Terra Alta, WV

still overwhelmed by its complexity and prefer the Super and the Sorts Casters.

After finishing the font of Incline Gothic, we turned to creating our diplomas. I selected a Monotype design for the border and changed the Super Caster mold over to 24 point. Kris and Terrence worked on casting the composition type for the diploma text. We combined these elements with hand-set foundry type, and we each printed our own diploma in two colors. As the diplomas rolled off the press, it felt official - we were Monotype University graduates.

Then, Rich, Kris, and Terrence finished printing a keepsake of the week on the Windmill. Meanwhile, I decided to test some foundry mats I had borrowed from the Smithsonian collection of ATF mats recently acquired by the International Printing Museum. I chose two simple ornaments from an old BB&S face called Fanchon, which fit on a 24-point body. I cast a small galley of these, sized for easy setting in a grid. Then I packed them up, along with the type samples, our printed keepsakes, and ephemera from Rich's long printing career.

That week was an unforgettable experience, and it solidified my desire to set up a foundry of my own. I feel more comfortable using the Super Caster, and I am confident that I can troubleshoot more issues. Now, I just need to find the space!

Monotype University Eleven, December 10-15, 2023

by Fritz Swanson

Just after my semester ended, in the middle of December, Rich Hopkins hosted the Printing Stewards for Monotype University XI. I went down, along with fellow board member Jody Harnish, and two of our longtime stewards Sierra Brown and Gerald Schulze. We arrived at Rich's on Sunday December 10th, and we left Terra Alta on Friday December 15th.



Erin Beckloff, Sierra Brown, Jody Harnish, Rich Hopkins, Gerald Schulze, Fritz Swanson, and Val Lucas after Monotype University Eleven, 2023

Sunday

On Sunday we established a plan: to set a poem, the poem's title, and decorate it with a border. This was Rich's ambitious proposal. The task was broken down as follows: On Monday, we would learn the Thompson and cast an ornament. On Tuesday, we would learn the English Super Caster and cast the title. On Wednesday, we would get an introduction to the Composition Caster and the Welliver system. And then, cast our poem. Thursday was set aside for finishing up tasks and printing our poem.

I suggested the poem "Adam's Curse" by William Butler Yeats.

Monday

Each day at Monotype University starts at the dining room table. We sat around the table and talked with Rich. We learned more about how Rich came to live in Terra Alta, and about his background as a newspaperman and printer. Rich is very practical minded, and he wanted to know

about each of us, or as he puts it, "What puts food on the table?" So, while Sierra and I both self-identify as "poets" he insisted that we confess our sins. Sierra is a technical writer, and I am a university professor. That satisfied him. Gerald and Jody had a slightly easier time of it, because each has an honest line of work with no caveats; Gerald is a designer and printer, while Jody is a librarian.

From there we dug into practical matters. We discussed the character of type metal, and we had a brief introduction to the Thompson and how it can be distinguished practically from the Super Caster. Rich notes that the Super Caster releases each piece of type "free" while "the Thompson pushes one piece of type out of the machine by pushing the new piece in." The consequence of this is that the Thompson is hard on kerned characters. It was for this reason that Rich suggested we cast the ornament on the Thompson.

Our first task was to select an 18 point ornament. We selected a pair of Granjon-style ornaments which, in Rich's specimen, were unnamed.

Once we had our matrices selected, we had to fit them to a matrix holder and otherwise get the machine set up. Because of our inexperience as typesetters, I think Rich's approach was to allow our design process to guide what skills we developed at the caster. So, in this case, because we had selected an 18 point mat, we had to change the body piece on the mold in order to switch from a larger size down to 18. My notes don't reflect how big a point size change we made.

Rich introduced us to the blackbox, the vertical mold blade, the body pieces, the stripper spring, the jet plow, and the overall mold assembly.

Rich then spent some time trying to demonstrate sliding the new body piece in without completely disassembling the mold. Then, once failing that, proceeded to completely disassemble the mold. I shot a good video of that process for our future reference. We then exercised the choker valve, got the matrix mounted, and did some test casting. We went through some rounds adjusting the set width until we felt satisfied that the ornament was properly positioned on the body, and at

2:30 p.m., we broke for lunch.

After lunch, we set about casting the ornament.

Tuesday

On Tuesday, our goal was to learn about the English Super Caster by casting the title. We had decided that the poem would be set in 12 point, and so we went about trying to find an 18 point title. But, at the end of it all, after hunting for a few different matrices that we couldn't find, we decided we really liked Albertus Bold, and even though it was 30 point, we decided that that was what we wanted to cast.

As on Monday, we spent some time looking at the box of parts that goes with the Super Caster Mold, and generally discussing that mold and the machine. I shot a video of that lecture.

From there I shot a number of videos of Rich disassembling the Super Caster Mold and preparing the machine for operation. The matrices were selected, the machine was set up, the matrices had been sorted by set width, and so with everything ready, we took our break for lunch.

Then, it was back into the basement. We drossed the pot and got on with casting.

And, like on Monday, once casting got started, my notes taper off. I have lots of photos and videos shot, though. My recollection of Tuesday is that casting 30 point on the Super was quite different from casting 18 point on the Thompson. The Super is, of course, much easier in terms of adjusting set width. And, because we were casting letters instead of ornaments, we had a LOT of opportunity to practice both matrix adjustments and set width adjustments.

BUT, because the bodies were much bigger, we ran into birdcaged type more often. The Thompson was like a manual pickup truck: challenging to operate, but relatively reliable once in operation. The Super Caster was, to me, more like an exotic sports car. Lots of features and fine tuning, but prone to fundamental breakdowns when in action. I have a VERY LONG video of us pulling the piston from the pot so that Rich could instruct us on how to clean it and re-insert it. We got very comfortable moving the pot in and out, cleaning the nozzle, adjusting the tension on the spring, etc. And of course, we became VERY familiar with the type saw as we cut apart sort

after sort to check to see if our maintenance work was having a positive effect on the type.

I think Tuesday was my favorite day. All the days were wonderful, but Tuesday was especially wonderful.

We decided that though all we NEEDED was to cast the letters for the title of the poem (AD-AM'S CURSE) we would instead cast an entire caps font for each of the four of us plus Rich. So, in my notes, I wrote out our casting scheme for all the caps characters, plus figures and points. We started with the letters for the title, and then cast as many more of the characters as we could, with the ambition to return to the casting at the end of the week.

Wednesday

Day three was our daunting exposure to the Monotype Composition Caster. Doubly daunting because on the one hand it was the most complicated machine, by far, that any of us had ever encountered, but also because it is the machine Rich clearly loves more than anything else. So, the delta between our capacity and his enthusiasm was enormous. This put a fair bit of pressure on us. But, nonetheless, we stepped up.

The morning roundtable was a whirlwind. We had a full packet of material from Rich, and of course, a long lecture on all of the elements of the handout. There was no time on Wednesday morning for the human color we got on previous mornings. We got more information on the history of the Welliver and just a lot of a lot.

We converted the poem into a text file appropriate for the Welliver digital system. We, at this point, had a brief debate about the length of the poem in the context of the amount of ornament we had cast. But after some discussion, we concluded that the amount of ornament we had cast would be sufficient to frame the poem. And so, we went ahead with the casting.

We selected 12 point Bembo, found the appropriate mat case, and inserted it for casting. The exact sequence of events is a bit fuzzy in my memory, but the thrust of the problem is that part way through casting, it became apparent that the mat case had been assembled in a way that did not match what the machine expected.

For example, several of the spaces were instead

casting letters, and several of the letters were transposed with other letters. We were most of the way through the poem at this point, though, so we went ahead and finished the casting with the idea that we would cast replacement letters as needed once we could assess what was needed.

The last two paragraphs compress several hours of work. And confusion. And frustration.

Once the poem was cast, we moved it onto a galley and took the galley to a slanted top in the pressroom. I assessed the poem and gave Rich an "order" for what characters we needed to replace what had not been cast. Rich then pulled the mat case and had Sierra assess it compared to how the mat case arrangement was displayed in his book.

Sierra observed that the case arrangement was extremely divergent from the illustration in the book, both with characters in odd or inexplicable places, but also with some characters just missing. Most of the mat cases had been assembled by whatever firm had owned them originally, and like with type cases you get from many different printing businesses, the little variations are always puzzling. But this mat case defied reason. We could not imagine what specialty task it had been rearranged to accomplish.

So, with Rich's guidance, Sierra disassembled the case and went about rearranging the matrices to match the illustration in the book so that we could reliably cast what needed to be cast. Sierra will likely have a better recollection of that process.

Like with so many other moments over the week, it was in the problems that we found our most profound moments of education.

For my part, I was in the press shop swapping spaces out that had been cast as characters, and, where possible, swapping characters that had been transposed into the wrong words. Some characters wrongly cast in one spot were available as wrongly cast characters in other spots. But not everything equaled out, and so eventually Rich needed to cast replacements for me to finish the task.

Lunch happened at some point that day. We went back to our lodge for dinner, and to decompress. It was a hard day.

The poem was cast, the characters were cor-

rected, but I wouldn't count the effort as pleasing, and I did not come away from the experience with a robust understanding of the machine. While we spent all day sorting out problems, little of it was directly related to the operation of the machine itself. And so, unlike the preceding days, I did not finish the day with any confidence that I could further my education on my own. The Composition Caster remains, for me, a mystery.

Thursday

On the final day, we had a lot of divergences to attend to. Val Lucas and Erin Beckloff were visiting and staying with Rich overnight. Sierra had taken over finishing with the correction of the poem and preparing it for printing. Gerald was focused on getting our diplomas prepared for the press. And so I assisted Jody in the casting of the remainder of the Albertus Bold 30 point caps font.

For Jody and I, it was a long day at the caster, making adjustments and correcting problems. We brought Rich in as needed, but we also grew more comfortable as we operated the machine. It was a real pleasure to watch Jody grow more confident in his own assessment of how the machine worked and what it needed to continue to cast good type. I cut apart so many sorts, and we became very familiar with the different degrees of swiss cheese internal structure one can find in cast type. I cut sorts, and we troubleshooted until we could get sufficiently solid casts. When we did, I was happy.

We also visited with Erin and Val, and of course drew on Val's knowledge as an accomplished caster.

Gerald and Rich printed the finished poem, as well as our diplomas.

Friday

On Friday we had waffles with Rich, and we loaned him a few of our ATF matrices that he was interested in casting on the Super Caster. They were the proper depth of drive, and he has a mold set up to cast 24 point without adjustment when combined with his foundry mat holder.

We said our goodbyes, and with a long day of driving ahead of us, we headed out.

A Census of Barth Type Casters

by Dr. David M. MacMillan, CircuitousRoot

An extended version of this article will be published on the author's CircuitousRoot.com website after this number of the Newsletter has been published.

This census is dedicated to the late Gregory Jackson Walters and the late Theo Rehak, without whom there would be little to take a census of. I would like to acknowledge the generous help of Patrick Goossens (Letterkunde Press) in providing access to original ATF and Dale Guild documents.

Rev. 5, 2024-05-04

Introduction: The Barth Type Caster



No. 3 1/2 Barth caster #XX, from the Gregory J. Walters Typographic Archive in Piqua, OH

The typesetting machine developed by Henry Barth and Ernst Lietze at the Cincinnati Type Foundry, commonly known as the Barth Type Caster, is a derivative of the earlier Foucher type caster developed in France. In very simplified terms, the Barth is a Foucher with a choker valve.

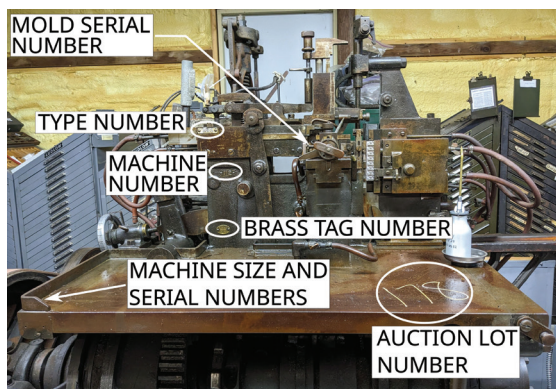
The initial Barth patents were filed in 1886 and for several years the Cincinnati Type Foundry used it in their own production and

sold it to other foundries. After the consolidation of about two thirds of the typesetting industry into a single firm in 1892, the resulting firm, American Type Founders, soon standardized upon the Barth as their machine for volume production. ATF constructed several hundred Barth casters for their own use, but, unlike Cincinnati, did not produce them for sale. ATF also destroyed several hundred Barth casters as their operations declined and were consolidated from the second quarter of the 20th century onward. The remaining casters were sold at auction in 1993. The majority of these were purchased by scrap metal dealers. Ultimately, twenty-five Barth casters have survived into preservation and continued use by the community of typesetting enthusiasts.

The Barth caster was usually referred to as an “automatic” machine in surviving internal American Type Founders Company (ATF) documents. The late Theo Rehak referred to it as a “foundry automatic” caster. In both later ATF marketing literature and in popular usage it was more commonly called the Barth type caster. Both the term “automatic” and the name Barth will be used for it here.

Identifying a Barth by the Numbers

Several different numbers either appear on or can be associated with each Barth caster. Some of these are identified below. The four numbers which are most important for the purposes of a machine census are the machine size and serial numbers, the “machine number” (which is not a serial number), and the “type number” (which identifies the size and type of mold installed).



Size Number: Barth casters were made in several sizes, numbered 1 through 4 (with some fractional sizes). Machines of a particular size could be equipped with molds in various styles over a range of body sizes. For example, the machine equipped with a 72 point mold at the Gregory Jackson Walters Typographic Archive of the Printing Stewards and the machine with a 60 point mold at CircuitousRoot are both size 3½. The “apron” of a Barth is the table-like flat surface at the front of the machine. The size number is stamped on the front left upper surface of the apron. The full range of body sizes ran from 3 to 144 points.

Serial Number: Barth serial numbers were assigned within each size range. For example, the size 3½ machine at CircuitousRoot is serial number 6 (of the size 3½ machines), but

machines 1-6, 2-6, 3-6, and 4-6 are all attested.¹ The serial number was stamped on the apron just below the size number, but at some point it was intentionally defaced by ATF. On some machines, it remains barely legible, on others it does not.

Machine Number: At some point prior to the completion of the move from Jersey City to Elizabeth, a “Machine Number” was assigned to each machine. This appears on a rectangular plate riveted to the front left of the mold stand.

Type Number: The most prominent number on a Barth is the “Type Number,”² this is a three to five digit number which appears on a silver-colored tag riveted to the upper left of the mold stand³. The last two digits of this number encode the type of mold used. But this number cannot be taken in isolation. It must be used in conjunction with the first one to three digits, which indicate the body size of the mold. The chart decoding this was published by Rehak in *Practical Typecasting* (1993, 188-190)⁴

So for example the machine at CircuitousRoot is Type Number 6003, indicating a 60 point mold of type 03 (within the various 60 point mold types). Turning to the table, we find that a 60 point type 03 mold is a type B-4. The ‘B’ in this indicates that the mold originated in the New York foundry of ATF (prior to consolidation into the Central Plant). Fortunately, further information survives about the B-4 mold (this is not the case for all molds).

Other Numbers: One number is prominent on a Barth but of limited use in a census. This is the brass tag number⁵ which appears on a round brass tag riveted to the mold stand. It is a five digit number appearing under the ini-

1 Other -6 machines (e.g., 1½ - 6) were certainly constructed, but they were scrapped before the mid-1930s and do not appear in surviving records

2 The name “Type Number” was used in the mid-1930s ATF document “Automatic Casting Mould Data” (ATF 1930s). The term “Mold Number” was used for the same thing in other documents, but that term introduces confusion.

3 The machine modified by the Dale Guild to cast their B42 type has a Dale Guild tag reading “B-42” in this location.

4 This table has been transcribed at: <https://www.circuitousroot.com/artifice/letters/press/noncomptype/casters/barth/data/mold-identification/index.html>

5 It was called a “brass tag number” in ATF internal documents. It would be called an “asset tag” today.

tials "A.T.F." It was part of an overall ATF inventory of casting and non-casting equipment (now lost). Brass tag numbers are used in some surviving internal documents and may in some situations be useful (especially in double checking other numbers for typographical errors).

Each machine was also assigned a lot num-

Early Production Estimates

Production Before ATF

ATF inherited four general categories of casting machines from the foundries which merged to create it in 1892:

- The MSJ/Ziegler-patent casters from MacKellar, Smiths, and Jordan
- Non-Barth "automatic" casters, including Foucher casters from the Central Type Foundry
- Pivotal type casters, of many sizes and styles
- Barth "automatic" casters

The MSJ/Ziegler machines became the initial ATF "space and quad" machines. At some point, ATF began using Barths to cast spacing material as well. We do not know if any of the Ziegler-patent casters survived in use until the 1993 auction. The Fouchers (and quite possibly other automatic casters) were scrapped during the initial consolidation of ATF foundries in the 1890s. Many pivotal casters were retained throughout the history of ATF, but there is no record of new pivots being constructed by ATF. By 1894, ATF had standardized on the Barth as its "automatic" caster.

The scant information we have about Barth production comes from a few remarks in the ATF corporate Annual Reports from the 1890s. Working backwards from these, (ATF 1894, 4-5) we know that the Cincinnati Type Foundry built at least thirty one Barths before the formation of ATF in 1892. Of these, eighteen were either used by the Cincinnati or sold to foundries which became part of ATF. At least thirteen more were sold to foundries which did not join in the 1892 creation of ATF

ber in the 1993 auction. This number is no longer physically present on machines which have seen use since 1993, but it remains useful for tracing provenance. The mold serial number is very important in ATF records, but is not used in this census.

(these thirteen casters were acquired by ATF from these foundries by 1894).

It is likely that more than these thirteen Barths were sold by the Cincinnati Type Foundry to other foundries which did not become a part of ATF. If so, these would have continued in use outside of ATF for some time. There is, however, no actual documentation of this.

Production By ATF

Between the formation of ATF in mid-1892 and its second Annual Report in August 1894, ATF built thirteen additional Barth casters, giving it a total of forty-four at this time.

A surge in production was ordered in November 1894, and by the end of 1895, Barths were being installed at a rate of six per month. The 1895 Annual Report also says that they were being manufactured in Cincinnati, Philadelphia, and New York. The 1898 Annual Report says that "The equipment of the several foundries with automatic machinery is now practically completed, and the expenditure for further improvement of plants will be much less in the future." (ATF 1895, 3)(ATF 1898, 3) This rate of production, seventy-two machines per year, suggests that it is likely that all Barths were produced by the first years of the 20th century. Most of this would have been before ATF moved to the new Central Plant from 1903 to 1906.

We do not know when the last new Barth was produced. Rehak says that automatic type-casting machines "attained their high-water mark with the 1905 Barth conversion model

(Old No. 1).” (Rehak 1993, 39)

Maximum Production Numbers

No production records for the Barth caster survive, so all conclusions about their production numbers will be incomplete.

In the 1930s, during the transition from the old Central Plant to the Elizabeth plant, ATF created a document entitled “Automatic Casting Mould Data,” the first five pages of which survive. (ATF 1930s) It is unique in the archives of surviving documents because it lists machine serial numbers. (It also gives type numbers, mold serial numbers, mould type names, the locations of the machine (in Elizabeth or in Jersey City) and the machine operators’ names.)

If we make the reasonable assumption that Barth serial numbers start at 1, then the highest serial number recorded for each type of machine represents the minimum number of machines of this size built. These highest serial numbers are:

Size	High Serial Number
1	226
1 ½	235
2	7 ⁶
3	28
3 ½	38
4	20

The following sizes mentioned by Rehak are not attested in this document. They were either all scrapped by the time this document was compiled or they were mentioned only on the lost later pages: 1¼, 1¾ wide, 1½ wide, 2 wide, 2¼, 2½.⁷

Adding up these figures, the total is five hundred and fifty-four. This number is a solid

minimum for total Barth production. The real figure may be slightly greater, as there are several reasons a caster might not be reflected in this total. Four reasons are most likely⁸:

-Six sizes of machines are not mentioned in this document.

-A higher-numbered machine might have been listed on a page missing from this document.

-A higher-numbered machine might have been scrapped before this document was compiled.

-A higher-numbered machine might have been exported to Stephenson, Blake in England before this document was compiled.

Of these, twenty-five machines survive.⁹ This gives a total survival rate on the order of four and a half percent. Much as we mourn the loss of so many fine machines, this is actually a fairly high survival rate for typecasters and for historic industrial machinery as a whole.

Surviving Machines

Twenty five Barths survive in the collections of the Letter-kunde Press¹⁰ (LK, Patrick Goossens), the Printing Stewards’ Gregory Jackson Walters Typographical Archive (PS), and CircuitousRoot (CR, Dr. David M. MacMillan). No other surviving Barths are known to anyone in the typecasting community with whom I have communicated.¹¹ Shown on the next page is a summary of the machines we have.¹²

-Machines 226 and 322 were listed by ATF as scrapped, but with different brass tag numbers.

6 The emphasis on No. 1 and 1½ machines for body type is clear. The low production number for No. 2 machines (none of which survive) is, however, surprising to me.

7 But (ATF 1930s) may oversimplify. At least one surviving machine (No. 259) is listed as a No. 1 (1-113) in it but has No. 1¼ (1¼ - 213) stamped on its apron.

8 It is unlikely that a machine with a serial number higher than any listed would have been sold by the Cincinnati to a non-ATF foundry prior to 1892. It is also unlikely that any new Barths were built after this document. By the 1930s, ATF was scrapping Barths, not building them.

9 Sixty-two were purchased by scrap dealers at the 1993 auction. At least four hundred and sixty-seven Barths were scrapped by ATF itself before 1993.

10 The machines of the former Dale Guild Type Foundry.

11 I would love to have been inadequately informed here.

12 Machine No. 155 requires further investigation.

Machine Number	Current Type Number	Size	Serial number within Size	ATF Brass Tag Number	1993 Auction Lot Number	Current Owner
112	6003	3 1/2	6	02053	178	CR
113	12002	4	7	02087	188	PS
149	7201	3 1/2	15	02061	177	PS
155	24 SCRIPT B4	1	?	02164	633	PS
159	1601	1	?	02046	not in auction	LK
201	18 PT. B2	1 1/2	235	?	195	PS
206?	2401	1 1/2	83?	02066	661	LK
213	2403	1	28	02122	169	LK
216	18/24-K	1 1/2	?	02148	198	PS
222	18 PT. B2	1 1/2	93	?	196	PS
226	603	1	216	02182 *	not in auction	LK
233	1403	1	19	02175	624	PS
259	14PT B/2	1 1/4	213	02012	632	LK
307	807	1	111	02011	162	LK
316	1801	1	41	02048	170	LK
322	1401	1	64	02137 *	not in auction	LK
347	1004	1	161	02144	135	LK
361	1410	1	123	02130	171	LK
371	1803 SPECIAL	1	113	02138	623	PS
381	18 ZINC 18PT SP	1	119	?	197	PS
383	B-42	1	48	02139	173	LK
402	1009N	1 1/4	122	02190	141	LK
423	1201	1	94	02031	157	LK
474	1804 B2	1	188	02145	156	LK
537	1209	1	96	02169	142	LK

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Through the kind permission and encouragement of the late Theo Rehak, this book is now freely available online at: <https://www.circuitousroot.com/artifice/letters/press/typemaking/literature/general/index.html#practical-typesetting>

Nineteenth Century Innovations Transform Typefounding — A Brief Look Back.

by Stan Nelson

Of all the necessary components required to make printing practical and economical, printing types formed the most original and essential element. For those of us who continue to set type by hand, printers' letter (ie. type or sorts) appear deceptively simple and uncomplicated, and because of this, we tend to take type for granted. But these characters have a fascinating history, first being entirely the product of highly skilled hand labor, then transitioning into a system of precise, mechanized manufacture. This article begins with a review of the traditional methods used to make printing type, and then deals with several early efforts to improve type production just before the introduction of typesetting machinery. Specifically, these innovations were a.) the invention of the lever/trigger type mold, b.) the invention of sanspareil matrices, and c.) the introduction of the force pump/pump pot. With this in mind, we can now take a look at how type was made by hand and endeavor to give the subject some context.

Typefounding was a trade that resisted significant innovation until early in the nineteenth century. To better understand the storm of change waiting in those busy decades, let's look back nearly two hundred years to when the Industrial Revolution began to be evident.

From the time of Gutenberg in the 1450s, until approximately the first quarter of the 1800s, changes in type making involved the fashions of letter design, the evolution of ornamental materials, the multiplication of type sizes (first small, then large), and the establishment of typesetting as a specialized industry. The process of cutting a steel punch with which to strike a matrix, and then casting types from that matrix in a hand mold, had remained largely the same. But with the coming of the

Industrial Revolution, change became a fact of life. Like many other trades, typesetting felt the effects of this new force.

'Innovative yet cautious' is a good way to describe the printing trades during the nineteenth century. In our times, we have accepted the idea that rapid technological change is a uniquely modern phenomenon. A 1970 book by futurist Alvin Toffler introduced the term "Future Shock" and defined it in simple terms as "too much change in too short a period of time" (Toffler and Farrell 1970) with the associated stress and disruption. But printers in the days of David Bruce Jr., inventor of the pivotal type caster, were experiencing their own form of future shock well over a hundred and thirty years before it was described by Mr. Toffler, for they too were adjusting to and struggling with an accelerating pace of invention. For example, mastery of the art of 'throwing for face' (casting a good printing surface on a type) competed with the growing use of machinery. The pivotal caster seemed to reduce hard won skill to the 'turning of a spit'. Iron hand presses replaced wooden ones even as cylinder presses supplanted hand presses generally. The same year (1838) that David Bruce Jr. patented the first commercially successful typesetting machine, Samuel Morse demonstrated his telegraph, which significantly aided the efficient use of the steam locomotive, only recently introduced. With each passing decade, printers and type founders began to experience a world in which these advances in transportation and communication "annihilated time and distance," effectively increasing their markets; while with the new presses, printing could be done faster and on rolls of cheaper, machine made paper. Print shops and type foundries became factories.

Simultaneously, cultural juxtapositions occurred. The Kiowa and the Comanche nations

still lived and fought for their traditional ways on the western plains. Just imagine being in the 1820s and 30s, where simply by traveling west you would be transported from a bustling, crowded European-style city to vast, open prairies that supported enormous herds of buffalo and the people who lived by hunting them.

In the east, the first quarter of the 1800s was a time of the odd juxtapositions of both old and new; of technologies that were common in the days of the Romans abutting innovations as novel as steam power and machine tools. Lighting consisted of candles, whale oil lamps, and later gas burners – for Edison’s light bulb was as yet unimagined, neither were the electric motor and the phonograph. Wood fires were still used for cooking and warmth. Even despite the introduction of railroad travel in the 1830s, people traveled locally by foot, on horseback, or by horse drawn vehicles. Such were common through the end of the century. Running water was not routine, and most people still relieved themselves in privies.

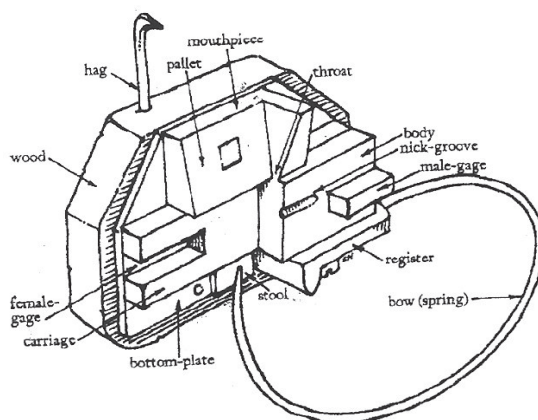
Until nearly the end of the nineteenth century, most printing type was set in composing sticks by skilled typesetters, and many a printer, despite having newer and faster printing presses, still continued to work with improved versions of the basic hand press – presses which worked in much the same way as Gutenberg’s had in the mid-fifteenth century. Notably, for the first four decades of the nineteen hundreds, type continued to be cast laboriously in hand-operated molds. Let’s focus then on this process of making printing types, a method that had resisted innovation and remained unmechanized for nearly four hundred years.

The techniques developed in the workshops of Johannes Gutenberg, and the type making tools that evolved from his invention, can be seen in the punches, matrices, and molds used then for centuries. Of course, none of Gutenberg’s materials have survived, and while recent investigations of the earliest printing have complicated our narrative, there is sufficient evidence to support the fact that Mr. G

was using movable types that were cast, and that many of the smaller types employed in the printed Indulgences of 1454 / 1455 display the characteristics of types made from matrices formed with punches, which is the process that we will examine here.

As we all know, for a set of printing types to function, they must all be of exactly the same body height, and the same body size, having parallel sides. Of course, they must also vary in width to accommodate the differences between narrow and wide letters. A lower case i and an upper case W must still range in line perfectly with each other, along with all of their brethren. This could only be accomplished through the use of a single, adjustable type mold made of brass or iron, whose two dimensions are fixed, but that adjust infinitely to any width. I am fond of quoting Theodore L. DeVinne, who first observed in his seminal book, *The Invention of Printing*, published in 1876, “In this type-mould we find the key to the invention of typography. It is not the press, nor the types, but the type-mould that must be accepted as the origin and the symbol of the art. He was the inventor of typography, and the founder of modern printing, who made the first adjustable type-mould.” (De Vinne 1878, 67)

So let us take a look at this critical tool.



French mold with its parts identified

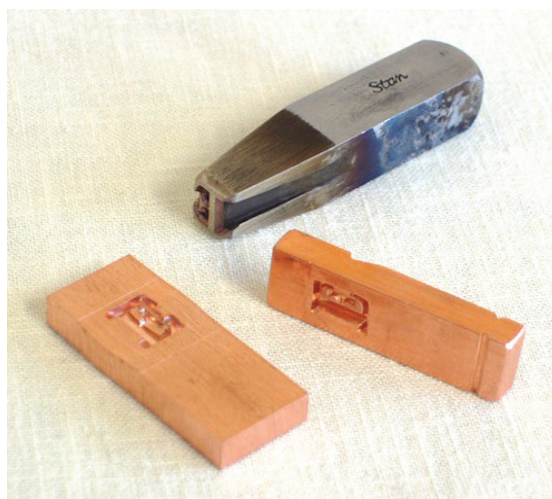
Regardless of the particular design of a type mold, of which there are several structures, all such molds consist of two mating halves that slide against each other in order to accom-

date variations in the width of letters, while maintaining both a constant height and body size. There must be a funnel of some kind to direct molten metal alloy into the mold, as well as a clamp with which to position interchangeable letter dies (called matrices) beneath the mold. This clamp is a combination of a supporting spring and two cheeks called registers that close upon the sides of the rectangular matrices. In addition, there are guides to keep the two halves of the mold sliding parallel to each other.

Matrices must be carefully prepared to fit the particular mold that will be used to cast type. In order to create a matrix, one first had to cut a punch, which is an actual-size model of the letter's printing surface cut in steel, by hand, using files and hardened steel gravers. A hand-engraved punch was carved and filed to the exact shape of a character, using a variety of techniques that allowed very precise details to be generated. The face of the punch must be perfect, since thousands of cast types will replicate it. This brief description is a disservice to the complexity and artistry demanded of a punchcutter, who was capable of engraving entire fonts of punches having hundreds of separate characters, all of which must sort with each other. A punch may take as few as four hours or as many as several days to engrave. When finished, the steel punch was then hardened and tempered to make it strong and durable enough to be pressed into a blank of copper that was then filed meticulously to fit the type mold. All of this latter work falls under the heading of fitting or justifying the matrix. Ironically, a face beautifully cut but badly fitted is less useful than an indifferent design that is properly justified, for at least it will 'scan' well.

To expand upon this, justifying a matrix requires a lot of fiddling. The letter shape impressed into the copper was intentionally driven below the desired depth. It then had to be made exactly level with the surface and kept at a constant correct depth. It also had to be precisely located both side-to-side as well as

up-and-down.



The punch, its unfitted strike and justified matrix. This 'Bodoni' E was cut for the Greek Font Society.

The 'set' (side-to-side) adjustments affect the relationship of each letter to its brothers and sisters, and the 'up and down' aspect refers to alignment. This would seem a simple matter, but round letters and letters with serifs need to be carefully placed so as to print perfectly even sentences. It's a matter of making optical adjustments.

Once the type mold and matching set of matrices were ready, casting could begin. The hand founder worked at a small furnace that supported an iron pot used to hold molten type alloy, a mixture of tin, antimony, and lead.¹



Casters working at their furnaces, from *The Penny Magazine*, October 26, 1833. The foundry at William Clowes

& Son, Ltd., London.

Molten type metal handles well at a reasonable working temperature of about 750 degrees

¹ Lead often makes up from two thirds to three quarters of the alloy of type metal, but it is an admixture of tin and antimony too. Founders as early as the time of Joseph Moxon (1684) called it metal – not lead. The alloy is a thorough blending of its component parts and quite safe to handle. Please respect the tradition and call it type metal – not lead type.

fahrenheit. It does not produce toxic fumes at those temperatures since they are far lower than the temperature at which lead vaporizes (approximately 920 degrees F.) Using a special spoon, the founder scooped up tiny amounts of liquid metal and dumped it into the funnel (mouthpiece) of the hand mold while simultaneously giving the mold a sudden jerk or shake. This technique was called 'throwing for face' and was an acquired skill, necessary to form a sharp casting. As suggested earlier in this piece, learning to get consistently crisp clean casts took years of experience to do efficiently. There are many variables regarding the temperatures at which type metal melts, depending on the specific percentages of tin, antimony, and lead. A mixture of 4% tin, 12% antimony, and 84% lead will melt at 463 degrees Fahrenheit, but "a good margin of temperature should be allowed for transit from pot to mould." (Fry's 1972)

The cast letters then passed through several different hands as they were dressed.

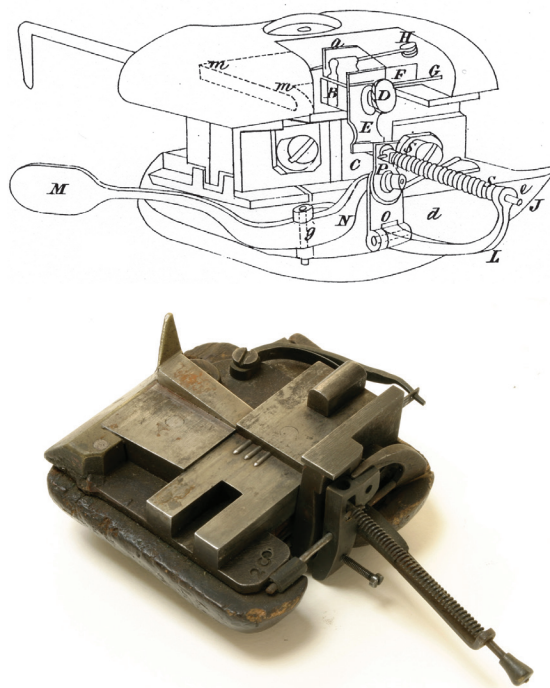
The sprues or jets formed in the mouthpiece of the mold were broken off by unskilled help. The sides of the types were rubbed smooth (often by boys or women), taking into account some letters that had overhanging bits called kerns which required special care to finish. After lining up the types in long sticks, the bottoms of the cast types were trimmed with a special plane, and the thin edges of the cast types were scraped smooth. They were then given a final inspection and wrapped for delivery to the printer.

There you have a highly abbreviated outline of the process of making type by hand. Clearly it was labor intensive, required highly specialized skills, and took a lot of time – but there was no alternative. That is where type founding stood until Bruce's successful type casting machine was patented in 1838 and then improved significantly in 1843. His, as well as several other casting machines, established the new standard for the manufacture of type after a few years of resistance by some members of the printing trade.

Meanwhile, three important early nineteenth century innovations to the hand casting of types are worth mentioning. By far the most important of these was the invention of the lever mold, sometimes called a 'trigger' mold. It is significant because in text sizes it allowed the caster to produce twice as much type as before.

In 1809 John Peek, an English millwright in the county of Surrey, England, patented a "*machine for the more expeditious method of casting printing types, by which three motions out of five, made in the ordinary method of casting types, are saved.*" (Peek[1809]1859, 117-118) His invention consisted of adding a complex assortment of interconnecting levers and a coil spring to the standard hand mold used at that time in England.

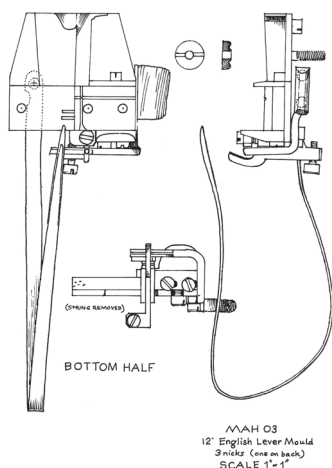
FIG. 4.



Peek's patent drawing with a photo of a similar lever mold is in the collection of the Type Museum, London.

With this alteration, the founder needed only to fill the mold in the usual manner and then, upon opening, the type was ejected from the hand mold by squeezing a lever (trigger). When working optimally, this improvement

nearly doubled the rate of casting smaller bodied types from roughly 2,000/4,000 types to 6,000/8,000 types a day (Fournier and Carson 1930, 104). Working days were twelve to fourteen hours long. But Peek's invention, which was intended (I believe) to be retro-fitted to existing, traditional molds, was overly complex and had too many moving parts. A transplanted Scottish typefounder, Archibald Binney, of the Philadelphia foundry of Binney and Ronaldson, patented an improved printers' type mold in 1811 that became the standard form of lever mold, as it was a simpler, more efficient design.



Drawing of a 12 point English lever (trigger) mold, using Bruce's invention.

As a result, Binney has been given much of the credit for the successful introduction of this faster mold. There were additional lever mold designs as well as Bruce's, but his design appears to be the most widely adopted.

The layout of the Binney lever mold altered the time honored arrangement in which the matrix was tied to the upper half while the spring supporting the matrix was fixed to the lower half. His invention essentially turned the mold completely over, transforming the bottom half into the top half, and moving the spring and the matrix abutment (called the stool) to the former upper half – which had now become the bottom. This accomplished the essential step of combining all of the moving parts on one half of the mold, so that they could be actuated by

a lever. When the lever (trigger) was squeezed, it tipped the matrix to free it from the type, and with a forceful opening motion, the newly cast type was thrown from the mold. A small under-cut was often made in the narrow face of the mouthpiece of the upper half, which momentarily caught the cast type and helped to free it from the opposite half. This notch was a feature that also appeared later in machine molds. To reiterate, the rearrangement of the hand mold, essential to the success of the lever mold that is believed to have been the invention of Archibald Binney, would become an integral part of the pivotal machine as well. But that is yet to come. Meanwhile, another valuable innovation beckoned.

Sanspareil Matrices

The second important innovation referenced above was the development of 'sanspareil' matrices. These were large, durable matrices made of sandwiched layers of brass plate. Around 1810, at about the same time that lever molds expanded type production in small bodies of type, the introduction of sanspareil matrices facilitated the casting *in molds*—not sand—of very large types suitable for printing large broadsides and posters.

In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, there was a growing use of posters, which expanded the need for large types. Typefounders had regularly cast these types up to about six lines of pica in ordinary hand molds (six lines = 72 points, or approximately one inch). When larger types were needed, they were often cast using wooden or brass models in combination with the process of sand casting – an ancient technique in which a temporary mold is formed in moist sand that is packed around a pattern. The technique is fairly slow, and the cast types are often flawed, but it was the only practical means for producing large poster types. Of course, very big faces had been produced by cutting massive punches in steel and striking them into copper using enormous pressure, but this was extremely difficult to do, and displacing so much metal distorted the copper strikes

very severely. It was really 'pushing the envelope'.² To cast poster type, what was needed was a form of durable brass matrices that could be produced efficiently and economically – ie. 'sanspareil' mats – which is French for 'un-matched.'

The idea behind sanspareil matrices was to simply abandon the use of a punch and to saw out the letter instead, much as one would to make a thick stencil. To make the letter on a sanspareil mat, the top layer of the composite brass plate was pierced using drills, saws, and files. It was then riveted to a second plate that formed the bottom of the matrix's casting cavity.



Sanspareil matrices in the collection of the Type Museum, London. (Photo by James Mosley.)

The counters or centers of letters such as an O or a Q were riveted to the bottom plate. The skills of some workers were surprising, as even complex 'in line' designs were made in the form of sanspareil mats. Sanspareil matrices could be made from five lines of pica up to sixteen lines or more. So, the practical limit for the size of cast poster types was then determined by what could be effectively cast (Figgins 1967, 39).

Casting very large types was never easy. Large-bodied hand molds, frequently mounted on long iron arms (called barrow molds – as in a wheelbarrow), were developed in order to cast these often enormous letters. In those large sizes, shrinkage also becomes a factor. Big, cast poster types would also be prohibitively heavy, requiring a lot of valuable metal. That is why the specialized hand molds used in this period often employed cores of various kinds to reduce the amount of metal needed to form the letters. The invention of machine-engraved wood types

in the late 1820s and early 1830s brought the use of most sanspareil matrices to a close. You could say wood type sawed off that branch of typefounding.



A force pump/pump pot. One of two that were in the collection of Theo Rehak. This one was sold to the Museum Plantin-Moretus to facilitate casting from their matrix collection. The second, barely seen in this photo, is in the workshop of Stan Nelson, Charles Town, WV.

The Force Pump

The third innovation that appeared in the 1820s became necessary as type designs became extremely delicate or fancy and were thus difficult to hand cast.

The ever inventive David Bruce Jr. created a force pump in 1834 that squirted molten metal into the hand mold under considerable pressure. Such were used regularly well into the 1850s in the production of type, and continued to be used throughout the 'machine age' of typesetting during the process of justifying or 'fitting' matrices. The force pump allowed the

² Another method for making large mats, little known and rarely used, was to use a lead pattern to cast brass matrices. These could then be finished with the large punch used to form the lead pattern. This is a subject for another time.

matrix fitter to quickly produce accurate trial castings in order to test the progress in justifying the matrices. It was a tool uniquely suited to its purpose. Also, it is worth noting that the combination of lever mold and force pump, in use, very much resemble elements of the casting machine that followed within decades, and patented by David Bruce, Jr. in 1838.

Conclusion

Typesetting was the critical element in Gutenberg's system of printing using movable letters, and after a rapid period of refinement, the process for casting printing type remained pretty much the same for the next three hundred and sixty years, until a series of improvements hurried typesetting into the age of machinery.

The invention of the pivotal type caster in 1838, which was radically improved in 1845, mechanized the production of printing type. By the mid-nineteenth century the hand casting of letters had become a minor, specialized activity, used to make limited amounts of letters. With the introduction of the pantographic punch and matrix engraving machines, automatic typesetters, Monotype, Linotype, Ludlow, and other composition systems, typesetting became so-

phisticated and efficient. As the earliest printers often made their own type, typesetting once again found its way into print shops in the form of Monotype and linecasting machinery. With vastly increased typesetting capacity, as well as the many improvements in telegraphy and transportation, some typesetters such as the American Type Founders Company became very large industrial operations. While many of our readers have limited experience with the 'hot metal' trade as it once was, some of us remember the days when the U.S. Government Printing Office had 120 Linotypes and forty Monotype casters running at one time. We 'old timers' have seen a trade that had evolved and thrived for hundreds of years reduced in its last days to a ghost of itself, and then we saw it succumb to the changing technologies that eliminated most of it.

It is this rich tradition of evolution and innovation that we have inherited. In some cases, we are able to preserve it as a form of living history and as a resource that will serve those who are willing to continue working with actual printing type. Who knew that there might be a renaissance of letterpress (photopolymer and all)? Let's see where it takes us.

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Two Masterpieces of Metal Type & Typography

by Scott Vile

“There are surprisingly few small machine book-printers who are well known for their work. D. B. Updike’s Merrymount Press is the most famous—and one of the last to install a typesetting machine. Others are the Southworth-Anthoensen Press . . . These names come first to mind because these presses have specialized in “fine” books—but there are many other small plants of this type which have not so specialized . . .”

Peter Beilenson. *The Dolphin*, Number 4, Part 2, Winter 1941.

Over the last year I happened to acquire a copy of the Merrymount Press *Book of Common Prayer* (Episcopal Church 1928) and also a copy of the Anthoensen Press book *Tudor Place* (Peter 1976). Both of these volumes, produced in the early- and mid-twentieth century respectively, are monuments not only to book production in their time but to the typographers that used the typesetting methods available to them (see figures 1 and 2). While there are many other examples of books from that century that are “monumental,” the Merrymount Press and the Anthoensen Press went to extraordinary lengths to compose and print with type in ways unlike other presses of the time. Daniel Berkeley Updike (1860-1941) and Fred Anthoensen

(1882-1969) were contemporary printer-scholars who took their trade and typesetting more seriously than others. There were other book designers and publishers at the time who were also serious about the “look” of their books, but Updike and Anthoensen were involved in the actual production of the books they were asked to print.

Beginning with Updike, the Merrymount Press (1893-1949) was set up for type composition by hand. When commissioned by J.P. Morgan to produce the *Book of Common Prayer* in 1928 (the book was not completed until 1930), the press needed a large quantity of Janson type (Nash 1974). Morgan had agreed to have the book printed in the Janson types, but the type

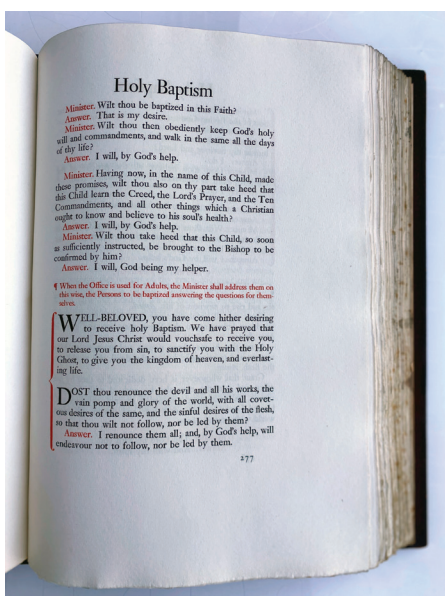


Figure 1: Book of Common Prayer

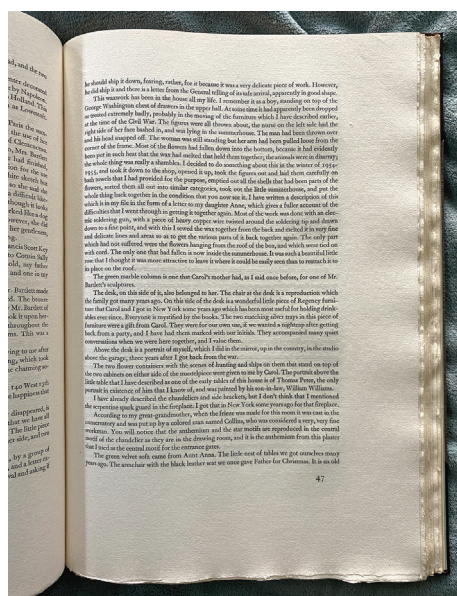


Figure 2: Tudor Place

in quantity was not available from the Stempel Type Foundry. To have the type he needed for the project, Updike had acquired a Thompson Type Caster, and he cast the Janson from electrotyped mats supplied by the Thompson Corporation. Thompson had used the type purchased for the sample pages from the Stempel Type Foundry to create Thompson-style mats.

The Thompson-style flat mats were handed down from the Merrymount Press to Dan Bianchi, who gave them to Rocky Stinehour in the early 1960s. Sometime around 2001 he gave them to John Kristensen at his Firefly Press, and they now reside in our shop in Bar Mills, Maine. They include all of the sizes and styles used in the making of the *Book of Common Prayer*, as well as all sizes of the initial capitals, which were drawn by W. A. Dwiggins. The details of the composition and history of the production of the book are to be found in *The Making of the Book of Common Prayer of 1528* (Hutner 1990). John used his English Thompson Type Caster to cast cases of all of the sizes of the Janson and the Dwiggins initials from these original matrices (see figure 3).



Figure 3

The *Book of Common Prayer* produced by Merrymount has been called one of the greatest books of the 20th century.

“This *Book of Common Prayer* is indisput-

ably the magnum opus of the Merrymount Press. It “exhibit[s] the elegance, superb design, scholarship and printing which represent the best of American work” (Hutner 1990, xii).

“Its beauty comes from its balance of color—black and red to white—the proportions of the text on each page and the lustre and evenness of the printing” (Hutner 1990, 59).”

The book was also printed in a limited number on vellum; hence the need for the book to be set entirely in type instead of printing, distributing and setting in sections. Printing on vellum requires that the book be printed (due to second color registration, temperature and humidity) as quickly as possible with no delays.

Fred Anthoensen’s shop in Portland, Maine also had a large quantity of hand type acquired from the best European foundries, but utilized the Linotype as well. Through the years 1944-69, the press was well known in New England for producing books and quarterlies for scholarly institutions, including the Boston Athenæum, the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, Bowdoin College, Peabody Essex Museum, Massachusetts Historical Society, Limited Editions Club, and many others. Typesetting these books required typographic refinements from Anthoensen that Mergenthaler Linotype had on hand and supplied on request. Most, if not all of the faces used, are still in use at the Ascensius Press, including the thin italics for Baskerville and Caslon. There are odd bits too, including things like true-cut Janson small caps, Porson Greek, Fraktur German, the special logotypes used in the *Hunt Botanical Catalog*, and many pi mats from years of setting the complex bibliographical work necessary for the papers of the Bibliographical Society of America (McMasters 1958). To take on complicated book work requires many pi boxes of accented characters, ligatures, diphthongs and italic figures, most of which cannot run in the magazine (see figure 4).

Tudor Place, a masterpiece, was set in 18 point Caslon, on a 50 pica measure, on a



Figure 4: ligatures and diptongs

Linotype with a 30 pica mold. That means, of course, that the slugs were butted together in specific measures to make a fifty pica line. Several colleagues have examined the book and cannot identify any example of where Lino slugs butt together; an extremely difficult task for anyone who has tried to do it and succeed, especially over ninety pages of forty eight lines each, all printed on handmade paper. Another consideration in the composition of the book was that the Linotype operator had to keep in mind whether the first part of the line's word

spacing was set "tight" or "loose," so the adjoining slug on the line had the same visual word spacing. Like the Updike Tacitus, the look of the type on the page in *Tudor Place* is magisterial; text block proportions in relation to the page's size are perfect, the density of the type and richness of the ink on paper are sumptuous, and all together these elements create an impression of elegance seldom seen in printed books.

The *Book of Common Prayer* and *Tudor Place* are extraordinary examples of work done by two presses that produced so much common work uncommonly well (it has been estimated the Merrymount Press printed over 20,000 items). Utilizing composition by hand or Linotype, under the right hands and with supervision from craftsmen, book composition can be a truly high art. The knowledge and skill of the master printers and typographers still alive today is being lost at an increasingly alarming rate due to the lack of enthusiasm by younger printers to "do the work." The members of the ATF have to make sure that at least the physical materials survive for future practitioners of our craft; better yet, we must show others how it is done.

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Notes and Queries:

Regarding the Welliver Interface: First, can anyone send a software "patch," or a trick to allow more than one hyphen at the end of a line of composition when setting text? I would prefer three. With short lines, when only one hyphen is allowed it makes very wide spacing on the next line. Right now, I have to manually hyphenate the text. Second, has anyone figured out if there is a way with the interface to allow space for a drop cap? The only way I have been able to do it, with, say, a three line dropped cap that is 3 picas wide, is if I have a 30 pica measure, to set cast the first three lines at 27 picas, determine where the last of the three ends, and then set the balance of the text on 30. Any other ideas? Email scott@ascensiuspress.com

The Benton Shading Device

by Jurie Florijn

Introduction

Discovery and rediscovery are terms that are often puzzling and highly subjective. They seem to reference a process or a certain point in time when e.g. information or an object is found (again). Take note that the confusion is mainly on the part of the discoverer; the discovery has been quite aware of its own whereabouts all along. After the process of (re)discovery has ended, the discoverer has to deal with even more confusion as they cannot declare something a (re)discovery on their own. A group or community has to establish that a (re)discovery has been made: after all, there might be a lack of common knowledge on the part of the discoverer.

So, without making bold claims about discovery or rediscovery, let's take a closer look at an object that we recently came across in the Letterkunde collection: the Benton shading device. For the sake of brevity I assume the Benton engraver, the machine that the device attaches to, and its workings, are known to the reader. If this assumption is not true for you, I can highly recommend Theo Rehak's *Practical Typesetting* (1993) or David MacMillan's *CircuitousRoot* (MacMillan, n.d.). I was lucky enough to learn to work on this machine at Project Letterkunde in Antwerp and engraved a newly designed font with it: Deinze type.

Context

The shading device was invented by Linn Boyd Benton in 1913 and perfected by Morris Fuller Benton (Rehak 1993, 131; Cost 2011, 97). In order to fully understand the device, we have to address the decorative typefaces of this period, especially those used in lithographic printing and the specific market segment ATF was interested in. Although lithographic printing opened up a whole new range of possibilities in terms of artistic typefaces and title pages, it had some cost-increasing disadvantages when

producing books (Lommen 2016, 224). A craftsman had to be hired to make the stone and the printer had to mix two different and highly specialized types of printing. ATF would likely have had two reasons for investing in a device that could engrave decorative and, more specifically, shadow types. The first reason is to eliminate the designer making the stones. If it would be possible to assemble the design in metal type and then transfer it to the stone, this would be of interest for ATF. Some experiments have been done in this direction, as we know the typeface Offset Engravers was specifically cut in metal to be transferred to stone (McGrew 1996, 235). The second reason is to print decorative title pages in letterpress for the cheaper segment. Surely, the more intricate designs of lithographic printing could not be realised in metal type, but simpler, more straightforward title pages could easily be produced, leading to cost reduction for printers.

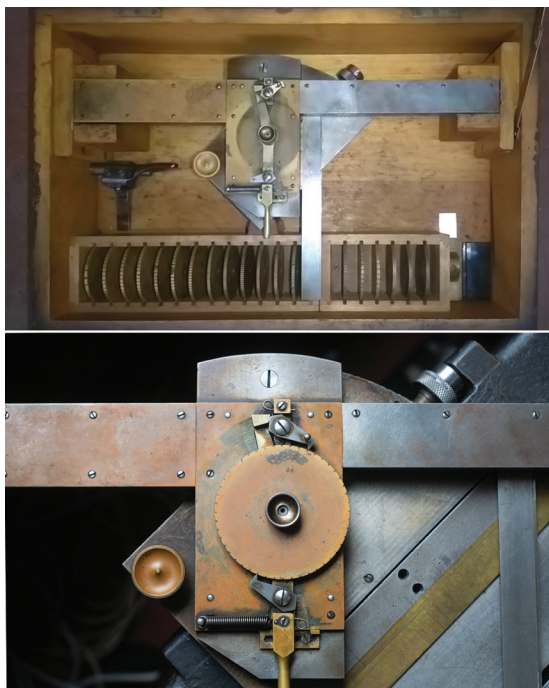
Description

Having laid out the context and issue at hand, let's take a look at the device that was invented to help engrave these decorative types. The device is stored in a wooden box that is clearly tailor made for the device and its attributes. It consists of a stainless steel platform with a t-shaped part fixed on top. The wooden box also has nineteen brass disks with notches all around. The notches for each of the disks are placed at a different interval. Three disks do not have any notches at all. Next to this the box holds a metal screw-like device, a small metal plate, a brass strip, and two pieces of hard plastic.

Workings

The device locks onto the back of the Benton engraver enabling the ruler to cover any pattern to be engraved on the machine. When locked into place, the arm of the Benton engraver can be used to engrave a straight line with the help

of the ruler, and the ruler can be moved by pulling a small handle to move the notched disk. The appearance of the device and its workings can be viewed on the website of Project Letter-kunde: <https://www.letter-kunde.be/benton-shading-device/>



Shading device in the box and attached to the machine

Purpose

The big question is: Why would you need a separate device for this? Why not fabricate a pattern to mimic the exact font and use that for the engraving work? Next to the obvious ‘to avoid mistakes,’ I want to point to another reason why the shading device was worth investing in: variety. In order to fully understand this, we have to take a look at the type of letters this device was used to engrave. For a non-native speaker like myself, the name “shading device” presents problems: Is it a device to make typefaces that display a shadow or is it a device to add a shaded look (or a greytone) to a certain typeface? I tend to believe the latter, but for the sake of explaining the possibilities of the device, we’ll take a look at the first-mentioned typeface: the shadow font.

Shadow fonts were hugely popular at the beginning of the 20th century and have remained a popular form of display type ever since. The shadow font consists of three components: the outline, the face, and the shadow, as depicted below using an artist impression of Engravers Shaded.



Left to right: full font, outline, face, and shadow of a shadow type

It does not take long for a skilled engraver to recognise the potential of fabricating a pattern with only the outline of the font and combining this with the shading device. By doing so, he or she does not have just one font at his disposal. By varying with the hatching, he can create numerous fonts with just one pattern. The face of the type can be white, black, and any desired greytone, and this applies to the shadow too. This means that instead of one possible letter to be engraved from one pattern, there are now at least six possibilities and many more, only limited by every possible greytone one can imagine. The Bentons and W.F. Capitan undoubtedly have considered this creative freedom, judging from *Lithograph Shaded*, which is an exact copy of *Engravers Shaded*, with exception of the hatching on the face (McGrew 1996, 205).



Engravers Shaded vs Lithograph Shaded

Another advantage of the shading device is that existing patterns could also be adjusted and turned into seemingly completely new fonts. A

commercial company like ATF would have certainly realised the advantages of this.

Conclusion

The Benton shading device has intrigued me from the moment I first saw it, and I hope I have been able to share my fascination. It provides a very straight-forward solution and opens up

a world of possibilities at the same time, like all great devices do. The Benton shading device remains in the Letterkunde collection until someone decides to design a new shadow type and engrave it. Don't hesitate to let us know if you fancy the idea.

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Type Alignment with a Digital Microscope

by Val Lucas

During my visit to Rich Hopkins' shop at the tail end of Monotype University Eleven, Rich showed off a new digital microscope he was using to enlarge a piece of type's pin mark and look at other small details. This microscope had a digital color screen above a lighted platform. The microscope could be raised or lowered. This looked like a good tool for aligning type to the baseline and checking type details when casting.

At Jim Walczak's shop, I learned to align type using a traditional microscope setup modified by Jim. A type alignment tool was mounted under the microscope, with a mirror to bounce the image up the eyepiece. I found this somewhat difficult to use. Each time, it required me to take off my safety glasses and stand on tiptoe to look through the eyepieces, which did not adjust to the right width for my eyes. Still, this setup allowed for a clear look at the alignment of type on the body, and it allowed us to get a great match to an existing piece of type.

I purchased a microscope similar to Rich's from Amazon. It had a 7" LED screen, attached

lights, and SD card capability. It worked great right out of the box for looking at a type's face and its pin mark. While the microscope itself did pivot to view an object at an angle other



Jim Walczak at the microscope in June 2024.

than just straight down, it did not allow for the type alignment tool to be properly viewed, The tool had to be held so that the type would lay flat on the surface) Jim and I decided to build a holder for the tool and set up a mirror to transform this new microscope into a copy of his existing station.

I found an extra type alignment tool, one with a metal rod sticking out the front, which we could use to mount it in a holder. I experimented with a small piece of mirror and the type alignment gauge held under the scope. I did this to find out approximately where the mirror and the tool needed to be situated.

In the wood shop, we used scraps of wood to create a base to support a vertical piece for the type holder and a slanted base for the mirror. The support for the holder went through several iterations, but in the end, the solution was simple. A small hole through a vertical piece of wood allowed the rod to be inserted upright in the wood. We then cut a 2x4 board at a forty-five degree angle to support a mirror under the scope. I arranged these two pieces until a clear view of the type holder could be seen in the scope. Then, I attached both to a wooden platform base. The base is set in place under the scope (which must be raised to its

highest setting) and held in place with a large rubber band. This makes the base easily removable, which allows for viewing other materials, such as flat mats or the occasional insect.



L: the base with angled mirror and type alignment gauge;
R: base on the microscope for viewing type

The scope allows for magnification up to forty times, and images or video can be saved to the SD card. I no longer need to take off my safety glasses or strain to see into the eyepieces. We've moved into the digital age for viewing type up close.

Cutting New ATF Matrices at the Greenboathouse Press

by Jason Dewinetz

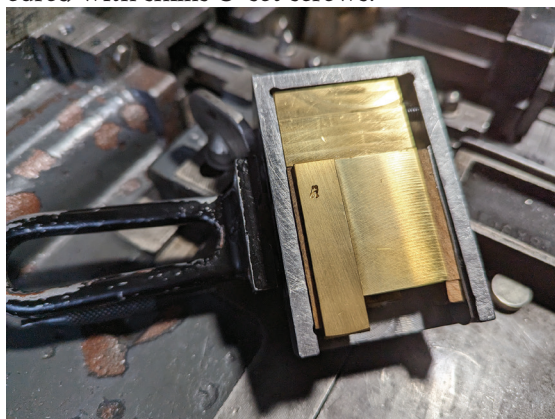
The book currently in production at Greenboathouse Press is a poem and accompanying essay by Crispin Elsted (of the Barbarian Press in Mission, BC). The essay includes a number of quotations and references in various languages that require a range of diacritics, which, as any printer and/or typesetter knows, can present a challenge when it comes to selecting a typeface for the project. For the former it's a matter of what's in the type cabinets, while for the caster the question is which box of mats includes accents?

Like many North-American printer/casters, my shop has an embarrassing shortage of diacritics, so I really didn't have much choice. What I do have are the original ATF foundry matrices for 16 point Cloister Lightface (roman, small caps, italic, & swash). I also have, strangely, the matrices for 16 point Cloister Oldstyle (a slightly darker version of the Lightface), but only the italic & swash, no roman or small caps. I honestly don't know why I even have these, as they're not much good without the roman, but there they are on the shelf. (As a side note,

if anyone reading this has the mats for 16 point Cloister Oldstyle roman/small caps, please let me know. I'd be happy to sell/trade the italic mats to get the roman & italic back together.)

I decided to use the Cloister Lightface for Crispin's text both because it's a lovely text type (if you've seen any of Bob Barris' books you'll know what I mean), but also because the mats include a full set of accents, both in caps and lowercase, in both the roman & italic. Also, of course, because I could cast fresh as much type as I'd need for the project.

So, I got to work. A few years ago, Dan Jones was kind enough to give me a custom matrix holder for the Super Caster that holds a range of foundry mats. It's a very simple contraption with a basic cavity where pretty much any size/shape foundry mat can be set and secured with shims & set screws.



I'd used it many times before and had determined the shims I'd need under the ATF mats so that they would seat correctly on the mould. The CLF mats are 16 point, but I was casting on an 18 point body to be set solid for printing. Dan has also sent me a 16 point mould and a modified type carrier for the Super Caster, but I haven't gotten around to testing it out yet.

First, I cast two very full cases of roman, the full range of upper and lower-case accents, and a good amount of the small caps. Then it was time for the italic. The Cloister Lightface italic is a nightmare to work with because nearly every single character has a kern, and many have kerns on both sides. The problem is that most

of the mats were engraved. Well, all of them were engraved, but some of the more common characters were then cast and electro-deposited. The engraved mats, of course, have beards, and while the kerns are designed to fit, the beards are not. When cast at ATF or at the Dale Guild, the type was pushed past a set of knives on the Barth caster that very carefully cut away the beards as the type exited the caster, in some cases doing very tricky under-cuts to ensure fitting. On the Super, however, I don't have those knives. This means nearly every single sort has to be hand-finished: not just dressed on a file, which is tedious but simple enough, but hand-finished with a tiny 3-sided file to rub away the beard without damaging the kern. After casting a relatively small 150-a/30-A font of the italic, along with all of the accents (á, à, ä, and â for all of the vowels, plus ñ and ç), I hunkered down with a loop and a file and hand-finished every single sort. While it was a small font, any of you who have spent time hand-finishing type will know what a slog this was to do.

Then, I set the text for the book. It's a short text. The poem is two pages, and the essay is seven. Once set, I ran each forme on the press to pull proofs to look for typos, etc. It was then that I got a swift kick in the balls.

The three wooden trays that hold the ATF mats (one for Lightface roman & small caps, one for Lightface italic & swash, and one for Oldstyle italic & swash) have no labels on them, and the mats themselves also have no identifying marks. They just have stamps for type size, set width, and, on some mats, indications for kerns on left, right, or both sides, as well as a few stamps indicating that the mats are St Louis 2 depth). The only thing identifying which mats are in which tray is a slip of old cardboard. When casting the italic, I grabbed the tray with the cardboard slip that had "16 Lightface italic." I checked that the set had all the same accents as the roman, and I got to casting. However, on pulling my first proof, the mistake became blatantly obvious. The italic I had cast was

significantly darker than the roman. At some point, the cardboard slips identifying the italic Lightface and Oldstyle mats must have gotten swapped. I had not only cast the wrong italic, but I'd spent upwards of 20 hours hand-finishing all of those sorts, only to discover they weren't the sorts I meant to cast.

So, back to the caster. It was at this point that I discovered that for some unknown reason the Lightface italic mats do not include a full range of accents. The mats only include á, é, í, ó, ú, and ñ, none of which I needed. What I did need was ä and ç. I figured I had two options: use the Oldstyle italic I had already cast and dressed, reluctantly accepting that the italic would print darker, or cast the Lightface italic and live without the accented ä and ç. Neither of these options was appealing.

I then remembered that I also have the original ATF copper-backed patterns for Cloister Lightface, and, on looking through them, I discovered that the full range of accents are included in the patterns.

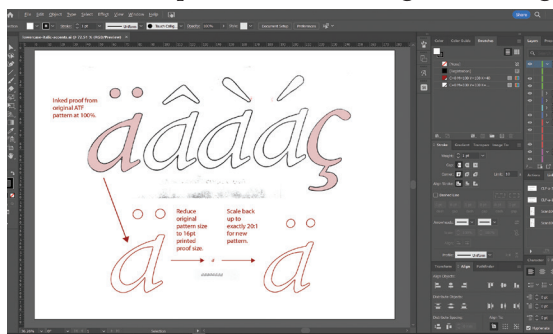


Why they were never cut is a mystery, but I now had the option to engrave new matrices for the characters I needed. Hooray!

I did some careful measurements and determined that I'd need to do a 20:1 reduction from the pattern to get to the 16 point I needed. I set to work and engraved the ä matrix (more on this below), then cast a handful of sorts and pulled a proof. Not surprisingly, my math was wrong. The character was too big and too dark. The darkness was a result not only of the character

being too big, but because of an ongoing issue I have with the Ogata pantograph: the spindle collet is old and worn (and it didn't help that Jim's method of getting his cutting tools out was to hammer on the spindle with a wrench), and so I have some run-out on my cutting tool. With a dial gauge I've determined that I end up with about .001 run-out, meaning a .003" cutting tool is actually cutting at around .005". This obviously sucks, and there are no new collets to be had, so my work-around is to use a larger follower. This keeps the cutting tool a tiny bit farther away from the outline of the pattern. The other option would be to redraw my digital outlines thinner than I want them to allow the pantograph to cut them a bit darker due to the run-out.

Anyway, at this point, I had another problem. The Ogata only allows up to a 20:1 reduction, but I needed more, which meant I had to create a smaller pattern. To do this, I pulled a proof of the copper ATF pattern and scanned it into the computer. I created a digital drawing,



and then reduced the drawing digitally to match a proof of 16 point type. Next, I enlarged the digital drawing back up to exactly 20:1. From there, I followed my usual protocol of laser-cutting the digital pattern into .125" adhesive-backed acrylic, which I then stuck onto another sheet of acrylic in order to have a smooth floor for the follower to work on. I also laser-cut a second pattern for the counter-cuts on the pantograph. See the image on the next page showing all of these things: the original pattern, my patterns for the character outlines and counter-cuts, and the finished mats.



My matrix cutting process is very similar to the specs that Ed Rayher included in his booklet on making Cherokee type, which look something like this for the 20:1 reduction:

- 1: Depth: .018" Cutter: .011" Follower: .225"
- 2: Depth: .036" Cutter: .011" Follower: .225"
- 3: Depth: .045" Cutter: .008" Follower: .160"
- 4: Depth: .052" Cutter: .004" Follower: .080"
- 5: Depth: .055" Cutter: .003" Follower: .060"

The extra depth allows the mat to be dressed to exactly .053" (St Louis 2), which is checked with an ATF depth gauge using an ATF standard for SL2. The final approval comes from casting some type and testing the height-to-paper to match the rest of the font.¹



None of this went perfectly, but I've gotten used to that. I had to engrave the ä matrix three times and the ç matrix twice, but in the end, I managed to make two mats that deliver well. Each has a reasonably clean face, and each blends well with the existing font of type.

I had done something similar for a matrix font of 60 point Bodoni bold italic, which was missing the capital W, so I suppose this was my second attempt to fill in gaps in my matrix collection. However, I wasn't done yet. I'm also using a 36 point Troyer ornament on the book's title page and wanted to print a pattern of the ornament on the binding, but the 36 point size was too big and I only have 2 sorts. I could have just digitally redrawn the ornament and had a polymer plate made. Instead, I went through this entire process again. I engraved a 24 point Troyer mat, then cast 500 of them for the patterned paper.

It's an interesting process, fraught with potential failure at every turn, but it's also very rewarding when the time comes to cast, set, & print these missing characters. Have a look at my Instagram account to see photos of these various projects: @greenboathousepress.

The next hurdle was to get to work printing Crispin's book, which I'm printing damp, and it's coming along nicely, but I had to take a break from that to get this article written. If any of you have any questions about my process, or suggestions, I'd love to hear from you.

¹ For a lot more detail on various other aspects of this process, such as preparing matrix blanks and cutting tools, see my article "In the Cut: Engraving foundry-style matrices at Greenboathouse Press," in *Parenthesis* 47, the journal of the Fine Press Book Association.

The PRINTERS EMBELLISHERS

By Arie C. Koelewyn, The Paper Airplane Press



Above are just a few of the cast of mostly printing related figures from the 1923 ATF *Specimen Book and Catalogue*. Almost all letterpress printers are familiar with them, and a lucky few own at least some of them. I am not among the lucky. I've asked around for quite a few years and during my discussions, I found very little is known about them and their origins.

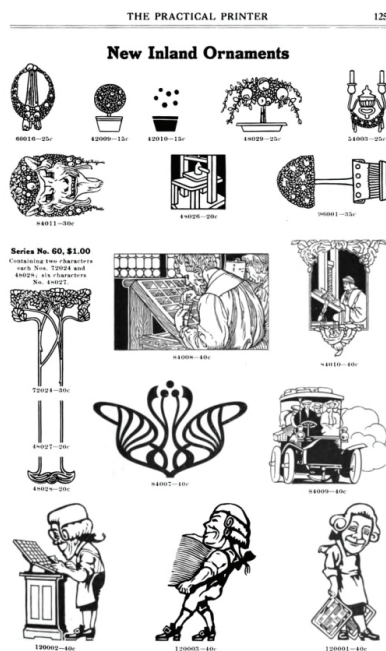
When I first became a hobby printer almost 50 years ago, I purchased an old Kelsey 5x8. The Kelsey Co. was still, barely, in existence, and I wrote to them asking if they could supply the missing gripper bar, gripper spring, and grippers. Eventually, after a bit of back and forth in the US Mail, I received the parts and, more importantly, a Kelsey's *Printers' Supply Book*.

In that catalog, I drooled over the cuts section and, in particular, I wanted the cut depicting a colonial printer (center, above) (Printers' n.d., 10). It was not to be. I've never seen a copy of this cut in any sale of any printshop, any NAPA or APA auction, at any wayzgoose sale, etc. Over time, I've slowly become aware that this cut was just one of a number of similar images, all nicely collected in the pages of that 1923 ATF catalog. I still do not own any original ATF castings of these figures. In recent years, I finally realized that if I was going to own any of these, I would have to come up with my own versions—in a digital format. I completed this project, a TrueType font of Colonial Printers, in April of 2020 (Koelewyn 2020). I use the digital font multiple ways. I've used it as a font in things I've written and sent along electronically. I've sometimes printed out on our ancient LaserJet (Koelewyn 2020). I have also sent them off to Owosso to be made into copper cuts as needed and in the desired size.

One result of this project was I found I enjoyed the process of creating digital versions of dingbats, cuts, full alphabets, and borders. I also discovered the wonder that is the HathiTrust

website. I began looking through old books and magazines for old ideas to recreate digitally. Eventually, I found their digitized copies of *The American Printer and Lithographer*, *The Inland Printer*, and similar journals from around the world. I scoured their pages for images to digitize.

Then, in the August 1908 issue of *The Practical Printer* (Inland 1908, 125), I spotted a familiar set of characters. This publication is the house organ for the Inland Type Foundry, and this advertisement introduced these figures. It didn't take long before they began to appear in other Inland Type Foundry advertisements in general trade publications, such as *The Inland Printer* and *The American Printer*.



Two years later, again in *The Practical Printer* (Inland 1910, 156) these figures got their own feature advertisement with three solid outline figures, for background color, added.

These three figures continued to be seen over the next year in Inland advertisements, especially

in *The Inland Printer*, but, as far as I have been able to determine, they were never included in any Inland catalog. Then, in 1911, ATF purchased the Inland Type Foundry and ATF became the owner of the matrices for these figures.

ATF's first mention of these figures came in December of 1912 (*American* 1912), about a year after the purchase.

MORE PROFIT NEXT YEAR

The Profits you have achieved during this closing year, however satisfactory, should be greater in the coming year. The Nation's Business is going to be all records next year.

Are you ready for the Harvest of Dollars?

Are you ready to satisfy next year's demand for More and Better Printing?

We ask these questions as much in your interest as in our own. Your prosperity is very important to us.

We think we have earned the right to advise the printers. Our great *Fashion-Creating, Original Type Families* have undoubtedly made Printing More Salable and helped You to Sell More Printing. They have Stimulated the Demand for Printing at Better Prices.

They have Stimulated the Demand for Repeat Orders.

Look over your Most Profitable Orders, and you will find they were set in Type Faces manufactured by this Company.

Look over the work which during the past year increased your Reputation, and you will find it was set in Type Faces manufactured by this Company.

You are progressing probably if you are largely using the newest Type Faces manufactured by us, and we are progressing to make it easier for all the printers to Do More Business and Make More Profits and Buy More Type and Printing Material.

The greatest, brainiest and most successful type designers in the world are working constantly to keep this Company ahead of the procession, and to enable our Customers to furnish their Customers with More Attractive Printing than can be produced by any other types.

This Company has greatly prospered because it deserves prosperity.

It has improved not only Type Faces but the Whole Line of Printers' Supplies by making the Best Quality and Best Value the first considerations in every line it handles.

We pride ourselves as much upon giving the Printers a Square Deal upon being by the Good Will of the Printers Everywhere, the World's Greatest Distributor of Type, and Printing Machinery and Materials.

For these reasons we ask your support. We ask you to carefully examine the extraordinary contents of our New Great 12-pound Specimen Book and Catalogue, and while so doing, we ask you to remember that every one of the thousands of items therein are manufactured by us to make accurate results in setting them to you can make only one moderate profit, when you use them you will make thousands of profits from the one purchase.

For the coming year we wish all the Printers Happiness and Prosperity—all the Printers You Can Do and all of it at Profitable Prices.

AMERICAN TYPE FOUNDERS COMPANY

In 1923, ATF published their monumental *Type Specimen and Catalogue*. It includes a much larger set of figures (*American* 1923, 757-758). On the bottom of page 757 are the three original Inland figures, minus their solid outlines, plus one not previously seen in either the Inland or ATF advertisements, a figure holding two ink balls (fourth from the left at the beginning of this article). Collectively, ATF calls these four PRINTERS EMBELLISHERS. All the others are called TYPOGRAPHIC SPOTS.

The preceding page of the catalog adds a number of additional images as well as some two color versions of both original and new figures. None of the three solid color outlines seen in the 1910 Inland advertisement in *The Practical Printer* are seen anywhere in the 1923 ATF Catalog.

Over time, I became increasingly curious about the history of these figures. Two questions arose in my mind: Who is the artist? And did Inland make all of the matrices for this remarkable set, or did they only have the first three, plus solid outlines, and then ATF arranged for the rest?

I have not answered either question definitively, but there is some evidence supporting my belief that:

- 1) The artist is Frederic Goss Cooper; and
- 2) Inland probably created a smaller set that ATF inherited and expanded upon at a later time

and included in the 1923 Catalog.

My belief that Fred Cooper (no relation, apparently, to Oswald Cooper) is the artist is circumstantial, but, I believe, convincing. Fred Cooper grew up in Oregon and by 1904 had moved to New York City to begin a career in illustration and cartooning. Shortly after arriving in New York, he managed to land an interview with the advertising manager of The New York Edison Company. Cooper was able to convince New York Edison to let him create some advertising for the company featuring 'Father Knickerbocker', a short man in a wig with an enormous head and an even larger jawline dressed in American Colonial clothing (Martin 1922, 153). He carried a tray, as a butler or waiter would, holding an electric light bulb. This figure became known as the "Edison Man" and was used as the symbol for the company for more than twenty years. It is sometimes paired with the text "AT YOUR SERVICE."



This was the first in a vast series of illustrations Cooper made for the New York Edison Company. He drew an extended family of related characters, each featuring a huge head and huge jawline, and each wearing a curled wig while dressed in American colonial-period clothing (*American* 1923, 576-577). His cast of figures included the "Edison Girl," who was shown doing all sorts of domestic chores that were made easier with electricity. Cooper, also soon after arriving in New York, became an illustrator for *Collier's Magazine* and *Life Magazine*, where he created small spot illustrations he called 'cartoonettes'. He also formed a long association with The Marchbanks Press, a noted private press that, among other things, printed books for The Limited Editions Club.

Even though the figures from Inland and, subsequently, ATF are unsigned, their resemblance to the Edison Man and related drawings is unmistakable. In 1908, and certainly by 1923, Cooper was an easily recognized artist with a distinctive style. I think it would have been easier to work with the prolific artist than to have another artist copy his style. It is easy to imagine an innovative, upstart type foundry like Inland dealing with an up-and-comer like Cooper in 1906-1908 for the

original three figures, and then later for the more established ATF to work with Cooper to create an expanded set of images for the 1923 Catalog. The arrangement of the figures in the 1923 ATF Catalog suggests that the matrices for the original three figures, plus maybe that fourth, which is on a different page than the others, may have been made at a different time.

The matrices for this series were spotted at the preview of the auction of ATF's assets in 1993 by Rich Hopkins, who noted that there were two matrices, in 120 point size, that were not seen in the 1923 ATF Catalog (Hopkins 1994, 6). That's the last time any of the matrices were seen. What happened to these matrices during the auction is a mystery. They may have bypassed the auction and entered into the collection of the Smithsonian Institution; they may have been bought by a collector who is keeping quiet about it; or they may have been purchased and melted down by one of the scrappers reported to be at the auction. Many of the matrices in the Smithsonian, but not all, were recently acquired by the Printing History Museum in Carson City, CA. I asked, but there were no reports of these matrices being seen during the packing for the move to California. It is also unclear what the Smithsonian retained for their own collection.

In addition to The Inland Type Foundry and, later, The American Type Founders, a couple of other businesses sold at least a part of this series of figures. As mentioned previously, The Kelsey Co. sold the figure. Kelsey was known to buy type from ATF and sell it under their Connecticut Type Foundry name. A post on the Briar Press website claimed that Kelsey used the Connecticut name for type it sold that was manufactured by ATF (VonHoldt 2014). It also sold Monotype cast type under the name of The New England Type Foundry. Some of this type may have actually been cast on site in Meriden, CT. Like many other fonts of type it sold, it seems likely that Kelsey sourced the printer figure from ATF.

Another source for two of these figures was Typefounders, Inc., Charles Broad's business, sometimes referred to as Typefounders of Phoenix. Broad sold the figure at the type cabinet and the figure holding two chases. He sold both right and left versions of each and in two sizes (Broad

1962). Eight matrices, four cast on an 18x12 body and four cast on a 36x24, passed on to Los Angeles Type Founders, and then to Barco, and finally to Skyline Type Foundry, which currently offers a set that includes these eight figures, as Collection 42 (Skyline n.d.) (Shipley 2024).

Outside of the United States, some unidentified Japanese company was importing at least these first three figures into Japan, presumably from ATF.



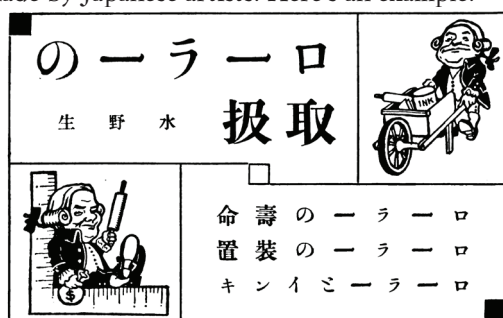
During the research for this article, Rick VonHoldt pointed out one more related figure in the 1923 ATF Catalog (American 1923 802) that I had somehow missed (VonHoldt 2024). This is a small cut of a variation on the Edison Man with his face looking out of the page. I also found this identical figure on the cover of *The Edison Monthly* (New 1914). A version of The Edison Man was on the cover of *The Edison Monthly* from June 1914 until the magazine ceased publication in December 1928.

One more variation of the Edison Man can be found in *Monotype: a Journal of Composing Room Efficiency* (Lanston 1913, 88-89). There you can find a two-page advertisement that includes a version of the Edison Man carrying a Monotype caster, instead of a light bulb, on his tray. It appears in just that one issue. Monotype must have engraved a matrix and then abandoned it. At least one of these border pieces is still in existence. It is in the collection of Rick VonHoldt, who used it in the 2012 issue of *It's a Small World* amidst a collection of printing-related cuts. Rick says it is on a 36x36 point body.

Finally, the figure standing at the type case traveled across the Pacific Ocean in 1912 and

made an appearance in *The Osaka Insatsukai* (Taniguchi 1913, cover) in an advertisement for The Taniguchi Printing Office. It is clearly not the same as the Inland/ATF casting as it is quite a bit larger, covering about a fourth of the page. It also incorporates Ben Day dots as shading in the wig and shirt as well as lined shading on the type cabinet. I assume a local artist carved a wood block or made a stereotype.

This journal and its successor, *The Nippon Insatsukai*, show a clear Western influence. There is plenty of English in the largely Japanese-language journal, especially in the advertisements. Later issues (Advertisement n.d., 12), beginning in 1915, show more American-style colonial figures not found in American catalogs. These were likely made by Japanese artists. Here's an example:



It is interesting to note that Carl Schraubstad-

ter, Jr. moved to Osaka, Japan shortly after the sale of the Inland Type Foundry to ATF and became a noted collector of Japanese woodblock prints. I can't help but wonder what his interactions with the Japanese printing industry were and if any of those interactions were responsible for this figure crossing the Pacific Ocean so quickly.

There's a lot of details yet to be uncovered about these fascinating figures. The ATF's Library was acquired by Columbia University in 1936 (Columbia n.d.), but it is not clear if any other papers were included in the deal. Rich Hopkins mentioned ATF's papers being scattered about during the auction with no regard to historical preservation (Hopkins 1994, 9), so it is likely they no longer exist as a body and are unlikely to provide any answers as to the artist of these figures' or the dates of their creation. It's possible that some of the principal people may have left archives of their work and letters, etc. to an institution, but I have not been able to find any. Likely candidates for such investigations include Carl Schraubstadter, Jr., Oswald Schraubstadter, William Schraubstadter, and Nicholas J. Werner, all from the Inland Type Foundry; Morris Fuller Benton and Joseph W. Phinney from American Type Founders; and Fred Cooper.

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Typecasting in Germany and Scandinavia in 2024

by Franz Hennies

Introduction

When, two years ago, I discovered the ATF newsletter archive on David McMillan's website CircuitousRoot, a new world opened for me, a world I had thought no longer existed. Ever since I started printing, I just assumed that the type we were using was the last existing. Everytime we had to throw a squashed type into the bin, it felt like an irrevocable loss. Yet, here was a large community still casting type. Rich Hopkins was producing an all metal type newsletter. There were mats of anything one can imagine in Greg Walters' barn. Stan Nelson was perfecting hand casting. People were even designing new typefaces and engraving mats. Around the same time, I got in contact with Erich Hirsch, a Monotype operator in my hometown of Hamburg, Germany, whom I am now blessed to call my mentor. I saw Monotype matrices that were freshly purchased from England, and I learned of Rainer Gerstenberg, who still operated a type foundry in direct succession of the largest German type foundries there ever existed.

However, turning the virtual pages of the Newsletter, I learned about the perishing of the Dale Guild, and I read the obituary for Greg Walters. I learned that Ludwig Mohr, who volunteered to take over the newsletter, also died an untimely death, and I saw the presumably last newsletter be produced on a computer. I learned that The Type Archive in London was closed for

good, that Gerstenberg will close his shop, and that my mentor, despite his good health and remarkable energy, will turn eighty-eight this year. So the world I had thought lost, then rediscovered, again faded away before my eyes.

But then, by pure chance, I saw Jason Dewinetz posting a link to the hybrid session of the last ATF conference. I listened to Val Lucas reporting her engraving adventures, and I learned about Fritz Swanson and the other printing stewards. So, when there was word about the revival of the ATF newsletter, I was enthusiastic to contribute and to see what I could do to help change the course of typecasting history.

Germany and Scandinavia

This attempt at an overview of current typecasting activities in Germany and Scandinavia comes from feeling an urgent need to help preserve the art of typecasting. I also have the very nonaltruistic motive of creating opportunities to practice it myself. I am active in Germany and Sweden, so the situation there is best known to me. While writing this piece, I realized how much I might not know and therefore might miss in my overview, hence the careful title. I actually hope that there are more activities, and that you readers reach out to me and report them, so that we can connect and include them in an update for a future ATF newsletter.

Foundry Type

Rainer Gerstenberg's type foundry (D. Stempel successor)

I will start by discussing foundry type first, and come to Monotype (both composition and display type / super caster) later. Internationally best known is certainly the type foundry of Rainer Gerstenberg in Darmstadt, Germany. Until recently, Rainer produced real foundry type from

a wide range of matrices, even using different alloys for small or large grades, casting calligraphic typefaces with large overhang, and making heat resistant type for bookbinding. Last year, the uncertain fate of his foundry was widely discussed on social media, and a petition was signed by several thousand people urging the government of the German state of Hesse to intervene and

secure the future of the foundry. While — at the time of writing and to my knowledge — no agreement has been reached, there are hopeful signs for a resolution. More about this later.

Rainer is a typefounder by trade. He started as an apprentice at D. Stempel in 1961 while still in his teens, the usual age in the German trade apprentice system. He was a quick learner, and he can pride himself with the dubious honor of earning an exemption permit for piece rate pay before the legal age of eighteen. D. Stempel had developed their own machines, where two typecasters were integrated into the same frame, allowing one operator to run continuous casting on one machine while setting up a second caster at the same time, all without having to step aside. During his career, Rainer was to meet the likes of Herman Zapf and Jan Tschichold. When D. Stempel, already merged with the German Linotype for matrix production and other remaining metal type activities, seized production of metal type during the 80s (Wikipedia 2011), Rainer took over the tools and the machines and eventually moved into the newly founded Haus der Industriekultur (House for Industry Culture) in Darmstadt (Feuck 1998). This was then an ambitious project aiming at a conservation of all aspects of industrial printing, supported by the president of one of the largest German engineering universities, and attracting public funding.

On the premises of what eventually became part of the state-owned Hessisches Landesmuseum (Museum of the State of Hesse, going back to the 17th century), Rainer has since operated a commercial type foundry, with his own machines and access to a growing stock of matrices, some owned by him, others by the state. In addition to Stempel's inventory, matrices from Swiss Haas, Italian Nebiolo, and some French foundries found their way to his shop. While closely connected to the printing museum under the same roof, his operations were independent and commercial. However, apparently his operations have only ever been large enough to support himself, never large enough to allow him to take in an apprentice and secure a succession. In the meanwhile, the operation of the museum went through several changes, which would warrant a

separate description, and ended up being treated rather stepmotherly by the state, which neglected maintenance of the premises. Finally, this led to first a partial, then later a complete closure due to an alleged unsafe state of the building in 2023 (Propson-Hauck 2023) (Joachim 2024). I was able to visit Rainer in autumn 2023 and see his operations, which had dozens of typecasters in an operational state. At this time, the museum under the same roof was already closed and its volunteers barred from entering. Since the new year, even Rainer's workshop is off limits, and his machines are standing still for the longest period since they were built. So, while not, as often claimed, the last commercial typefounder in the world, he is to my knowledge the last one in Europe, and maybe the last to stand in a direct line of succession from the first typefounder himself.

I want to caution that I am not privy to the ongoing discussions between the stakeholders. I'm not even sure who all of them are, and I'm aware that much of what has been discussed publicly is based on speculation. But, I think it is safe to say that at the heart of this are two issues: First, and most important, there is a need to find an operation model for Rainer's type foundry which secures, at last, a transfer of knowledge to new people, in order to preserve the immaterial heritage of typecasting, and in order to secure a supply of sorts for printing in the future. It is my understanding that the three largest printing museums in Germany, the Klingspor Museum in Offenbach, the Museum für Druckkunst in Leipzig, and the Gutenberg Museum in Mainz all are willing to contribute together (within their means), and have already secured some (while not yet disclosed) parts of a solution. Connected, but partly also independent, is the second question about the future of the current premises in Darmstadt. While keeping activities there would have huge benefits, major investment would be needed to compensate for many years of neglect, which until recently seemed unlikely. However, in another unbelievable plot twist a white knight may have arrived who is willing to invest the necessary millions (Walz 202).

So, it looks like hopes are up, and the near future will tell what is going to happen with the last

type foundry in Europe. What we can do in the meanwhile, I think, is to see how we can contribute to an exchange of knowledge and to support whatever solution is found with our expertise.

Other collections in Germany

There are no other operating foundry typecasters to be found, or at least in regular operation, in Germany or Scandinavia, if not in Europe. The only other machines that I know of are at the Museum für Druckkunst, Leipzig, Germany. There, a couple of foundry typecasters are on display and have mostly been used by Thomas Siemon, from the museum's part time staff, to produce ornaments for the museum shop. There are general concerns regarding safe operation of the machines, since they have gas furnaces and a tendency to produce nasty splashes. With limited resources, the museum will focus on Monotype operations (see below).

Other than that, a scattered collection of foundry type matrices and some machinery can be found in the collections of some museums in Germany and Sweden. The Darmstadt collection available to Rainer's type foundry comprises the remains of many German foundries, but not all. The Deutsche Technikmuseum (German Museum of Technology) Berlin (Mathieu 2022) owns

matrices, documentation, and specimens from the Berthold type foundry and has in recent years made an updated inventory available, as well as undertaken some digitization projects.

Sweden and Scandinavia

In Sweden, two large type foundries existed. Norstedts and Sons donated large parts of their inventory to the Nordic Museum in 1974 when they stopped producing metal type. A digital catalog exists, but it is not easy to understand how complete the collection is. Not on display, the inventory is available for research, but most likely not for any production. Matrices and machinery from the Berling Type Foundry in Lund are all but lost without a trace. Some 19th century matrices, as well as some early typecasters, are stored at the Kulturen museum in Lund (Burman 2017). None of these collections seem promising to start any typesetting related activities anytime soon. But, again, in a plot twist worthy of a Hollywood movie, it seems possible that some mats and machinery from Lund have found their way into a barn in Piqua, Ohio (Walters 2022), and I will report more on this connection in a future ATF newsletter.

In Scandinavia outside Sweden, to my knowledge, no type foundry equipment is preserved.

Monotype

There are a number of Monotype Composition Casters preserved and a few running in Germany and Scandinavia, and a small number of Super Casters as well. I am not aware of anyone, however, currently producing fonts or sorts for sale on any of these, or of anyone casting text for any larger projects such as books, on a regular basis. There are a couple of small private presses, and (at least) two regular book art fairs, the annual Buch-DruckKunst in Hamburg, and the Malmö Artist's Book Biennial, which bear witness of a vibrant community, but none of the presses currently participating use a Monotype.

The Museum der Arbeit, Hamburg

The Museum der Arbeit in Hamburg has since its beginning had a large and living printing division. Founded by volunteers, the museum is now

part of the Foundation of Hamburg State Historical Museums. For more than thirty years, volunteers have kept a well-equipped workshop alive and offered a drop-in printing workshop once a week, as well as evening and weekend courses and kids birthday parties. The museum participates in festivals and fairs and more. A Heidelberg Cylinder, a Windmill, two Linotypes, several proof presses, a large hand composing room, and a book bindery are regularly used by some thirty volunteers. At the same time, everything is on daily display for the regular museum visitors.

The museum has the only Monotype that I know of in Germany or Scandinavia that is regularly operated. Since Erich Hirsch started fourteen years ago to get up and running what was until then only on "dead" display, he and his colleague Daniel Janssen have been demonstrating

the keyboard and caster at least twice a week to visitors. Erich has also produced text for a good amount of small and large projects. For nearly two years now, I have had the luck that Erich calls me his “apprentice”, learning the Monotype Composition Caster and keyboard, and by now I can operate them independently (as long as things go smoothly, that is), and I have done some service on them as well.

In Hamburg, operation is historically correct with keyboard and paper ribbon. Thus, available typefaces are limited to where wedges, stop bars, and keybars exist. Another choice is to use lino-type metal, as it is in easy supply and has provided reliable casting. Erich provides sorts for the museum workshop.

The OHD and the Museum für Druckkunst, Leipzig

Until recently, a large collection of Monotype matrices and machines could be found at the Offizin Haag-Drugulin (OHD) in Dresden, Germany. A descendant of West Germany, printer and collector Eckehart SchumacherGebler acquired the largest remaining metal type operation of the former German Democratic Republic. He saved the Officin Andersen Nexö from the liquidators when Germany became reunited in 1990. After some years of negotiating over the best way forward, this eventually led to the separate founding of the Museum für Druckkunst (Museum for the Art of Printing) in Leipzig and SchumacherGebler’s private operation, the OHD. Fast forwarding, by 2022 he had steadily grown his private collection, which included several super casters, several operational Monotype Composition Casters, some of which were fitted for large composition, and a number of keyboards. His inventory of matrices was impressive. He employed a printer, a young and newly educated typecaster, and Heike Schnotale, a young and newly educated hand composer and keyboard operator. Unfortunately, at the time of his death at eighty-eight in December 2022, no arrangements had been made for the OHD. Despite efforts from many in Germany, and all over Europe, no solution to preserve the OHD in their existing state has been found.

Fortunately, the heirs finally agreed to transfer

the most important parts of the collection to the Museum für Druckkunst in Leipzig (Julke 2023), where all former OHD Monotype equipment can now be found. The museum’s leadership, Dr. Katharina Walter and the board, is committed to keeping them operational and available for projects. The remaining challenge is to secure the knowledge needed to operate the machines, and ideally, a business model that allows this to not rely only on volunteer work. The museum has had their own collection of operational Monotype casters, both composition and super. In recent years, they have not been used much. Since this year, however, Thomas Siemon is learning Monotype operations from Michael Märker.

Other Monotypes in Germany

The Offizin Alpirsbach, a small all-volunteer museum supported by the local brewery in the Black Forest in southern Germany, has an operational Monotype Composition Caster, but I am not aware of anyone there who can operate it. The Haus für Industriekultur in Darmstadt houses not only Rainer Gerstenberg’s type foundry, but also a separate printing museum, which is currently closed as well. They have a Monotype on display and have had occasional demonstrations, but the machine is presumably not fit for producing text or type. Michael Bode operates a mail order company for artist printing, and casts lead-free (tin alloy) type for schools on a super caster.

Sweden and Scandinavia

Sweden has no operating Monotype Composition Casters left. Einar Ljungström in Smedjebacken, north of Stockholm, operates a super caster and has a composition caster in his collection, but he has never operated it. In Denmark, the Vingaards Offizin in Viborg, another all-volunteer-museum, has both composition and super casters in operational state, but, to my knowledge, no one is actively working with them.

The Rest of Europe

A great development of the last few years is the increased collaboration in printing across borders in Europe, and there are some initiatives aiming at educating the new generation of type casters. I want to briefly mention a few more peo-

ple and places that I believe will play a role in this. For a more comprehensive description of the European situation, I simply don't have enough information. Percy Penzel, aged forty-five, is the world's youngest Linotype technician and heads the Typorama museum in Bischofszell, Switzerland (Benz 2022). It has the largest collection of operational linecasters in Europe, and an operational Monotype, albeit no one currently operating it. Another youngster in Switzerland is Nicolas

Regamey who recently added both a super caster and a composition caster to his workshop in Lausanne.

Tartu in Estonia, a few kilometers from the Russian border, probably has Europe's most innovative printing museum and arts center, TYPA. There, with help from Ian Gabb, Jörgen Loot has recently revived their Monotype Composition Caster "after thirty years of inaction".

Summary

When it comes to foundry type, we are at a crossroads. There might be a solution for Rainer Gerstenbergs foundry very soon, allowing his workshop to be preserved and an apprentice be trained. Or maybe no solution will be found, in which case the last foundry type has been cast in Europe for a long while, if not ever.

There is more hope on the Monotype side. There aren't many operating Monotypes left. What is threatening the future of typesetting more than a lack of machines is a lack of people that can operate them. I have counted three people below the age of fifty that currently work with Monotypes, a few more that might soon or that I don't know of. This can be enough, as long as we find good ways to collaborate and invite new people to join us.

So, finally, I am looking forward to you reaching out to me, to tell me about other people and places in Europe that will become a part of preserving typesetting into the future.



Franz Hennies and mentor Erich Hirsch, replacing the bridge at the composition caster in Hamburg in 2023.

Photograph by Burkard Meyendriesch.

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IN MEMORIAM

Since Issue 45 was published in 2022, this small community has lost some of its giants: Theo Rehak (d. January 11, 2024), Don Black (d. June 3, 2023), Mel Arndt (d. January 15, 2024), and Richard Mathews (d. January 3, 2024). As this founding generation of typesetting preservationists passes, we must all gratefully reflect on their essential achievements. The new generation has a responsibility to step forward, to be taught and to teach, to support and to be supported, so that this long tradition may continue.

A Tribute to Theo Rehak

by Rich Hopkins

I made the mistake of reading Theo Rehak's book, *The Fall of ATF*, before writing this tribute to his life as a typefounder and a cherished friend, who left this life in January. Theo was a complex person. He was a compassionate person, and above all, he was a very committed person. Sadly, that which he was committed to ended up being a profound disappointment for him.



In the 1960s, Theo and some friends formed a renaissance guild revival reminiscent of William Morris's efforts in the earliest years around 1900. They convinced him they needed a "printer" influence and that he should be the one to research the

subject. That he did, in a convincing fashion. His efforts are the only remnant of what was then a dream called the Dale Guild. Others faded away, but Theo—he built a type foundry.

Paul Duensing first told me of Theo and his obsession to get a job at American Type Founders so that he could learn the trade from the bottom up.

Working at ATF? "That's a dream come true," I thought to myself. But only several years later, when I got to know Theo personally and labored alongside him in seeking committed apprentices, did I come to realize his ATF adventure was filled with adversity, and an abundance of people who hated themselves, each other, and especially ATF. But Theo was on a mission, and he was not to be defeated. As he himself admitted, the book he wrote was a watered-down version of how

things really were.

Then came that fateful day in 1993 when the ATF foundry was auctioned off. Theo was not present. It was just too much for him. He had to keep away from the sale. But the day before, he was present at a motel in New Jersey, meeting with and advising those American Typesetting Fellowship friends who intended to be at the sale. He spent precious time telling us where things were and what to look out for. He was helpful, and he gave warning of difficulties. Then he returned to Howell, where he lived and where his foundry was located. The truth is that he attended in abstention. Others were monitoring and bidding on his behalf.

I cannot recall when I met Theo, but when we did meet, immediately we became friends. During the years that he ran Dale Guild Foundry, we interacted frequently, primarily because I had purchased ATF matrices he needed in his casting activities. That interaction was keen during the years when Theo worked with Roger Frith, who then was working at the Tennessee State Museum. Roger had been a "lost soul" to the ravages of drug abuse, but somehow came out of it thanks to the passion he gained for typesetting. It was only logical that Roger seek out Theo, and quickly they became friends. On more than one occasion they stopped by the Hill & Dale on the way to Tennessee with equipment Theo had garnered on Roger's behalf. I remember one evening when Theo pulled in, driving a pickup truck that was stacked so high he had to take caution about underpasses on the highway. The truck was stacked with type stands, makeup stones,

etc., which Theo was gifting to Roger. Whether it was a voiced opinion I do not know, but surely Theo was preparing Roger to be his successor. He had great sympathy for Roger and intended to do as much as possible to encourage him.

But this was not to be, for Roger's health had been compromised by his earlier addiction, and he passed away far too soon. This hurt Theo greatly.

Somehow, I think Theo was not comfortable in crowds, for it was almost impossible to get him to commit to attending meetings of our fellowship. Until the last minute he would not commit, but at two of the ATF sessions I hosted, Theo showed up and was abundantly welcomed by all in attendance.

For certain, I am a Lanston Monotype "fan" and so when Theo's first book, *Practical Typesetting*, was published in 1993, I was quite bothered by what he said about the machine and the company. One evening, when my Thompson caster was functioning as near to perfect as one could ever hope, I cast up a few 36 point letters and sent them off to Theo asking, "tell me this is not good type." Please take note of how I phrased that sentence, because for certain, a large percentage of the type I have cast—and others have cast—falls short of the ATF standard. A few years afterward Theo and I had a frank discussion on the matter. He admitted the Monotype he started with was a "junker" and not a good measure of better machines, and the same was true of his discussion of the Thompson machine, which he was not too familiar with at the time. He off-handedly apologized, but shrugged saying "I can't take it back now."

But in discussing the product—type—I must explain that Theo was absolutely absorbed in the karma and aura which surrounds American Type Founders. He had pictures of the Bentons and Henry Bullen hanging on the wall. The way they made type? By golly, that's the way Theo was going to do it. Conversely, I make type so that I can print with it. Theo made type and labored to make the very best type possible—in the ATF tradition. Unfortunately, that commitment worked against him in this brave new world where speed is the answer to everything.

There was a time in ATF history when a

single machine continuously cast 12 point low-ercase e's for weeks at a time. With that kind of mass production, setup time could occupy half an hour or so with no concern. But it is prohibitive when you're only casting ten copies of a letter. Trimming knives manually set and adjusted took long stretches of time in undercutting kerns and overhangs, and they could have been eliminated. The Monotype didn't undercut kerns at all. But that wasn't the ATF way, so Theo wasn't going to do it.

I visited Theo at Howell at least three times, but one particular visit will underscore that idea. I had indicated to him a strong desire to run a Barth caster myself, and since I owned ATF matrices, why not cast one of my own fonts during the process? I had a full week planned so I could stay as long as necessary. When I arrived, Theo said he wanted to have Ed Harwelik with us to "help." In reading Theo's book, you will figure out that Ed was perhaps the only person Theo worked with at ATF who took Theo under his wing and shared his massive knowledge of the trade. All employees had been hugely abused by management at ATF, and Theo felt compelled to give Ed "some work" at Howell after the fall of ATF. Ed did not drive, so the first step that day was to go to Elizabeth to pick him up.

Needless to say, Theo and I had plenty to talk about while driving to Elizabeth, which was at least a two-hour drive. Talking with him was somewhat difficult because Theo was well read and very familiar with the English language, and he often used words I didn't quite understand, and he used literary references which I didn't know either. Once I got my comfort level up, I learned to interrupt and seek explanations. Theo was happy to comply. We got along OK, but there was some effort.

Ed was waiting on the porch, so we had no delay in hooking up. But no rush. The two had a favorite stop along the way where coffee and sweets were their habit. So it was that we arrived at the foundry about noon. Theo had turned a caster on before we picked up Ed, so casting could begin soon. They had an order for sorts from a person wanting 18 point Raleigh Cursive, which involved difficult kerning. The samples the client

provided were worn and that made casting proper alignment far more difficult. The two spent an inordinate amount of time pondering proper alignment of letters, and then matching the type samples with a huge number of special trimming knives necessary for trimming the sorts. Ed was running the caster and Theo was inspecting his samples under a loupe. They bantered back and forth a long time before agreeing that what they were doing was OK. When casting letters that had kerns, automatic delivery was not possible. Instead, Ed caught the cast letters in a bowl and handed them to me for final dressing. They put me into action, dressing the type they were making. This wasn't my dream experience at all.

I have no recall of how many different letters they cast that afternoon. Less than half a dozen, for sure. Then, Theo broke the process, saying it was time to hit the road before traffic got bad. The pot was turned off, and we drove Ed back to Elizabeth. It was dark when we returned to Howell.

My memory is fuzzy as to whether I remained the second day, but it was evident to me that we were not going to be casting any of my mats, nor was I going to run a Barth. Finishing the job at hand was Theo's primary concern. I found some kind of excuse for not staying much longer and returned to Terra Alta. I had plenty of my own type I could hand dress!

In later years I never brought up this visit with Theo. Now, I ponder whether it was an intentional move on Theo's part—to drive home the point that casting fonts is a meticulous, time-consuming process. On more than one occasion, I have been compelled to discourage visitors to my foundry who might have suggested, "Let's cast a font." Secondly, I realized that Theo included Ed Harwelik primarily as a means of giving Ed "something to do" and reassuring him that his extensive knowledge and experience were appreciated by others, in this case, me. Theo had compassion for this man whom he felt had been so badly exploited. This was his way of demonstrating his concern.

On the other hand, Theo boasted that he would never allow George Gasparik, (general manager at ATF) into his shop. He used every

excuse in the book to prevent Gasparik from visiting, though George inquired several times. Theo blamed Gasparik for the conditions at ATF and this was his way of "punishing" him for all that had happened.

Another "lighter" view of Theo is now reflected. I had been chosen to receive an award and had been asked by the American Printing History Association to come to New York to give a speech. At that time, Theo was active in APHA and especially the Typophiles. So he called and asked me to come to Howell and we would drive to New York together. I was happy to let someone familiar with the city (traffic, parking, etc.) do the driving. All went well, and we arrived at the New York Public Library half an hour early. I was to give a "powerpoint talk," and I had my laptop in case it was needed. I had been given assurances that equipment and operators would be on hand and ready to assist. This goes back to the time when audio-visual equipment and computer integration were still problematic, to say the least. Details had been reviewed long before the meeting took place.

No one seemed in charge, and the room was quickly filling up with people. Theo and I lingered in the hallway next to the large auditorium talking with the few people we knew and/or met. I was getting anxious about logistics. Finally, our host arrived and I immediately asked about equipment. He handed me a box containing a device and professed no knowledge as to how it worked. Fortunately, I was able to get my computer and that projector to work together—almost. "Where's the screen?" I asked. Someone knew a screen was rolled up high on the wall; it opened electronically. My computer efforts got me only to the point where half the image was visible. When the screen unrolled, it ripped itself in half all the way down. The show went ahead with me showing one half of each slide on one half of the screen, which was being held up by Theo Rehak. Those in attendance were polite. They didn't leave before I was done.

We took a cab back to our car. The ride was punctuated by a cabbie who insisted on pulling us into a lengthy discussion about the assassination of President Kennedy (which had happened many

years earlier). Theo got us out of that by quickly exiting the cab in the middle of a traffic jam. Years later, if we were together and something wasn't going right, Theo might ask me "who did kill President Kennedy anyway?" It was our private joke.

As the years rolled on, Theo and I had several sullen moments pondering the future of the Dale Guild (and my own stuff, for that matter). I don't know the details of his many false starts with new apprentices, but I do know he was making a strong effort.

That little building over there in Howell, New Jersey, became Theo's albatross. When it did finally sell, I am convinced Theo realized

it wasn't a good move, but it was better than nothing. As the equipment moved to Salt Lake City, at last Theo could relax. He took to building models of towns and items that might be used on model railroad exhibits. Typefounding no longer was his millstone.

There was a fleeting moment when he, perhaps, was able to look back with some assurance that all was not lost. That was when Theo was asked to go to Antwerp to teach the Barth to others gathered there. Patrick Goossens deserves a gold star for that effort. But, for Theo Rehak, it was only a bittersweet reminder of a very fascinating career.

Theo Rehak will always be "my typefounder."

Remembering Mel Arndt

by Phil Driscoll

I first met Mel twenty years ago when I was selling a cabinet of Bernhard Gothic. He lived about 1 hour south of me, and he brought a trailer and picked it up. We bonded over our professional work in computer networks.

Mel was a regular attendee at our ATF conferences as well as the annual wayzgooses of the Amalgamated Printers' Association. He also regularly attended the printer meetups we have here in Michigan a couple times per year, even if that meant driving 2 hours one-way.

Mel had a lot of hand-set type in his basement at his house in Toledo, but he only had a small, one-car garage. He had a Ludlow in storage but was never able to find space to get it in operation.

Mel was very interested in making matrices using a computer-controlled milling machine he owned. He cut a 120 point matrix with our ATF

logo for the 2010 ATF conference in Piqua, Ohio. Many people tried their hand at casting this giant matrix using Greg Walters' 120 point hand mold.

Mel had a huge number of other hobbies, which I knew little about. He brewed beer and tended a garden. He was a baker and photographer. He was a ham radio operator and railroad historian. He was involved with the German-American Society and made several trips to Germany.

Later, I had some regrets about selling that cabinet. Whenever I would see Mel at a printers' gathering, I'd always say, "That Bernhard Gothic is a great-looking typeface," and he'd smile and say, "It sure is." Then I'd add, "I sure wish I had a run of it," and Mel would laugh and say, "I'll bet you do!"

Sadly, Mel passed away January 15, 2024. I will certainly miss him.

by Sven Olaf Nelson

To say I knew Mel well would be stretching the truth. But I knew him; he was fun to be around and had great stories. He was always smiling, ear to ear. I actually don't recall the very first time I met Mel; it's like I've always known him. I presume it was shortly after I moved to Toledo, Ohio in 2003. I was new to the world of letterpress printing, new to a group called Amalgamated Printers' Association, and new to Ohio. So

I grabbed the member directory and spotted Mel Arndt as owner of Willowdell Press in Toledo.

Knowing Mel for over 20+ years, I found that he kept to himself, always learning, and was a man of many interests. When there was something fascinating to him, he was all in. He didn't just learn by reading a couple of books on a subject; he bought every relevant book and magazine he could find. He loved trains, so naturally he bought

a rideable small scale railroad to set up in his backyard to ride around.

He stumbled into letterpress printing in the same way. After taking early retirement and wanting to fill his downtime, he delved into machining. He bought a small struggling machine company to obtain its equipment and the acquisition also included a small printing shop. Since he loved working with his hands and tinkering with machines, he began printing. He learned different processes and even worked on combining his machining with typesetting. He intended to complete a typeface of his own for a friend who loved to cross-stitch. That was still a work in progress when Mel passed away.

His favorite typeface was Parsons. I'm pretty sure, though he never showed me. He had every size, weight, and variation ever made. He even had the ornaments. Yet, he always tried to get my measly two cases from me.

Once, I enticed him to help me move a press. I told him I'd give my two cases. He showed up early, looking like Santa on his day off: Long white beard and wearing his standard bib overalls. It was the first time he had been in my shop, though at this point all that remained was my pulled apart C&P press.

He assured me it would be easy to get it out,

and had several stories of previous moves he had made. "Awe Sven, it's easy, you've done the hard work just taking it apart." The way he told the stories, I would have believed it if he told me he disassembled a 8x12 Old Series Chandler & Price and escaped from Shawshank following Andy Dufresne out of the tunnel.

He guided the whole process. I was especially concerned about the new basement we would be moving into. He quickly replied, "We'll let gravity do all the work." To get more help, he called a good buddy to help. His friend had no idea who I was or that Mel was moving a press, but he stopped what he was doing and drove 45 minutes to help. My crew was then 12 strong. We just gently controlled gravity, just like Mel said.

Mel had a close relationship with those around him. Why else would a person drop everything he was doing to help someone he'd never met? Mel called and simply asked. It's a trait I hope to develop: being willing to help a fellow printer whenever there's a need. That's how relationships are built and that's where all those interesting stores come from.

I once felt I needed to hoard my equipment and knowledge, but I now realize it's more beneficial to be open and share with others—and I'll likely learn a lot in the process. Thank you, Mel.

Remembering Don Black

by Rich Hopkins

Don Black was a linecaster operator working for the local daily newspaper in Toronto many years ago when the Typographical Union went out on strike. The strike lasted far longer than anyone had expected, and Don had a family to feed. Somewhere along the line he had either acquired linecasting machines as a hobby or just by chance. During the strike, this provided him the opportunity to do both composition for customers and to deal with other printers in providing used equipment and accessories. I believe his operation was always labeled Don Black Linecasting Service.

As the industry progressed to cold type and beyond, Don's business continued nicely. Ultimately, it morphed into serving primarily hobbyists. In that light, he became associated with our hobby groups, such as Amalgamated Print-

ers Association and the American Typesetting Fellowship. I believe I first met him at an APA meeting, but that is foggy in my mind. After he became involved in ATF, I frequently received phone calls from him. I made the trip to visit him in Canada on at least three different occasions.

He was an astute businessman. He knew what he had and he had a good understanding of what it might be worth. He also had quirks. Chief among them was his insistence that the Intertype machine was far superior to the Mergenthaler Linotype machine. That's why I used "linecaster" in my first paragraph, for it would have been a great insult for me to say that Don was a "Linotype" operator. He made his point with written material and, wherever possible, verbally.

Though his business handled all sorts of stuff

associated with letterpress, Don was chiefly concerned with linecasting and insisted that he would not get involved in Monotype matters. Nevertheless, he did not let an opportunity to “make a buck” pass him by, and so it was, especially in more recent years, that Don also bought and sold Monotype matrices and equipment.

Canada had a difficult time with Monotype. The Lanston Monotype firm in Philadelphia had exclusive rights to the “Western Hemisphere,” yet Canada was closely tied to England. Canadian operators used all sorts of back-room arrangements in order to acquire English-made Monotype equipment. But, as necessary, they did deal with Philadelphia as mandated by the agreement. The differences between the two machines are not evident to the untrained eye, yet they’re critically important when dealing with composition matrices and molds.

Thus, it was common for Don to call me with something in hand and ask me to tell him whether it was English or USA. He left the impression that if it was Monotype, all he wanted to do was get rid of it. Thus, he frequently lured folks like myself and Mike Anderson to drive up to his place and dicker with him over what “new stuff” he had.

Within weeks of the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center, Mike Anderson and I were lured up to Don’s place because he had just acquired a bunch of English display matrices. Suzanne, Mike’s wife, traveled partway with us, so she could visit her parents in upstate New York while we went on to Toronto. Accordingly, we crossed the border at a lesser-known point, rather than through busier places such as Niagara Falls. Mike was convinced that was to our advantage.

Our trip there was uneventful, and we spent two days going through the mats Don had acquired. Of course, the visit was punctuated by continuous banter with Don about letterpress, about type, and about every nuance imaginable. We filled the trunk of Mike’s car with those steel-reinforced wooden boxes that English Monotype used for their display matrices. The boxes were dark & mysterious. Their lids screwed shut, suggesting “questionable” merchandise. Mike, who had experience with matters of border cross-

ings, made sure Don provided us with the proper paperwork. Though that matter was covered, he went out of his way to cover the merchandise with suitcases, coats, and whatever else.

We arrived at the border (I now have forgotten which one it was) after dark, and it was raining when we pulled up to security. Mike was driving. He showed the paperwork from Don and carried on about what we had in the car. I thought he did a good job of convincing the guard we were not a problem, but that was not so. A second guard stepped over to our car and instructed us to pull over so they could inspect the car’s contents.

“What is this!” the guard shouted when he pulled out a heavy box of matrices. “Those are Monotype matrices,” Mike replied. Nothing about Mike’s answer made any sense to the guard, so Mike and I figured we would need to open a box to reveal the contents. The lids were screwed shut, which is always the case with English mats. We fumbled because we had not anticipated needing a screwdriver. We both stuttered, trying to find words which better explained what we had, all the while getting soaked by the rain. Mike finally came up with an old folded military-style can opener and was able to get a box open.

Those shiny nickel-plated square blocks excited both of the guards. I’m sure they were thinking we were smuggling precious metals. Mike detected the problem, so he pulled out a single mat and turned a flashlight onto the face revealing the shape of a character thereon. Mike stumbled on the word “letters.” The guard questioned, “they’re letters?” “Yes,” Mike chimed as he pulled more mats from the box, “you see each box contains the whole alphabet—you see, A, B, C” as he handed mats to the fellow holding a flashlight.

“Letters,” one said to the other. “Letters, letters,” the other agreed. Suddenly, all tension disappeared, and the guards helped us put the trunk back together. We were on our way. The next morning Mike called Don with the story and laughed, “That’s a new one on me. Letters!” My observation? Isn’t it amazing what a person will do to get another font of mats?

Don Black’s plan was to keep his business running and have it taken over by his son Craig. For a

couple years, Don was able to spend his summers in Florida and help his son by telephone.

In two disheartening steps, the plan unraveled. First, when Craig's wife abruptly walked away from their marriage and left Craig with two young children. Don and his wife returned to Canada, helped with the kids, and slowly got everything on an even keel. Then, Craig discovered he had a fatal illness and the clock was ticking. Within the year, Craig was gone. Don was forced to step in and disband his business.

Here is a story which might help one to understand Don's true character. It occurred probably twenty-five years ago while Don's business was still running smoothly.

At one time, I had visited Bob Halbert's massive letterpress collection in Tyler, Texas, and I had talked with Don Black about it. I lamented that Bob's entire collection would likely be trashed when Bob died. So, one day, Don called and asked me to go with him to Tyler and see if we could get Bob to part with it. I made arrangements with Bob, and the trip was on. We would fly separately to Dallas, meet there, rent a car, and travel to Tyler. We also planned to go to Little Rock for a visit with John Horn. Lots of driving.

Bob's wife had passed away and, for whatever reason, he was now living in an apartment in downtown Tyler. So, he drove to his home and met us there. It was extremely hot and everything was closed up and musty. His building was not a traditional barn. It was two stories high, had concrete floors on both levels, and was in excellent condition. But it was stuffed so full of printing and typesetting equipment that it was difficult to walk through, and it was even more difficult to tell what might be there.

We were gawking. I had heard Bob had three Supercasters, so I asked him where they were. "You're standing beside one of them," Bob replied. The caster had a tarp thrown over it and loads of stuff piled on top of the tarp. You never would have guessed a casting machine was underneath all that stuff. Bob had linecasters everywhere. In one area, five of them were in a row. At one time they had been operational. Bob looked at Don and said, "you like Linotype? I got Linotype." He di-

rected us up sturdy steel stairs to the second floor. Bob proudly showed what he explained was the entire linecasting department of the Dallas daily newspaper. Countless drawers were filled with new replacement parts. Don was impressed, but that evening he confessed to me that linecasting had diminished to the point that he was no longer actively seeking the equipment. He would take the stuff, but likely trash most of it. Incidentally, the second floor was filled with hundreds of outdated signs. Surely one would be able to sell them to Cracker Barrel or a similar "retro-design" restaurant chain.

We spent several hours working our way through the huge building. Near a two-bay loading dock, Bob pointed to an old dusty bread truck with all flat tires. He said that several years ago he had gone to Dallas and bought an entire typography plant. After buying, he went to a dealer, bought a truck, loaded it up, and hauled it all to Tyler. Then, he never unloaded the truck. It was impossible to know what jewels might be hidden there.

Considering the mess, it'd be difficult to realize that Bob had done some work in getting it organized. He and I had both been bidders on lots at the U.S. Government Printing Office in Washington. I knew he had won the bid on all the surplus composition matrices. The mat cases themselves were not in the sale. Each size of each font had its own little drawer, and Bob had built a cabinet to handle them all. Each drawer, there were over a hundred, contained at least one complete font, always with several duplicates of the frequently used letters. I discovered Bob had beat my bid by \$15.00. I gawked. It all was there and in perfect, organized condition.

Bob suggested we break for lunch and that he knew a nice place nearby. So we got into his clean, shiny new white Cadillac and headed down a back road near his shop. He pulled into a parking lot, which wasn't even graveled, that featured a couple of dogs running about and a front door propped open for air. The place had no air conditioning, very poor lighting, and a pathetic looking table sparsely filled with stuff resembling a salad bar. Lots of flies too. I have no recall of what I ate but I remember being worried about

food poisoning. Bob picked up the tab, but I'm sure it was less than twenty five dollars.

During that lunch, Don broached the subject. "Bob, what do you think you'd need to sell the shop," "I dunno, what do you think?" was his response.

At the motel that evening Don and I spent a couple hours figuring what strategy to use in getting Bob closer to negotiation. I had no interest in anything other than Monotype matrices and machines. Don would take the rest. I found that he had a very practical eye for appraising the situation. "I spotted a junk yard only a mile or so from Bob's place," Don said. A huge portion of Bob's stuff would go straight to the junkyard. We both shuddered to think of the effort, sweat, and brute labor necessary to get the plant sorted out and moved onto pallets or into dumpsters. "Two weeks minimum," was Don's assessment.

We finally concluded that Don would put ten thousand dollars in the offer and I would add five thousand dollars, and we would work together to sort it all out. Of course, another trip to Tyler would be necessary. We likewise agreed we were offering more money than we ever would reap from the deal, especially when considering what it would take to get it to Terra Alta or to Toronto. Our only motivation was to "save" the stuff that needed to be saved.

We would depart for John Horn's place the next day, but first, Bob wanted to show us yet another shop he owned. He drove us downtown to a substantial building which was closed up. Inside was a complete composing room with linecasters, Ludlow, proof presses, etc. Apparently several years earlier the local newspaper was closed by a strike. Bob worked a deal with the paper's publisher and set up a complete shop. Bob and the other "scabs" kept the newspaper in production

throughout the long strike. Once settled, the place was closed, and Bob never made an effort to disband the facility.

Driving back to the plant next to Bob's homeplace, Don once again attempted to get a discussion going regarding a sale. Don and Bob were in the front seat and I in the back. Bob was stopped at a traffic light when Don made his offer of fifteen grand. Bob turned sideways in his seat, threw one arm up on the seat back (so he could see me too), and replied, "Shit, boys, I can get five times that from the boys over in Mexico."

He turned back around and off we went. Don tried to explain that the market had gone flat in Mexico too (he knew these things intimately) and that there was just no way we could offer more. That pretty much ended our visit. We said our farewells and left Bob to close up his magnificent building filled with goodies.

A few hours later, we arrived at John Horn's place and were treated like royalty in very nice surroundings. John had all his equipment in a huge building he'd put up for the purpose, and inside was a huge amount of equipment. It was all in operational condition and everything was in its proper place. Don and I both babbled to John about the stark contrast between his setup and Bob's, and we had a very enjoyable stay at the Shooting Star Press before returning to Dallas for our respective trips home.

Postscript: I have no firm followup to this story. Bob Halbert has passed away. Obviously, he was quite wealthy, didn't need the money, and he had no desire to rush into any kind of sale. Likely, it still is in Bob's barn. Bob's son now has the "inheritance," and I'm sure he's also in no hurry to dispose of it.

Remembering Richard Mathews

by Rich Hopkins

The Broadway musical lyrics read, "In short, there's simply not a more congenial spot for happily-ever-aftering than here in Camelot." We languish in thoughts of Camelot—the thoughts of a perfect situation where all wishes had come true—then to see it all disappear like the morning

mist. No one had a better "Camelot" experience than Richard Mathews and his Tampa Book Arts Studio.

There was a period of bliss back in the 1970s when governments briefly threw money at the arts and underwrote some of the dreams of artists

across the country. Richard Mathews, fresh with a doctorate in English literature, hooked up with others in creating the Konglomerati Foundation in Florida, incorporated in 1979. It was a non-profit organization “dedicated to the enhancement and advancement of literacy arts and the history & fine crafts of bookmaking.” Such lofty goals. And for a brief moment, they blossomed. Letterpress printing was to be at the core of this endeavor.

He and a close ally, Barbara Russ, whom I never did meet, had need of type composition. Somehow they learned I owned a Monotype machine. I was green enough as a typesetter to take on their aspirations. It was a fascinating time back then. A time for unpunished dreams about what could be, and the youthful vigor of thinking such things might really be possible. We had a marvelous interlude when matrices for a forgotten Goudy design called “Companion Oldstyle” were discovered and pursued as the “house face” for Konglomerati. The mats were borrowed from Les Feller, who had found them at a typography house in Chicago. I did their casting. Richard spoke of getting his own typesetting equipment, but not long thereafter, the harsh realities of life came crashing in. By 1988, the Konglomerati dream had expired. Somewhere along the way, Richard ended up at the University of Tampa, challenged to create a book arts press, as a study instrument, and the UT Press, for more academic, formal arrangements in book publishing.

This was when our relationship blossomed as he progressed in making things happen in both areas of the University.

We were back-and-forth time and time again as he slowly acquired equipment and operating space and found ways of making things happen. Though an English professor, he had a very worldly view of publishing and he sought to have and know all about the processes of putting words on paper. I was able to visit with him during these early stages and was, frankly, envious of the apparent freedom he had in developing programs at Tampa. The university itself was in a phase of development where long-range thinking caused them to acquire real estate adjacent to the existing physical plant.

A small industrial-type building in the middle

of a brush-covered field became available. Richard argued this would be a perfect space for his program to grow and prosper. He got his wish. Easy access? You could back a truck up to the door and offload with ease. No parking restrictions either. And inside? Plenty of room both for the development of the book arts program and for storing the inventory of publications produced by an expanding university press. The facility would be called the Tampa Book Arts Studio.

It was, indeed, a red-letter day in 2006 when Richard and crew celebrated an “Open House” at this new facility. He had gathered linecasters, Monotypes, a Ludlow, several presses including Vandercooks, imposing stones, and a great variety of hand-set type. He developed a modest publishing program which gave his students the opportunity to learn the traditional letterpress trade while pursuing actual projects. The program attracted a number of enthusiastic students. They “staffed” the open house, and several retired professionals were on hand to run and service the equipment and assist in all aspects of teaching the trade. I was at the open house and was engulfed by the excitement which permeated the crowd. Richard had plenty of admirers and everyone bubbled with excitement about how the program was evolving. This was a fairy tale experience for us all. It just couldn’t get any better than this!

One of the “professionals” I met again at this open house was Les Feller. He and his wife Elaine had retired from Illinois to near Tampa. Les brought with him those prized Companion Oldstyle matrices mentioned earlier, and donated them to the book arts program for their exclusive use.

To further advance the letterpress program, Richard Mathews attended Monotype University 2007, and Karl Nudi and Jeff Steward from his staff attended a session in 2013. By then, Richard had acquired the Welliver interface and was moving ahead with getting a Monotype Composition Caster online so that lengthier books and related products could be undertaken.

About this time, Richard found I was working on a manuscript about Tolbert Lanston and the Monotype. He insisted that University of Tampa Press be the publisher and he volunteered

to be my editor. The book was published in 2012.

With no warning, in 2019 Richard received the unnerving news that the university had decided to close the program. It seems the building which housed the studio was in the way. The university had new plans for the real estate, which was to house a multi-story building for multiple uses. "They tell me they have space reserved for our program on the eighth floor," he explained.

"But what about access, ventilation, three-phase power, and stuff like that," I asked. With obvious dejection, he explained those kinds of considerations weren't being discussed. His biggest concern would be where to put everything during the move. The transition would last two or three years. Richard quickly realized that in truth, there was no plan for continuing the program.

Richard and I had a few more conversations,

during which I realized that whatever support he once had with the university administration was no longer there, and that his best move would be to take retirement and put the whole experience behind him. That was easier said than done, for the administration put on his shoulders the responsibility of getting rid of all the equipment and resource material he had acquired while running the program. He made some effort in that direction.

Along the way, Richard indicated to me that he had some ongoing health issues, but he did not elaborate. He and his wife Julie traveled to California to visit children and I thought they were morphing into retirement. I didn't know cancer was his illness. He succumbed to cancer on January 3, 2024. He was 79. The Tampa Book Arts Studio was his Camelot-like experience and, sadly, there was no happily ever after.

What was great about yesterday...

by Rich Hopkins

I was just reflecting on the Tampa Book Arts Studio which Richard Mathews set up at the University of Tampa several years ago. Richard just passed away and that triggered this remembrance.

I was in Tampa for a gala event staged by Richard Mathews and his staff, commemorating the expansion and re-dedication of the Book Arts program he had established several years earlier. The place was teeming with visitors and students alike. Several students were busy working on various machines or devices. Earlier, I had operated and troubleshot a Monotype Sorts Caster. There were two Intertypes running in the background, one being operated by a former employee of the local daily newspaper in Tampa. Other luminaries were lingering near the Ludlow machine, which a student was attempting to run.

The machine was fouling up. It was casting slugs which were far from acceptable.

The student had handed a faulty slug to Richard and asked what might be the problem. Immediately, he took the slug to a small group of visitors, including me, Don Black, Les Feller, and one other person. We all chimed in saying the pot was not hot enough. But then the question came, "How do we correct the problem?"

Don Black said, "There's a special tool which came with all new thermostats and with that tool, you could easily change the settings for "on" and "off."" Richard quickly answered that he had no such tool, that the Ludlow had come to him "as is—where is." Don paused momentarily, and then asked Richard for a screwdriver.

Screwdriver in hand, Don went to the Ludlow, removed the face, and said, "Ah-A. Here it is." He knew that the tool was routinely stored inside the unit. In a matter of minutes, Don had the machine back in proper operation. We all congratulated him and his good memory. It was a very upbeat day for the Book Arts Lab—for that brief moment, Richard had a complete service team on hand.

Both Don and Richard passed away in January 2024. Sadly, a few years earlier, Richard had "the rug pulled from underneath him" when the university administration opted to discontinue the program and get rid of all the equipment. Richard took early retirement. "Nothing is forever," one could conclude.

Just before this issue went to print, the editors learned that Michael Bixler of the Press & Letterfoundry of Michael & Winifred Bixler in Skaneateles, New York, passed away. A true icon in the world of fine printing and typesetting, he will be missed. A more detailed remembrance will be published in the next issue; please send any stories you may have to newsletter@americantypecastingfellowship.org.

THE ATF COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE SEEKS VOLUNTEERS

to convert past issues into HTML and Plain Text

Help us make the past articles of the newsletter more accessible. We would like every article from all previous issues to be extracted as plain text and HTML versions from the Circuitous-Root PDFs. We would then publish them on our website to ensure they can be widely read and indexed by search engines. You can convert as little as one article, or as many as all of them. Addi-

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THE PRINTING STEWARDS SEEK ATF AUCTION MATERIAL

Were you at the 1993 ATF Auction? Do you have photos, video, or ephemera from the auction that you would like to see preserved and shared? Please contact Fritz Swanson at fgs@umich.edu with information about the material you have.

Surprise! Another Monotype University

A twelfth session of Rich Hopkins' Monotype University was held just this August, at the Hill & Dale shop in Terra Alta, West Virginia. Rich had perhaps the youngest crowd in recent times, with four students: Fairuz (Fabi) Elektra and Vincent Potter from Tucson, Arizona, Seth Gottlieb from Washington DC, and Jason Yoh from Minneapolis, MN. Dan Jones from Pygment Press instructed alongside Rich, and visiting Junior Professor Val Lucas helped for a few days. More detailed recollections of the session will be published in the next issue (but we couldn't wait to share the news of this event).



Vincent and Fabi at the Super Caster; Seth on the Thompson; Rich and Jason working on diplomas



The ATF Newsletter is published yearly for members and supporters of the American Typecasting Fellowship, an informal group of typesetting enthusiasts. Our primary interest is the preservation and use of all forms of hot-metal typesetting and linecasting equipment. Until this issue, the newsletter had been published by the inimitable Richard L. Hopkins of Hill and Dale Private Press and Typefoundry, in Terra Alta, West Virginia. This issue is the first published by Val Lucas, Fritz Swanson, and Sierra Brown. The publishers may be reached at newsletter@americantypecastingfellowship.org.

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The best way to support the newsletter is by purchasing the annual printed issue, at americantypecastingfellowship.org.