

ATF Newsletter

Number Four

AMERICAN TYPECASTING FELLOWSHIP

March, 1980

Maybe a Conference This Summer

Very preliminary plans are afoot for the second conference of our fledgling organization, hopefully coordinated by Terry Belanger and Pat Taylor in the New York City area, with, hopefully, a visit to American Type Founders included in the itinerary.

By the way, for those who wonder, there is *no* relationship between our fellowship and the above-named company. The ATF letters have symbolized typecasting in the United States for so long, our "fathers" felt it only proper to play on the initials when setting up this loose organization.

Production work finally has begun on the *Proceedings* of our first conference, held at Terra Alta, W. Va., in 1978. The delay:

time available for keyboarding and casting this volume, which is heralded as the *last* comprehensive manual on the processes of typefounding ever to be printed—especially by letterpress.

Hopefully it will be done before the end of the year, but don't hold me to it. See related information inside.

Since the last *Newsletter*, the biggest news is the "discovery" of several additional persons with lots of type making equipment. We will hear from several of these persons on other pages.

Rather than ramble further, we'll let "new" discoveries tell their own stories. So read on, fellow typecasters (and interested observers too!).

Followup to the Thompson Article

There was great interest in the Thompson article in *Newsletter* 3. Questions in that article have been answered and thus, this piece should be considered a continuation of the first article.

For example, prints from the 1925 manual, explaining the rule-making device, were forwarded by both Phil Cade of Winchester, Mass., and Vance Gerry of Fallbrook, Calif. Harry Wiedemann of Nyssa, Ore., reports having such an attachment, although he admits he has not used it for years and can't put his fingers on it right now.

The device definitely was an attachment, installed after removal of the mold, vertical mold blade, type-receiving shoe and other items. It cast rules and spacing material from 2 to 18 point, much in the fashion of the Elrod machine. An automatic cutting device would cut any pre-set measure from 4 to 126 picas.

Another device, for trimming type on the right and left sides

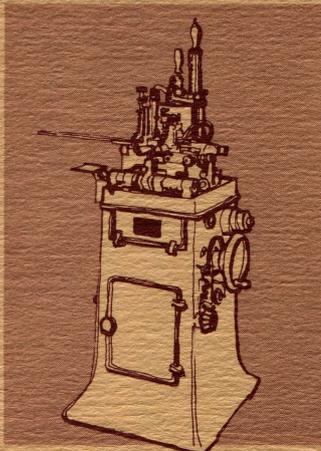
("dressing" is a more precise word), also was detailed in the 1925 owner's manual from which the rule-making information came.

I also had posed the question about what was necessary to cast Mono Giant matrices on the Thompson. Indeed, the manual said such an adapter was made, but no one knew much about

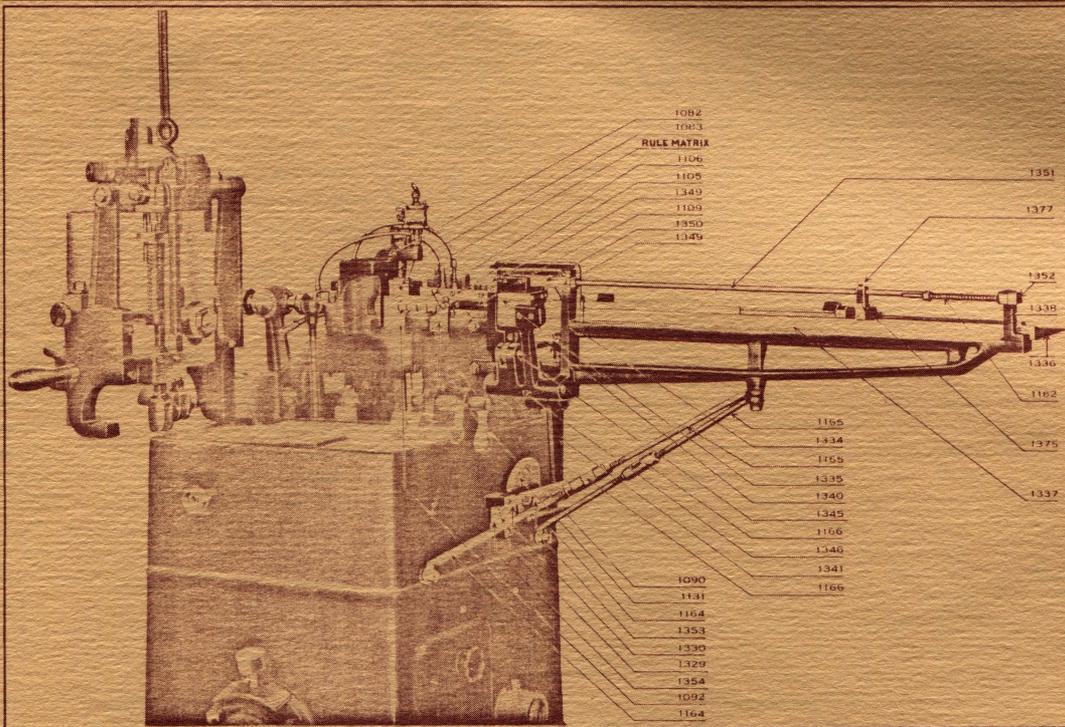
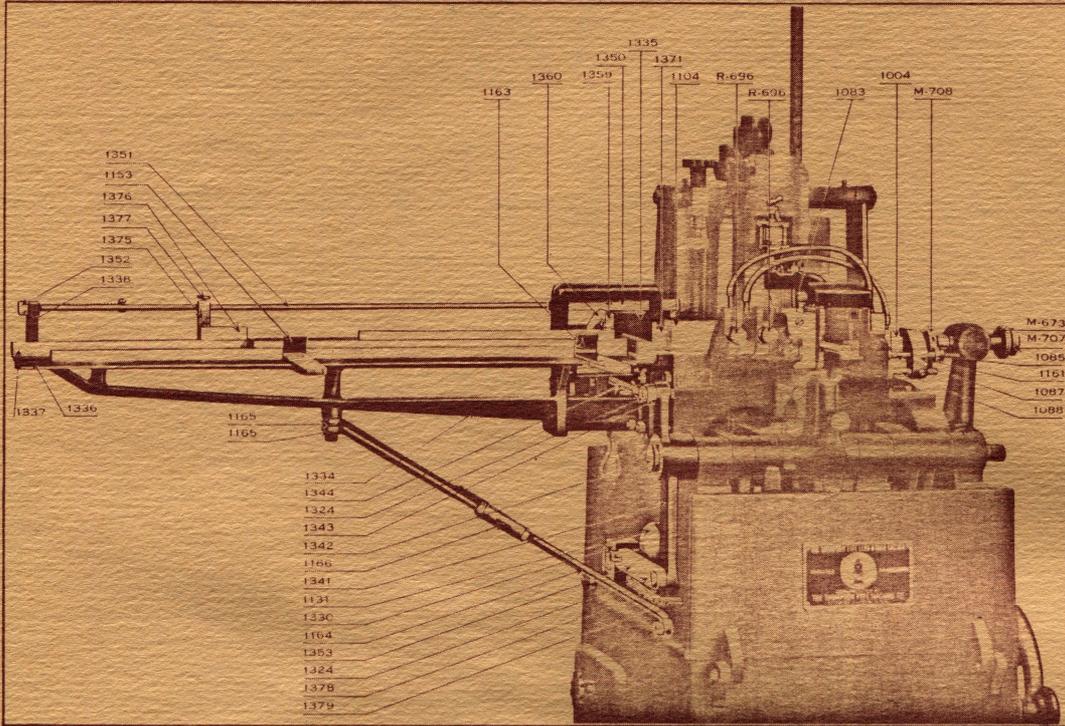
it until Pat Taylor came up with one. Obviously it involves a special mat holder, but since the "set" on Giant mats is variable on the left side of the mat, the special mold is made with the nick on the bottom. In a sense, you cast the Giant mats upside down in relation to standard flat mat casting. Only the 42-point and 48-point sizes of Giant mats can be used, since 48 is the maximum size for the Thompson.

Regarding Thompson himself, Fred Williams of Hayward, Calif., notes:

"About 1938 or '39, I visited the Pacific Coast agency of the



Detail Plates on Rule-Casting Attachment for The Thompson



Little-Known Details Regarding the Thompson Caster

(From Page One)

Linograph Company to see the little linecasters. A gentleman demonstrated the machine and other printing equipment. The agency was in San Francisco. The gentleman who showed me around could have been Mr. Thompson as he was the representative of the Linograph Company. I was only an apprentice at the time and didn't "know" of Mr. Thompson."

Thompson's role with the Linograph firm is documented in an article concerning Thompson by J. L. Frazier, long-time editor of the *Inland Printer*. The article appeared in January, 1954, on page 47. Thompson was 81 at the time, but still actively writing for trade magazines and doing research alluded to by Harold Berliner at the typesetting conference: "What did Gutenberg Invent?"

Thompson's "personal" machine now is in the hands of an ATF associate, Alan Ligda, of Issaquah, Wash., according to Frederica and Monroe Postman, owners of the Printers' Shop at Palo Alto, Calif., who recently sold the machine to Ligda. "We bought it from Andy Soule about five years ago. Andy got it from Dan Solo, who told us that it had been Mr. Thompson's caster when he lived here on the Peninsula."

Regarding the list of Thompson matrices printed in *Newsletter 3*, Andy Dunker of Jackson, Mich., comments:

"That little booklet on Thompson typefaces that I have is in a tattered condition, and since it carries no date, it is hard to tell just how old it is. From what little study I have done, it appears that there were at least two other firms who made Thompson mats, and may possibly have used numbers of their own. In going through some of my own fonts, I have found additional numbers for your listing. These may be a useful addition."

The fonts listed by Dunker are:

59	Unnamed Condensed Gothic	
112	Narciss	
228	Goudy Handtooled Italic	
238	Garamond Bold	
239	Garamond Bold Italic	
552	Victoria Italic	12 pt.
553	Victoria Italic	12 pt.
554	Victoria Italic	12 pt.
650	Penn Initials (Ben Franklin)	
1079	Modern Title	
1082	Cheltenham Bold Condensed Italic	
1084	Cheltenham Bold	
1116	Contour No. 4 (open-face letter)	
2039	Elzevir	
2504	Modern	

Phil Cade opens another matter for question with the comment that he has an old specimen book of the Universal Type Caster and the

numbers therein agree with the Thompson numbers listed in *Newsletter 3*. The book has a Chicago address shown, and a New York address pasted over.

Two references indicate that the Thompson Machine Company was bought out *first* by the Universal machine's manufacturer, rather than going direct to Lanston Monotype ownership. The most credible is J. L. Frazier in the article already mentioned. He says "in 1918 the company was sold to the manufacturers of the Universal typecaster. Called the Monotype-Thompson typecaster, it is still made by the Lanston Monotype Machine Company in Philadelphia." (Remember, this was written in 1954.)

Frazier may have had first-hand knowledge, for he obviously knew Thompson, and perhaps many other principals in the Thompson company. He reports: "The *Inland Printer* was associated with the development of the typecaster, officials of the publication joining him (Thompson) in forming the Thompson Type Machine Company in 1907."

The line drawing of the Thompson caster on page one comes courtesy of Paul Duensing of Kalamazoo, Mich.

Source for Engraved Matrices

Engraved matrices still are commercially available from at least one source: Design Trends, Inc., 307 Oak Street, Grantsburg, Wis. 54840.

Their letterhead indicates they do matrices for Giant, Mono cellular, Mono or Thompson flat mats, Ludlow or Linotype mats.

Carl A. Solomonson, representing the firm, provides the following information:

"In reply to your letter, it is hard to quote a price on a matrix engraving without seeing the copy. A single mat can cost from \$15.00 to more than \$65.00. We have done Monotype or Thompson fonts for \$7.50 to \$10.00 per mat.

"Some mats involving a lot of detail, such as trademarks and other logos, cost in the area of \$25.00 to \$65.00. For the average typeface duplication, assuming one mat, the minimum cost would be \$15.00."

As a postscript, it should be added that type cast from engraved matrices often must be dressed by hand after casting to eliminate the bevels leading to the relief images—bevels are necessarily created by the engraving tools. But this should not be an insurmountable obstacle, especially for a hobby caster.

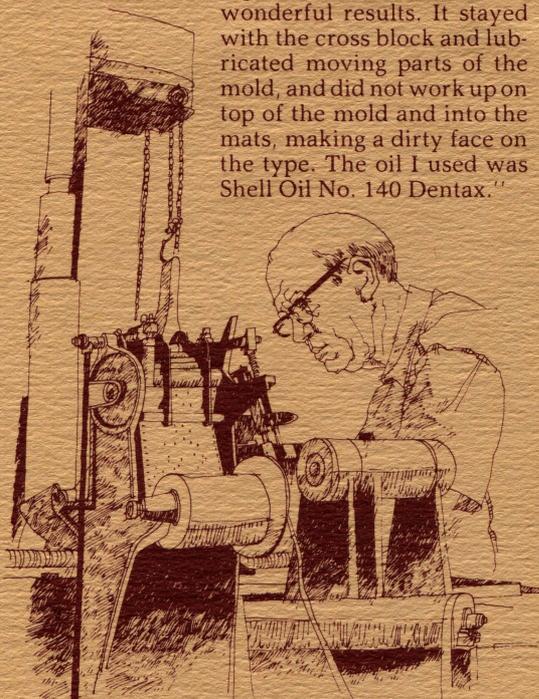
Bits & Pieces About Composition Caster Operation

These comments about pot, nozzle and mold lubrication came from Hyden Sizemore, a retired Mono machinist now living at Kalamazoo, Mich.:

"Each morning I took out each piston and brushed it off and put pure Ivory soap on it. I used the large cakes of the Ivory soap. Also, I always used Dixon Micro-Fyne flake graphite, which I mixed around half and half with a heavy black oil into a paste, and I used this on all nozzle threads. In fact, I used it on all of the threads on the pump bodies and on all threads around the metal pot where there was a lot of heat. This prevented the threads from rusting and burning in from the heat. Years later, if you want to take out a screw, it comes out easily.

"Now about mold oil: Two of my greatest teachers in New York City were Ralph Hall and Bill Hyslop. Both spent many years as service men on the road for Lanston Monotype Company. Both would not have any part of the Monotype Company's mold oil. They both said it was just like water, and they had seen many molds cut up, damaged and ruined from the thin oil. Both used a No. 60- or 70-weight body lubricating oil.

"I too used the very heavy No. 60 or 70 oil for my molds all of the time, with wonderful results. It stayed with the cross block and lubricated moving parts of the mold, and did not work up on top of the mold and into the mats, making a dirty face on the type. The oil I used was Shell Oil No. 140 Dentax."



From June, 1965, *Typo Graphic*

Because I Am Stupid

I operated my composition caster for two years before I felt compelled to buy a micrometer. Indeed, the little device helps a lot in setting up the machine, but a trick I learned before I got the "mike" still turns out to be quite useful—simply because I never seem to be able to convince myself that I am reading the "mike" correctly, or that I have tightened it enough or too much.

The trick? Simply check out the table which you use at the keyboard to establish how many keyboard EMs are in the measure you want. Scan down this list until you see where the EM measure is even (with no extra units or ENs) with the pica measure. Such as 24 EMs make 23 picas in 11 set. Now simply cast up 24 EM quads and throw them into a composing stick which is accurate. They should fit snugly. If they don't, then the set of the EM is not yet precise.

—Rich Hopkins

Monotype Equipment Supplier

A note this summer from Hartzell Machine Works indicated several items of typesetting equipment were on hand, some with special "sale" prices. Hartzell carries a full complement of spare parts, molds, manuals and technical literature for the machinery listed, and manufactures matrices in composition sizes for nearly all American Monotype faces. Repairs and overhauls also are carried out by experienced personnel. Write Richard Hartzell, Hartzell Machine Works, Market Street and Bethel Road, Twin Oaks, Pa. 19014.

On Shipping and Storing Typesetting Equipment

The best way to move type casters is to do the work yourself. That way, you're present and can supervise. It's virtually impossible to convince others that machines are (1) fragile even though heavy, (2) very adversely affected by water, and (3) all the crating in the world won't save a machine from abusive handling.

Bob Halbert of Tyler, Tex., reports "the last caster I had sent by motor freight was a pile of junk when I got it. They turned it over and mashed it, lost all the molds."

Roy Rice of Atlanta, Ga., just got a Mono shipped to him only to discover it had been rammed by a forklift, and turned over on two sides.

I now have moved five machines with no damage at all. That's because I did the moving myself. Care and patience are all that's needed.

—Rich Hopkins

More People 'Found' with Lots of Equipment

Here is an overview of correspondence received since the last NEWSLETTER, giving an indication that there are far more typecasting enthusiasts than anyone first realized.

Thompsons in Washington State

The writer below sent this follow-up to a letter claiming he was the only owner of a Thompson in Washington:

"My claim to having the only Thompson caster in the state of Washington was, to say the least, premature. There are two guys in this little one-horse town, one within three miles, who are so equipped. I bought this one from Freddie Postman at the Printers' Shop in Palo Alto, Calif. She got it from Andy Soulé, and he got it from Thompson himself, or so the story goes. My dad is an old Linotype operator and this machine has a Linotype mat holder, so I'm in good shape for scrounging mats for casting. I bought the machine just before we moved up here from Northern California

"My main line is hand composition and I'm always looking for good foundry type, especially large quantities of book faces like Lutetia, Weiss, Elzevir, etc."

ALAN LIGDA
2101 192nd Avenue, S. E.
Issaquah, Wash. 98027

Beside His Handpress

"Your typecasters' newsletter is very informative, even though I don't have any casting equipment yet. I do have some Lino mats and maybe I'll get a machine to go with them yet. I plan on enclosing one of my three carports to house my Washington Handpress and maybe there'll be enough room for a type or line caster when the room is finished. . . .

"I bought a small photoengraving shop and gave up land surveying. I do a lot of work for offset printers. Eventually I plan to produce a flyer showing many of the cuts I produce on a stock basis—mostly cuts from the wood engravings of Thomas Bewick."

PALL W. BOHNE
7718 Fern Avenue
Rosemead, Calif. 91770

Tinkering with a Keyboard

"I have a Monotype keyboard and am tinkering with it and hoping to get to the tape-punching point with a little luck. But actually, I'd also like to know if your members offer cast type for sale, and styles and terms of sale. Typecasters are a scarce breed, and I've been inquiring here and there with mostly 'address-unknown' returns."

BRUCE NORTHRUP
29 Henrietta Boulevard
Amsterdam, N. Y. 12010

Has Several Casting Machines

"I am a retired printer, especially interested in type casting and type founding. I retained some equipment from my own shop when I retired, including several Monotypes, the keyboard, mats, molds, keybanks, bars, scales, etc. I have some 300 faces of cellular mats and several display Monotype flat mats, as well as a considerable number of Thompson .043 drive mats. I also have an old Nurenberg-Rhettig (commonly known as a "Universal") caster with some 25-30 molds. I make type when I feel like doing so, mostly for my printer-hobby friends. I do not advertise as a business, but do carry a small stock of type in fonts and sorts cases.

"Where can I get Monotype flat mats electroplated? Or, where can I find the base angle quads for making up my own forms for electroplating? Does anyone happen to have an old matrix engraving machine (such as mentioned in Legros and Grant's *Typographical Printing Surfaces*)?"

OWEN STOUT
Route 3, Box 108
Paoli, Indiana 47454

Need Some Typecast Logos?

If you haven't heard of the Sterling Type Foundry, P. O. Box 94, Charlotte, Mich. 48813, then you'd better send a buck for Frank Sassaman's most extensive catalog of logos, dingbats and other miscellaneous cuts, all foundry-cast. In a recent note, Frank detailed his equipment:

"I have two Thompsons (one with a .050 and one .043 drive) and of course the .043 will cast Lino mats. They both work fine. Also have two Universal type makers in 18 to 72 points (one with .050 and .076 break-out molds)." Probably a majority of his matrices have been made expressly for him to provide up-to-date (as well as old-time) commercial logos.

Misplaced Priorities

I had inquired about documenting in a future *Typographic Curiosities* (my own publication) the curious, long-used "private" typeface used by *The New Yorker* magazine. It was designed in 1925 by a *New Yorker* artist, Rea Irvin, and cut into matrices by Mergenthaler. That much information was volunteered. But the letter went on:

"Since we're in the process of converting from metal to computerized typesetting, we'd prefer not to collaborate on the sort of booklet you have in mind."

Down goes one of the last-remaining bastions of letterpress printing. But no documentation of yesteryear, please. (!)

—Rich Hopkins

All Matrices Aren't the Same Depth

For the un-initiated, it may come as a surprise that characters are not stamped or engraved into matrices to any single "standard" depth. Rather, the depth varies and makes casting from differing matrices somewhat complicated. For example, although the Thompson caster is capable of using Thompson, Monotype flat, Monotype Giant, Monotype cellular, Linotype, Intertype or even foundry mats, to use them all would require at least five separate molds, varying mat holders, and probably some other paraphernalia. Below are listed the most common "drives."

Be alerted to the fact that the hodge-podge of old foundry matrices roaming the countryside varies considerably regarding drive. No one drive is dominant.

Monotype cellular matrices	.030 inch
English cellular matrices	.050 inch
English display matrices	.050 inch
Monotype "flat mats"	.050 inch
Linotype/Intertype mats	.043 inch
Older Thompson "flat mats"	.043 inch
Newer Thompson "flat mats"	.050 inch
Monotype Giant matrices	.065 inch

Measuring mats requires a depth gauge. In the absence of such an instrument, measure to the shoulder of the sample letter generally left with the matrices by the caster operator using them before you got them. Subtract this from .918 to determine the drive. (Anyone who casts type knows this .918 standard rarely is accomplished because of varying molds, and so on.)

More Interesting Correspondence from Caster Owners

Plan to Sell Type

"We have two Thompson casters. One is quite new and made in England. We also have a Monotype caster and keyboard and hope to put all of these machines to work casting type for sale. We have a large number of mats, though we are always looking for more."

FREDERICA AND MONROE POSTMAN
The Printers' Shop
4047 Transport
Palo Alto, Calif. 94303

Has Super Caster and More

"I have set up a Monotype material maker, a Monotype keyboard and composition caster, and a Super Caster. Pat Taylor is sending me a Thompson. I have some mats but am looking for others. Of course, it is all just a hobby that I enjoy. I hope someone comes along that will be interested in casting someday. So far, everyone around this part of the country thinks I'm a little 'off' hauling these old obsolete machines in."

BOB HALBERT
Route 1, Box 344
Tyler, Tex. 74708

Around Shops Since He Was 7

"Set up and operating (or almost) are three composition casters, one material maker, one Thompson and two Monotype type-and-rule casters. I am 66 years old and have been around a print shop since I was seven. Bought my first Monotype in 1946 and have continued to add to that until now."

W. R. NEWBERRY JR.
2979 Old Highway
Cathy's Valley, Calif. 95306

Two Intertypes, Thompson

Producing soft-cover sewn books printed by letterpress is the principal activity reported by this correspondent. "We have a C-3 Intertype and a good selection of Linotype mats that we use for book and job composition. We also have an F-2 Intertype that is functional but has not been used for several years. We also have a Thompson caster for which we need matrices."

DAN KELEHER
P. O. Box 162
Whately, Mass. 01093

'I Came to Love Monotypes'

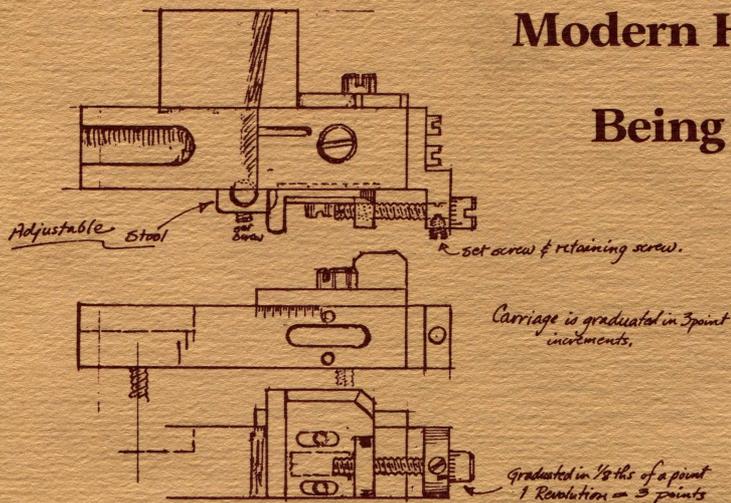
"Years ago I worked as a compositor and casterman in the trade, and came to love the Monotypes in our office. Since the decline of letterpress in our area, I have been able to pick up my machines very reasonably. So far I have a Monotype comp-caster, keyboard, and material maker. Last summer I found a Thompson on the prairie and brought it back here. At present I am searching for some sort of matrix cutting machine. Paul Duensing has been most helpful in getting me started in electroforming mats."

JIM RIMMER
411 West Cordova Street
Vancouver, B. C. V61E5

American Typesetting Fellowship Newsletter

Printed by [argh!] offset on 80-pound Tan Teton Text by Richard L. Hopkins, Post Office Box 263, Terra Alta, WV 26764. A voluntary subscription of \$5.00 for five issues is solicited. Published "occasionally." Typeface: Garth by Compugraphic.

Modern Hand-Mold Proposal Being Developed



Stan Nelson continues his spare-time project of developing a modern-day hand-mold. He forwarded the accompanying drawings, with this note:

"I am writing instructions on how to make a type mold—these are in the rough draft stage—and also I have been doodling with drawings for a hand mold that will cast from say 10 to

18 points, and, with the proper holder, from foundry, display and Linotype mats. The body pieces are interchangeable, the mouth piece adjusts to each size, and the registers are calibrated to follow the sets marked on display mats. I am ready for suggestions about the drawings.

STAN NELSON
8486 HAYSHED LANE
Columbia, Md. 21045

Yes, Virginia, Once There Was Hand-Set Type for Doing Music

The depth of specialization within the confines of metal typography is yet to be measured. Owen Stout of Paoli, Ind., indicates having had some *music* matrices made several years ago, and Richard Harrington of Winona, Minn., writes: "My latest project is sorting a music font that a good friend found for me. It has approximately 250 characters and the more I work with it, the more I realize why hand setting music was never really practical."

Stout adds these details:

"Modern music type for printing 'round notes' has 546 different characters in the font, and three type cases are required to hold it. Contrast this with the 26 letters in a font of 'roman' type!"

Stout sent along this sample of some sheet music which he printed several years ago—the entire job done from hand-set metal types.

1. We are out on an o - cean sail - ing home - ward |
2. And when we are safe - ly land - ed o - ver |
3. Mil - lions now are safe - ly land - ed o - ver

out on an o - cean sail - ing, To
walk a - bout that ci - ty, And
now are on their jour - ney, Yet th

Annenberg, Turner, Pass to Eternal Monotype Kingdom in Sky

MAURICE ANNEBERG

I cannot let the passing of Maurice Annenberg go without mention. He died April 20, 1979, and was one of the earliest "supporters" of the Typecasting Fellowship. His Maran Printing Company was Monotype for years, and he commented in a letter regarding his monumental book, *Type Foundries of America and Their Catalogs*, that it could have been done Monotype in half the time it took to do it on the firm's then-new Mergenthaler VIP photocomp machines.

The bulk of his Mono equipment was obtained by Alan Teas, who's a current ATF associate.

We who have such great affection for the heritage of our craft all know we have lost a staunch friend. Fortunately, Maurice has left behind two excellent books of very recent vintage, both of which will help preserve this heritage for many others in years to come.

BILL TURNER

Paul Duensing has received word that Bill Turner, long-time customer service manager for Monotype Corporation, Ltd., passed away in December. Bill Turner retired five years ago, but until that time was quite visible wherever Monotype equipment was demonstrated, and frequently was the "contact man" for anyone buying Mono matrices, etc., from England. Paul adds that Bill Turner could have filled a large book with stories of unusual requests and special applications of Monotype equipment he was involved with over his many years with the company.

Jealously, I Call It 'Disgusting'

Harold Berliner, a participant at the Typecasting Conference, sent along this note for everyone to drool over:

"Since last we talked I have made yet another buy. The only useful matrix items obtained were a full set of Walbaum as well as Helvetica and 70 sizes and kinds of Univers. The real virtue of my last purchase was machinery. I was able to pick up four perfection casters in mint condition. One of them is a 16x17 which has air spacing (they all have air spacing) and a sorts caster which is the finest machine I have ever seen along these lines. It makes less noise than a sewing machine in operation; you can't even hear the pump. Of course, beautiful type."

HAROLD BERLINER
224 Main Street
Nevada City, Calif. 94949

Classified Advertisements

FOR SALE. Over 200 cases of type, one D keyboard, one DD keyboard, two composition casters and one material maker and about 125 fonts of display matrices. A C&P 12 x 18, small offset, 24-inch cutter and all the necessary equipment for a printing and rubber stamp plant. Also type-and-rule caster. Wayne Holmes, 204 E. South Street, Eaton Rapids, Mich. 48827. (Info provided by Frank Sassaman, Sterling Type Foundry)

WANTED: Monotype display matrices, borders, ornaments, signs, dingbats, or others. Robert Halbert, Route 20, Box 76, Tyler, Tex. 75708.

TOTALLY ENGLISH SHOP FOR SALE. Many items already sold, but inquire about what is left. Purchased while studying casting at the Monotype Corporation in England in 1976. Relatively new. Write James Houle, 34 Union Street, Biddeford, Maine 04005 for details.

FOR SALE. Several duplicate fonts of flat mats for Monotype casting. Also some fonts to 48 pt. of old Thompson mats. In current inventory of Detroit Type Foundry. Bob Hansen took the trouble of typing out the list. Write me and I will forward it to you so you won't have to bother him. Rich Hopkins, Box 263, Terra Alta, W. Va. 26764.

WANTED: An .043-drive mold for my Thompson. I have several fonts of Thompson mats, Intertype mats, etc., and wish to cast them. Owen Stout, Route 3, Box 108, Paoli, Ind. 47454.

GIANT MATRICES FOR SALE. About 100 fonts of Giant matrices are offered for sale at \$10.00 per font postpaid by Ray Adkins, 306 Cascade Drive, Bellevue, Ill. 62223. Most are the standard newspaper faces, but there are exceptions. Write for his list.

WANTED: Would appreciate any ideas you might have as to where I could possibly obtain Linotype mats for either Eldorado or Falcon, both faces designed by Dwiggins. Most dealers seem to never have heard of either. Glen Goluska, 401 (rear) Huron Street, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5S2G5.

Letterpress Production of First Conference Proceedings Finally Getting Underway

The *Proceedings* book finally is taking shape. The format is established at 4¼x7 inches with the text being composed in 9- and 11-point Baskerville with subheads in 16-point Bulmer Italic and main chapter headings in 24-point Bulmer.

The size is almost the same as that most popular handbook carried by printers for so many years, MacKellar's *The American Printer: A Manual of Typography*, first printed in 1886. There will be about 112 pages, incorporating numerous illustrations.

Pat Taylor has supplied ranging figures to round out my 11-point Baskerville font. I seek two items to complete the design: mats or a font of 14- or 18-point Baskerville Roman ranging figures for my page folios and I also need several accented characters in 9- and 11-point Baskerville and italic. If you can loan me any of these items, your help will be appreciated.