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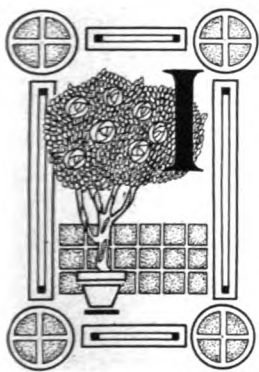
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DISCURSIONS OF A RETIRED PRINTER.

NO. X.—BY QUADRAT.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE PROGRESS OF AMERICAN TYPE-DESIGNS FROM 1870 TO 1890 — ROMAN BOOK TYPE INVENTED IN AMERICA — JAMES A. ST. JOHN, A SUCCESSFUL TYPEFOUNDER.



N the March discursion of which this is a continuation, the illustrations of ornamental job types were brought down to 1860. For ten years after that time American letter-founders displayed no originality, either reproducing old-world type-designs or following old-world ideas in designing their own productions. Group A is representative of

the best ornamental letters in general use down to 1870, all of them used in the United States. This group shows progress, and also marks the introduction of ornamental lower-case letters. It was from this point that American type-designers diverged, creating a new and better school of design. The old world idea was to elaborate and ornament the conventional alphabet. The American idea of design is inventive—characterized by novelty of form rather than of ornament, although the latter feature has not been neglected. This idea revolutionized job printing throughout the world, and gave American letter-founders that preëminence which they still maintain in this important branch of typography.

Nevertheless, invention as applied to display types had its origin in the European typefoundries. (I include Great Britain in the term European.) Such great parent designs of types as San Serif (our Gothic), Antique, Clarendon and French Clarendon, are each of them distinct inventions of form or of line, and all of European origin, and all, except the latter, introduced prior to 1860. These are familiar, but to preserve the

sequence of illustration they are shown in Group B. In France, in the sixties, three variations of a new invention were produced and are shown in Group C. In Europe this family of types was not successful and did not grow; but in America it had a marked influence in producing the numerous variations of light faces which predominated in American typography in the half-decade from 1880 to 1885, as illustrated in Group G.

Invention in types requires novelty in the form or in the stems and serifs. I have named a few familiar inventions, each of which has given birth to great families of types. The common old style and modern and the French old-style Romans are inventions traceable to their origins, and parents of very numerous variations. Italic was an undoubted invention, and until a sloping Roman was invented it stood alone in its field, although thousands of italic faces were made. Old-style Antique is not an invention, as it merely combines the old-style form with the Antique stem. Boldface, condensed or extended Romans are none of them inventions, various as each group is. In the preceding article it was stated that in America no body-types had been invented. By that it was not meant to say that we had not produced many improved or desirable variations of the parent body-types. In that respect we have been prolific and successful. Exception was taken to the statement by men who know more about the subject than myself, and, after discussion, it was decided, correctly I think, that the Century Expanded Roman, designed jointly by Mr. De Vinne, the printer, and Mr. Benton, the typefounder, is a new invention. It is not new in shape, but it has a combination of stem and serif

that can not be classified with any other Roman. It is an admirable invention and I gladly acknowledge my error in overlooking it. If it has a defect I should say it was in the narrow difference between the thickness of the stems and the serifs, in so far as that difference is apt to become less distinguishable after the face is worn, but, on the other hand — (so mysterious and subtile are the qualities which give character to a type-design) — this very blending of stems and serifs



Group A.

Showing the most popular European ornamental type-designs in 1870.

may be the feature that makes it so obviously admirable. Cushing, Cushing Monotone and Cheltenham, all distinctive American faces, are none of them inventions in my opinion. I question whether they can be properly classified as book types, although they look well in page form. This is controversial ground, and if the reader will take the trouble to form his own opinion on this subject of invention by studying these various type-faces, I shall be better pleased than to have my opinion accepted as correct!

Irrespective of changes in type fashions, which in America occur about every five years, two great groups of letters — the texts and the scripts — are always in demand. These were the first job types made. It was in texts that the American inventive idea first disclosed itself. MacKellar's Card and Fancy Texts, produced in the early seventies, were the precursors of a long line of plain and ornamented text designs of first-class merit in their day, although now fallen into disuse. The texts which survive to-day in America are all based upon early European designs. I suppose it will be safe to assert that the series made and sold here as Caslon Text, copied exactly from an English original, and the series known as Cloister Black, which is an American revision of the former, are the most satisfactory letters of this class now made. A comparison of these two in the specimen books will prove good type study. The original series is not consistent in design; its sizes are not well graduated; the capitals L, F and C have a disconnected effect. In Cloister Black the English design is retained, but

improved upon. It is made harmonious and consistent. The serifs are strengthened to a correct thickness, and are graded perfectly from the largest to the smallest sizes — a great improvement. The capitals are condensed where in the original they lose color by expansion. But the chief improvement is in the "set" or spacing of the letters. The English original is spaced too widely, so that each word appears as an aggregation of letters and not, as it should be, a unit to the eye. The eye of a learner reads each character in a word — spells it out — but the educated eye grasps the word as a whole. The spacing of the letters in Cloister Black is a return to the practice of the earlier printers and their prototypes, the great medieval letterers, whose work can never be surpassed in their field. Flemish Black is another satisfactory text which has survived for three centuries. In its smaller sizes it was known as Priory Text, and was kept alive by Mr. Phinney in the specimen book of the Dickinson Type Foundry until he extended it into a series of thirteen sizes under its present name. It came from Holland when that country was the leader in typemaking. Mr. Phinney has not succeeded so well in this as in Cloister Black. The lower-case overweights the capitals with few exceptions. In a text the capitals should dominate decidedly. No examples of these three series are shown; they are in the current specimen books, and merit study.

It would take more space than can be afforded to show the evolution of text designs in America. The same objection prevents the illustration of the evolution of scripts. Undoubtedly American scripts, conventional as well as characteristic, are superior. The scripts offered by the typefounders

ABCD abcdefghp

Clarendon.

ABCD efghijklmn

Antique.

ABCD efghijklmno.

French Clarendon.

ABC abcdefgk

Group B.

Four European Inventions.

ABC DE GG KK

AABCDEFGHIJKL

ABCDEFGHI

Group C.

Variations of a French invention of the sixties, which was revived and extended in America in the period 1880 to 1885 (see Group G.)

at the present time are perfect. The reform in scripts from the elaborate but too diffuse grace of the great Penman and Spencerian series was commenced by the admirable Plate and Bank Scripts of the Barnharts. Invitation, Inland French, Tiffany Upright, Tiffany, Tiffany Extended and Bond Scripts leave nothing to be desired. From the beginning American letterfounders have been in advance in scripts, and

have produced an astonishing variety of designs. In America, also, the smallest as well as the largest script faces have been made. Here again in default of examples, the study of the type specimen books will bring to the printer-student an enhanced appreciation of the genius of American letter-founders and the unparalleled precision and delicacy and ingenuity of American letter-punch cutters.

Excepting text letters, the first important original American development in type-design

last Bruce specimen book. As we approach (in 1867) a period prolific in the production of new designs, it is interesting to note that the foundry which was to lead the way and excel others had only patented two designs up to 1867, and that there was an interval of twenty-one years between each patent. Philadelphian broke the spell. It is not inventive, but it easily surpassed all previous ornamental shaded letters of its class, and was a revelation of what could be done to impart the softness and delicacy of lithography

ABC abcdefg

Example 1.—Philadelphian.

ABC abcdefghr

Example 10.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMRSP

Example 19.

ABC abcfeing

Example 2.

ABCEHGMK

Example 11.

ABCDEFGHIJNQS

Example 20.

ABCDEFGHIJ

Example 3.

ABCD abefmg

Example 12.

ABCDEFINP

Example 21.

ABCDEF

Example 4.

ABCDEFGHIJKR

Example 13.

ABC Dabcdeg

Example 22.

ABC Dabcfeighn

Example 5.

ABCDEFGHIKQN

Example 14.

ABCDEFGHIMRS

Example 23.

ABCDEK

Example 6.

ABCDEFGHIJLKN

Example 15.

ABC abcdefghijklnopt

Example 24.

ABCDEFGHI

Example 7.

ABCDEFGHIKN

Example 16.

ABC DABGEJK

Example 25.

ABC abcdg

Example 8.

ABCDEFGHIEN

Example 17.—Bruce.

ABC Dabcfeghijklnps

Example 26.

ABCDEFGHIJKLNQR

Example 9.—Made by Bruce.

ABCDEFGHIGM

Example 18.

ABCDEFGHI D

Example 27.

Group D.—Period 1870 to 1875.

All, except Example 9, originated by MacKellar, Smiths & Jordan.

Group E.—Period 1875 to 1880.

All, except Example 17, originated by MacKellar, Smiths & Jordan.

Group F.—Period 1875 to 1885.

All originated by MacKellar, Smiths & Jordan.

was in heavy-face shaded letters, represented by Group D. These came into vogue about 1870 and about 1875 gave place to the lighter faces of shaded letters shown in Group E. The first American letter of the shaded class was Philadelphian (example 1), patented September 26, 1867. It was the second type-face patented by the Johnson Type Foundry, the first being a heavy Gothic made to imitate the American flag, patented in 1856. In 1861, it was reintroduced to work in red and blue to suit the demand of patriotic feeling in the war time. The first patent for an American type-face was granted to George Bruce for an admirable script, known as No. 2000 in the

to a heavy design. It was the aim of the American designers to rival the effects obtained on the lithographic stone, and in this they succeeded. Contemporaneous with the heavy and light shaded letters a class of strong unshaded types were produced, and these are represented by Group F. These groups are necessarily limited to a small percentage of successful designs, and as no exact line of demarcation between the prevailing fashions existed, the periods assigned to each group are necessarily approximate. These type-faces, which in our strenuous progress have been left hopelessly in the rear, deserve to be shown in this series of historical narratives. They made

fortunes for the letter-founders who produced them, and put American types in the lead throughout the world. They represent the utmost skill of designer and punchcutter. For most of them this may be the last appearance in a printed page. Typefounders' specimen books have a habit of quickly vanishing, and it is meet that they should be preserved in the pages of THE INLAND PRINTER, which will be in centuries hence the original source of historical information concerning these times. Those who would forget and

which indeed they were made to supplement. After 1885 the medium weight ornamented types of Group H came into use, together with a great variety of eccentric letters in which the inventiveness was very marked (Group I). Up to 1885 the larger proportion and all the very successful job-type designs were produced by MacKellar, Smiths & Jordan, of the Johnson Type Foundry. In 1885 the supremacy of MacKellar was disputed, first by St. John & Schraubstadter, of the Central Type Foundry of St. Louis, and by the Cleveland

ABCD ABCDEFGHIJKLS

Example 28.—Dickinson. J. W. Phinney's first design, and the first American letter of its class.

ABCABC abcdefghijklnp

Example 29.—Dickinson.

ABCD abcdefghijklmnop

Example 30.—Dickinson.

ABCDEF GHIJKL MNPQRS

Example 31.—Dickinson.

ABCDEFGHIJKL MNORS

Example 32.

ABCD abcdefgo

Example 33.—The first success of the Central Type Foundry.

ABCDEF abcdefghijklmnopqw

Example 34.—Central.

ABCabcDdefghijklmnopqrs

Example 35.—Central.

ABCDEGH MQRSW

Example 36.—MacKellar.

ABCabcde Mefghjks

Example 37.—MacKellar.

Group G.—Period 1880 to 1885.

Not all of this period, but all representative

ABCD abcdefghjks

Example 38.—MacKellar.

ABCD ABCD * GHIJKNR

Example 39.—Dickinson.

ABC abcdefghjo

Example 40.—Dickinson.

ABC abcdefghkijn

Example 41.—MacKellar.

ABC abcdefghpq

Example 42.—Central.

ABCD abcdefghijklm

Example 43.—Central.

ABCDEF G

Example 44.—Central.

ABCD abcdefghijklmnopqr

Example 45.—Boston.

ABC acdegikno

Example 46.—Central.

ABCDEF GHR

Example 47.—MacKellar.

Groups H and I.—Period 1885 to 1890.

During this period the Central, Dickinson and Cleveland Type Foundries were the leaders.

ABC Dabc e f z u h i j k r

Example 48.—Central.

ABC abc f g h i l n p

Example 49.—Boston.

ABD ac f e g h i n o p s

Example 50.—Central.

ABCDEF AND GHN

Example 51.—Dickinson.

ABCDEF GA

Example 52.—Dickinson.

ABC abcdefg

Example 53.—Dickinson.

ABbCD acdefghijklmno

Example 54.—Dickinson.

ABC acdefghijk

Example 55.—Boston.

ABaCcih Skg

Example 56.—MacKellar.

put out of sight these monuments of past skill and past successes are unworthy followers of an art which boasts that it is the preserver of arts.

About 1880 the type-fashions changed to the light faces shown in Group G, the prototypes of which were the types of French origin shown in Group C, which came to the height of their popularity twenty years after their introduction. In the period of 1880-1885 American typography was characterized by good taste and extreme delicacy. During that period Old-style Antique was considered a bold-face, while to-day it certainly is not in that class. The types of Group G were used with the light-face shaded types of Group E,

Type Foundry, the Dickinson Type Foundry and by others in a lesser degree. The advent of Harper (example 48), and Century (example 49) marked a change in taste to the bizarre, which induced the production of many fantastical designs, many of which lacked every merit, unless mere eccentricity is one; these have been excluded from the illustrations. Harper and Century are artistic. The former, I believe, was designed by the great artist Abbey, who at that time was contributing a fine series of Shakespearean illustrations to *Harper's Magazine*, in which he used lettering from which the Harper types were copied. Century was likewise found

in the works of an artist in the *Century Magazine*. The first success of the Central Type Foundry was the Geometrics (examples 33 and 34) shown in Group G. MacKellar attempted unwisely to follow the demand for the eccentric, but without any success. He had shown his competitors the way to fortune and success, and in the end they bettered the instruction. The Cleveland Type Foundry was remarkably successful, but none of its faces survive to tell the tale. The Central and Dickinson Type Foundries disputed the palm of leadership, and both progressed rapidly.

During this period of twenty years all the foundries made great progress in the plainer faces, and in body-types. MacKellar produced the great Ronaldson family of faces. The Dickinson, Farmer, and Central Foundries introduced various forms of the French old styles, termed Elzevirs by the French, by whom they were reintroduced from the times of the Elzevirs of Holland. The Gothics particularly were brought to great perfection. Competition was keen, the market expanding, and every week brought its surprise to printerdom in the shape of a new idea or design. In 1890 the period of the purely ornamental and the fantastic came to an end in America, and the introduction and immediate success of the De Vinne series by the Central Type Foundry brought the short reign of St. John and Schraubstadter as leaders of type-fashions to a triumphant close. I suppose that no other series of job types has had so extensive a sale as De Vinne. Its effect on typography has been most beneficial, but the development of the De Vinne family, and of the masculine types which have predominated since 1890, by the successors of MacKellar and St. John will be discussed in the next article.

Many meritorious designs have been unavoidably omitted from the representative illustrations, particularly a number of the productions which made the Cleveland Type Foundry famous in its day. Farmer, Marder, and the Barnharts also produced many popular series in the period under discussion, so prolific in typographical novelties. My aim has not been to represent the product of the various foundries, but to illustrate those types which best illustrate the progress of American design.

American letter-founders have been as prolific in borders as in types. While the artistic designs and delicacy of Derriey's French borders have never been equaled, our combination borders had the merit of extraordinary ingenuity. In borders America may be said to have held its own with Europe.

Thomas MacKellar, whose career has already

been related in these articles, dominated the type-making business from 1870 to 1884, in which year he retired, leaving the management to a younger generation. From 1884 to his retirement from business in 1892, James A. St. John was the leader. It is not asserted that to these two men belonged all the credit for the achievements of their respective typefoundries; doubtless they received the aid that was absolutely necessary to their success from partners and employees; but this is not the place to go into such details. It is conceded by all that the policy, the character, the enterprise of each establishment was imparted by the men here named; and I believe that no matter what partners or subordinates these men might



JAMES A. ST. JOHN.

have had, and no matter where their foundries might have been located, they were made of the stuff that always spells success.

Before 1890, Joseph W. Phinney, of the Dickinson Type Foundry, had shown unmistakable evidence of genius as a typefounder. Examples 28 to 31, 39, 40 and 51 to 54 illustrate Mr. Phinney's earlier successes. His chief and best work has been done since 1890, and will be discussed in the next article.

James A. St. John was born in Harbor Grace, Island of Newfoundland, on September 23, 1841, and was the youngest son of W. C. St. John, a writer and publisher, who removed to Boston, Massachusetts, in 1853. In 1857, young St. John found employment in the Boston Type Foundry in

the salesroom. In 1869, the foundry being operated by a coöperative association, of which, however, St. John was not a member, he was elected manager. In 1871, Mr. J. K. Rogers having secured a majority control, it was determined to start a branch foundry in St. Louis, and Mr. St. John was sent there to manage it. In 1875 he united with Mr. Carl Schraubstadter, who was superintendent of and a stockholder in the Boston Type Foundry, in buying the St. Louis branch, changing the name to the Central Type Foundry. It was a success from the beginning, and in ten years became the leading foundry of the United States in reputation if not in volume of business, taking a decided leadership in type-designs and successes. It was the first Western typefoundry to sell its type in any considerable quantity in the Eastern States and abroad. Its reputation was also increased by the excellent manufacturing abilities of Mr. Carl Schraubstadter. James A. St. John was the encourager of designers, and the first typefounder to really encourage the sale of his types by his competitors. He had broad ideas, unhampered by precedents, and earned and deserved his success. In his busiest years he found ample time to devote to athletic sports, and at one time was either president or vice-president of every athletic club in St. Louis, as well as being a liberal patron of all of them. In 1888 Mr. John K. Rogers, of the Boston Type Foundry, died, and his majority interest was purchased by Messrs. St. John and Schraubstadter, who thereafter operated both foundries until 1892, when they sold both to the American Type Founders Company for a sum which gave to each partner an ample competence, the fruit of seventeen years' labor. Theirs were the only foundries which were purchased for spot cash. Mr. St. John returned to Boston with his family, living a life of leisure, until his death in 1901. He had one son, Carl, who now resides on a ranch in Missouri, which he owns and operates.

(To be continued.)

LEAD-PENCILS NOT "LEAD."

Lead-pencils originated with the discovery of graphite mines at Borrowdale, England, in 1554, and not a particle of lead is used in their manufacture. The name "lead-pencil" came through a confusion of the German terms. Graphite, so strongly resembling galena (bleiganz), was given the name of blei (lead), and to distinguish it from the lead already found, it was called Wasserblei (Molybdena). To make matters more confusing, the makers of lead-pencils called themselves Bleiweisschneiders (white-lead cutters).

The early method of manufacturing lead-pencils was most wasteful, but in 1795 Conte, a Frenchman, tried using pulverized graphite and binding-clay, thus utilizing all the mineral and producing pencils of varying hardness, according to the amount of binding-clay added.

Written for THE INLAND PRINTER.

COARSE-LINED AKROTONES.

BY A. H. M.



THE accompanying specimen is printed from an electrotype that was reproduced from a sixty-five-line akrotone automatically engraved in celluloid on the akrograph engraving machine.

The lines run horizontally instead of vertically or at forty-five degrees as ordinary half-tone screen lines are placed.

While this is wholly a tentative effort, it shows a softness in gradation that has a pleasing effect. The high lights could have been brought up purer white by simply setting the engraving tool a bit deeper, but this would then



COARSE-LINE AKROTONE AT SIXTY-FIVE LINES PER INCH.

have also cut the shadows deeper to the same extent, so what the high lights would have gained would have been lost in the shadows, and the resulting range of contrast would have been less than is seen in the specimen. The technic of the process is simple, for it is quite obvious if the engraving tool is not set any deeper the shadows will not be changed, and it is equally self-evident that if the black lines in the high lights were made narrower, the high lights would be made whiter. The query, then, is how is one to change the machine so as to modify the high lights and not affect the shadows? The answer is found in the interchangeable gears with which each machine is supplied that enable the operator to quickly change from one set of lines to another. With the same depth of engraving seventy lines would give greater contrast than sixty-five, and seventy-five still more. If they are increased so far that the inverted V-shaped printing ridge has its printing face cut away, the tonal relation will remain unchanged thereafter. It is possible to