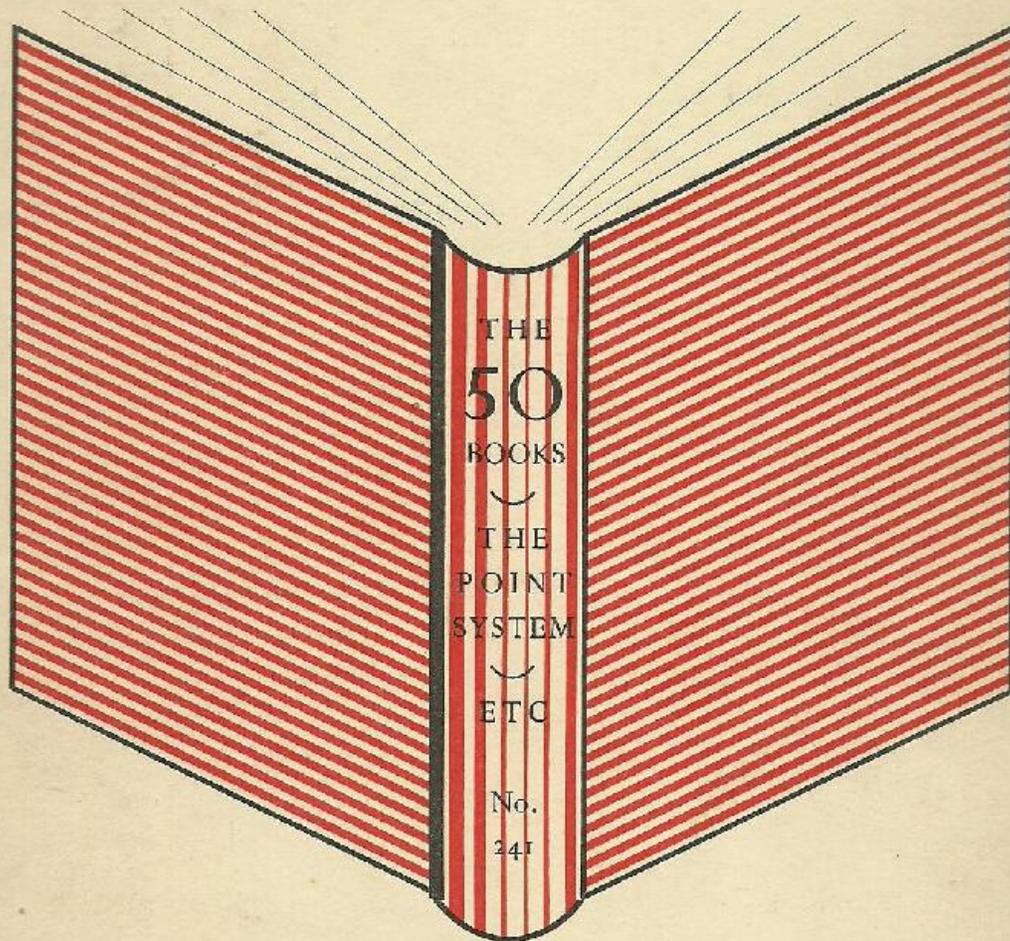


4241

# THE MONOTYPE RECORDER



LONDON

THE MONOTYPE CORPORATION LTD

43 Fetter Lane, London, E.C.4

MCMXXXI

THIS NUMBER  
is printed in Monotype Perpetua roman  
Series No. 239

DESIGNED BY MR. ERIC GILL

This face is of unusual importance, as it is an origination by the most famous English letter-designer of our times, and may therefore be considered as a twentieth-century contribution to English type-design. Too many types created "for our century" have betrayed self-consciousness and failed to find the classic transparency of a good book face. Perpetua, however, has been the letter used by Mr. Gill for inscription cutting for many years; for this reason it is more disciplined in outline than any "drawn" letter, and, for all its original freshness, less experimental than many faces which have found their place in advertising work after having been tried and rejected by the book printer.

An italic for Perpetua is now in preparation.

(The "book" on the cover is composed of "Monotype" rules)

# THE MONOTYPE RECORDER

A Journal for Users and Prospective Users of the  
"Monotype" Type Composing and Casting  
Machine and its Supplies

VOLUME XXX

NO. 241

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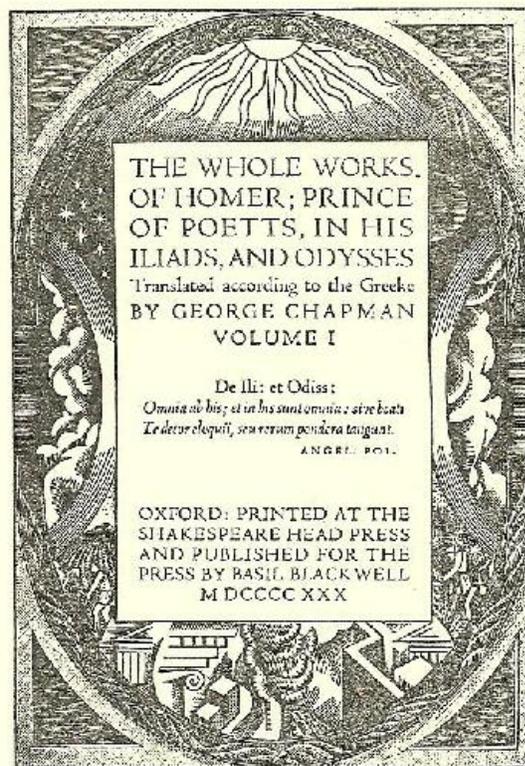
MCMXXXI

## THE FIFTY BOOKS: 1931

Amongst the many good things that can be said for the old practice of sending a journeyman on his "wanderyear"—his journey, that is, through the great craft centres outside his own land—is that what excellences he finds at home thereafter he can appreciate, not merely take for granted. You can "like" strawberries, but you cannot "prefer" them to any other berry if you have tasted no others. The Englishman or Scotsman who has neither travelled abroad nor patronized foreign libraries and exhibitions here can,



OPTIMVS HIC SESE, QVI NOVIT CUNCTA MAGISTRO,  
PROSPICIENS RERVM FINES MELIORA SEQVITVS.  
SEVEN KINGDOMS STROVE, which THEYR Scholl'd HOMER CALL,  
AND NOW ONE CHAPMAN, OWNES HIM FROM THEM ALL.  
Eruditorum Poetarum hujus Aevi, facile Principi D'no Georgio Chapman;  
Homero (velit nolit Invidia) Redivivo J.M. Tessellum. hunc xepioro pioo. c. d.  
ILLE SIMVL MVSAS, ET HOMERVM SCRIPSERIT IPSVM,  
QVI SCRIBIT NOMEN (MAGNE POETA) TVVM.



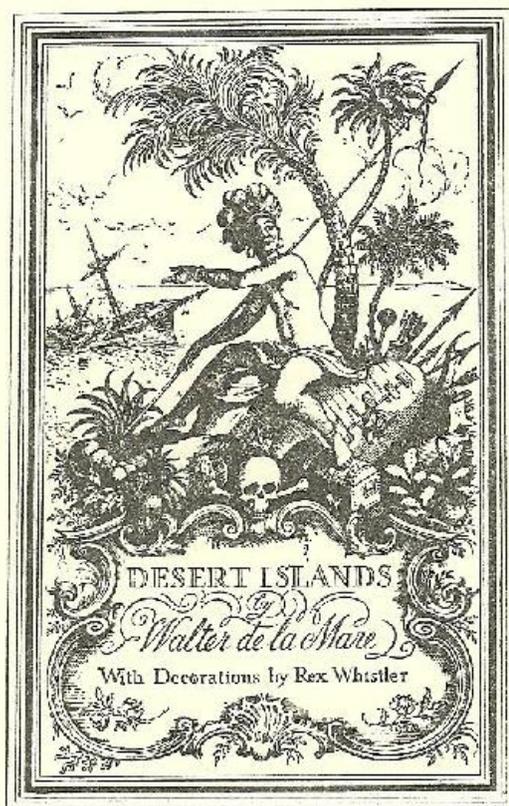
OPENING PAGES OF THE SHAKESPEARE HEAD "CHAPMAN'S HOMER"  
SET IN MONOTYPE CENTAUR

with good reason, be delighted with the book printing of Great Britain. But the longer he studies the general standard of book production in other countries, striking an average between the cheapest volume and the most luxurious, the more will he realize his own good fortune as a reader.

England was not only the cradle but the training-school of the whole modern movement towards better typography; for a whole generation of European and American booklovers was startled and given new eyes by the English Private Press groups. Edward Johnston trained calligraphers who in turn created flourishing schools on the Continent, and a pilgrimage to England became as necessary to typographic enthusiasts as it had been, long ago, to musicians. What Morris and his followers did was to alter the conventional idea of a "fine book" from that of a mere picture-book to something which took account of the basic material of reading, namely the type face. Typography and type design—"the soul of the book"—have been the British contribution to the history of book production.

There are interesting implications in that fact: for example, there is nothing about printing type that can make a series of books particularly rare, or even very expensive, whereas illustrations such as colour-etchings automatically limit an edition and raise its price. Hence we find that in France, where the fine book stands or falls by its illustrations, there is probably a more distinct cleavage between "reader" and "collector", and more contrast between the appearance of "ordinary" and "limited" editions than in any other country. In France, there is admirable typography when it is needed to

support fine illustrations; in this country, so it often seems, there are illustrations in the more luxurious editions in order to distinguish them from the better class of ordinary trade editions, which, value for value, are undoubtedly the best in the world. The book speculator, and the man who would rather handle than read a book, are surely the only ones who could object to this state of things. The man who remembers that (as *The Times Literary Supplement* recently pointed out) "the author is chief among the artists connected with book production", is only too happy to know that he—and perhaps two thousand other booklovers—can purchase three fine volumes with the amount of money which the more snobbish



NO. 19: FABER AND FABER, PUBLISHERS

collector—and about two hundred like him—would have paid for one “arts and crafts” book a generation ago. Let no one cavil at the interest which this article takes in price and value, “reading-value”, in fine book production. For, once the intelligent reader is pushed aside by the wealthy collector, once the “letter” of the book—handmade paper, private type, delicate illustration, etc.—is exalted above the “spirit”, that is, the contents—then the economic springs of the craft dry up, and a whole country deserves the reproach of barbarism for letting

## HENRY JAMES :

Letters to A. C. Benson and  
Auguste Monod; now first  
published, and edited  
with an introduction by

E. F. BENSON

1 9  
3 0



London: Elkin Mathews & Marrot  
New York: Charles Scribner's Sons

NO. 30:

MONOTYPE BODONI IN EFFECTIVE USE

most of its literature appear in shoddy costume while a few “collectors’ treasures” wear useless ermine.

It is particularly cheering, therefore, to note that although each of the fifty British Books this year is obviously a work of craftsmanship and “fine” in the æsthetic sense, no fewer than 32 of the chosen volumes—over three-fifths—were issued at less than £2 2s., and that only three cost more than £4 4s. each. A guinea would seem no excessive price to pay for a beautiful book: more than half the volumes came within that price limit, eighteen of these within the “bookstall price” group (up to 10s. 6d.), and the majority of these last sold at, or under, the price of a new novel. There were actually seven books, not mere hand-made-paper pamphlets but honest volumes, priced under 7s. Thirteen books were in the 1 guinea–2 guinea price group. Of the most expensive volumes one (No. 5) was the 5 guinea edition de luxe of the *Fleurion*, of which the ordinary edition sold at the incredibly low price of £1 1s.; another (No. 22) offered superb facsimile plates and a host of specially cut decorations, for £3 3s.; and a third, at £15 15s. the most expensive volume in the catalogue, was richly illuminated by hand.

Fortunately one did not see, amongst the British books, any volume that “racketeered” upon the wealthy collector, offering a few dozen pages of expensive paper as a mere excuse for decoration. It was no business of the selection committee to judge the importance of the literary contents of each book; which makes it all the more a matter for congratulation that in every case the contents were either new, or newly edited, or in some

other way self-justified as reading matter. In no case was it evident that the printer or publisher, merely yearning to "print something", had bestowed an expensive dress on still another edition of a hackneyed trifle, or on some work which not only exists in many fine shapes but can be bought for half-a-crown at any bookseller's. That fact, in itself has an economic importance, for royalties, research and constructive editing cost money and leave less margin for the producer.

Comparisons with the Fifty American Books, which are simultaneously shown by an exchange of duplicate sets with the American Institute of Graphic Arts, New York, prove unfair in one sense, but in another way and with proper understanding are very illuminating. The Selection Committee for the First Edition Club announces that books were awarded marks in the following proportion to a possible total of 50: paper, 5; typographical design, 12; binding, 8; "relation to price", 10; general impression, 15. The American Committee chose "irrespective of price, from the viewpoint of typographical design, press work, binding, and in general the extent to which the publisher had solved the problem involved". Now if the normal American trade edition were as beautiful and craftsmanly as the relatively cheaper British equivalent, that would make comparisons unfair; but that is not the case. There is almost as great a gulf between "fine" and "commercial" bookwork in America as in France; the sparkling presswork, magnificent type faces and accurate register which we in Great Britain take for granted in the cheapest University Press publication and others, mark out a book as "something unusual" in the States.

That being so, we are not surprised to find that only ten well-known commercial publishing houses (including three University Presses) are represented by a total of 15 of the American volumes, as against 15 similar British houses with a total of 24 books. Indeed if one counts the Nonesuch Press for its successful unlimited editions at low prices these British figures can be revised to 16 houses with 28 books. Five book-clubs, 9 "private presses" of actual printers, and 12 limited-edition "presses" in the looser sense appear as American publishers of 35 volumes against one book-club, 5 printer-publishers and 7 "edition" presses in Great Britain with a total of 22 volumes. Five "privately-printed" American books were unpriced and accounted for by subscription societies, etc.; of the remainder no fewer than 19 (as against the British 11) cost more than £2 12s. 6d. There were 9 American books ranging from 5 to 20 guineas in price, as against only 3 in the British section; and the "commercial price" group had but 10 books under a guinea in contrast to the British 23.

The "what shall we print?" attitude is losing ground in America, and yet it is instructive to note that no fewer than nine of the books in this year's selection rank as what the reader would discuss as "abiblia" in that they offer less than 100 pages of text at prices far above normal. "Hand setting" and fine typography would, in this country, be poor excuses for charging thrice the normal rate for a 42-page "limited" book without illustration, or with ordinary zinco line cuts; it would seem fantastic to us to pay 10 guineas for even the most elegant edition of that homely classic, the "Christmas Carol",

and while there are two well-designed paper-bound books at 50 cents (2s.) they are from the same series and do not differ in design, indicating a paucity of choice. The text page and especially the chapter-opening has received the most thought in the British books; the American show far more decorative title-pages and more dependence upon the allied but not primary art of the illustrator.

Forty-one of the British books use "Monotype" faces, and of these 39 were keyboard-set. Monotype Baskerville retains its popularity, appearing in 9 volumes; Fournier, that most effective and ever-fresh classic, is used in 5 others; Monotype Garamond appears in 4, Poliphilus, Imprint and Monotype Caslon in 3 each, Monotype Plantin, Bodoni, and the new Bembo in 2 each, while Monotype Goudy Modern, Gill Sans, Centaur, Cloister, Barbou (privately owned), Modern, Old Style, Scotch and New Hellenic each were used for one volume. There were seven books set by hand in foundry type, and one set on a slug-casting machine. The cheapest volume in the collection\* and the most expensive "limited edition",† were both "Monotype" set.

No fewer than 25 printers had the honour of being represented in the "British Fifty". It is a healthy sign that the two great University Presses (each, it should be noted, users of no other composing machine than the "Monotype") should be so very well represented. Oxford published four, and printed a total of seven of the books; Cambridge printed five for other publishers and

was publisher as well as producer of another two. A further good thing is the number of printing firms, regularly engaged in large-edition book production, who here display admirable craftsmanship. In some cases the credit for the typographic design goes to the publisher, but without the aid of fine presswork, good register, and a first-class repertory of type-faces in the printing office the designing effort would have been wasted. Richard Clay & Sons printed 3, W. Brendon & Son, T. & A. Constable, the Curwen Press, R. MacLehose & Co., H. Reiach and the Westminster Press each printed 2, and others represented included the Chiswick, Garden City, Invicta and Shenval Presses, Henderson & Spalding, Alexander Shand, Waterlow & Sons and Wyman & Sons.

The presses more particularly associated with limited-edition "fine" publishing included the Shakespeare Head Press, with four books, including the new 5-volume Homer in Centaur, the Alcuin Press with 2, the Beaumont Press, with a charming poetry-book, "Toys"; rhymes by Cyril W. Beaumont in Monotype Garamond illustrated by Eileen Mayo; the Gregynog Press and the High House Press, each with a book set by hand in "Monotype"-cast type (each book bound by the Press); G. W. Jones, producer of the only slug-cast book in the collection, the De la More Press, with "The Library", by Crabbe, well illustrated by E. J. I. Ardizzone and priced at 3s., and the Windmill Press of Messrs. Heinemann, with two books in Monotype Garamond.

\* No. 6: "Vulgarity in Literature", by Aldous Huxley. London. Chatto & Windus. Printed by T. & A. Constable, Ltd., in Fournier. 2s.

† No. 1: "The Life and Death of Thomas Wolsey", by George Cavendish. Printed and published by the Alcuin Press. Bembo. Illustrations by Paul Woodroffe, illuminations by Miss M. Scriven. £15 15s.

Twenty-four binders appear this year; in addition to "press" bindings by the Alcuin, Curwen, Garden City, Gregynog, High House, Oxford University and Windmill Presses, and by Brendon's, Waterlow's and Wyman's, the specialist houses number 14, of which J. Burn & Co. (6), Leighton-Straker Co., Mansell & Co. (5 each) and A. W. Bain (4) are the most popular. The papers of Messrs. Spalding & Hodge appear in no fewer than 12 of the books, those of Batchelor & Sons in 6, and of Dickinson & Co. and Grosvenor Chater & Co. in 5 each. British printers are fortunate in the number of really fine and "sympathetic" papers for which they have no need to search outside their own country.

Perhaps the attitude of the typical British fine-book producer today has been best set forth (indeed, to some extent shaped) by the statement of the Nonesuch Press that it would cater to collectors "who also use books for reading". The lover of reading insists on beautiful books because he respects literature; he detests extravagance because a "bibelot" book is not "used for reading". If a machine can do really fine work at a low price, he will have that machine and its best service. It no longer seems important to such a man that the fine book he buys should have been printed in a type-face that only one private press can use. If he cannot distinguish between hand and machine setting, or between a "Monotype" and a foundry face, he is unimpressed by the labour involved in setting one bit of metal next to another in a stick. The amateur printer may enjoy it, but he, the reader, has to pay for the art-and-craftsman's fun. And if he can distinguish, then

he is far more likely to prefer the book printed from new type, the book with more subtly distributed spacing—above all the book with the classic beauty of those type faces which the "Monotype" created. There are distinguished and famous type-foundries in the world. But their strongest motive for creating or reviving "book" faces vanished with the introduction of the composing machine. It is physically impossible to compose and cast classic letters, retaining every kern of roman and italic set together in book composition, on any machine but the "Monotype".

This is why we feel that the excellent standards and the comparatively low prices of the "British Fifty" are in a way a tribute to the all-British "Monotype", and a stimulus to "Monotype" users throughout the country.

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A (as printers and publishers)

(1) THE LIFE AND DEATH OF THOMAS WOLSEY, by George Cavendish. £15 15s. MONOTYPE Bembo.

B (for other publishers)

(40) THE FIRST THREE YEARS, by Eric Partridge. 3s. MONOTYPE Poliphilus. The Scholartis Press.

#### THE BEAUMONT PRESS

(4) A SUMMER'S FANCY, by Edmund Blunden. £1 1s. Hand-set Caslon Old Face. The Beaumont Press.

#### W. BRENDON & SON

(32) SELECTED ESSAYS OF WILLIAM HAZLITT. Edited by Geoffrey Keynes, F.R.C.S. 8s. 6d. MONOTYPE Plantin. Nonesuch Press, Ltd.

(34) THE WEEK-END BOOK. 6s. MONOTYPE Plantin. The Nonesuch Press, Ltd.

THE FIFTY BOOKS OF 1931

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

A (as printers and publishers)

(5) THE FLEURON NO. 7. Edited by Stanley Morison. £3 3s. MONOTYPE Barbou.

(6) THE EIGHTEEN-EIGHTIES. Essays by Fellows of the Royal Society of Literature. Edited by Walter de la Mare. 12s. 6d. MONOTYPE Caslon.

B (for other publishers)

(10) MEMOIRS OF THE LATE MRS. ROBINSON, written by herself. 7s. 6d. MONOTYPE Baskerville. R. Cobden-Sanderson, Ltd.

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(20) ANABASIS. A poem by St. J. Perse.

THE FLEURON

A JOURNAL OF TYPOGRAPHY

EDITED BY  
STANLEY MORISON

NO VII



Cambridge Garden City, N.Y.  
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MCMXXX

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(9) EURIPIDES ALCESTIS, translated by Richard Aldington. 15s. MONOTYPE Fournier. Chatto & Windus.

THE CURWEN PRESS

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(50) THE LABYRINTH AND OTHER POEMS, by James W. Mills. 7s. 6d. MONOTYPE Baskerville. Williams & Norgate, Ltd.

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More Press.

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EURIPIDES

ALCESTIS

*Translated by*

RICHARD ALDINGTON



CHATTO & WINDUS, LONDON

1930

THE FIFTY BOOKS OF 1931

B (for other publishers)

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(33) THE COURTIER'S LIBRARY, by John Donne. 8s. 6d. Hand-set Fell. The Nonesuch Press, Ltd.

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(46) LONDON PROMENADE, by W. Gaunt. £1 5s. MONOTYPE Baskerville. The Studio, Ltd.

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(41) THE WORKS OF FRANÇOIS VILLON, edited by Geoffrey Atkinson. £1 5s. MONOTYPE Fournier. The Scholartis Press.

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# THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE "POINT" UNIT OF TYPE MEASUREMENT

By R. C. ELLIOTT

THERE are still in this country a number of important printers who persist in using type based upon old English body measurements. The reason for this clinging to old methods is due not so much to conservatism as to the cost that would be incurred in changing over to the modern system of point measurement. Still, the longer the change-over is delayed the greater will be the expense when the change must be made.

The whole practice of typography has always been noted for lack of system, and for the haphazard manner in which many of its processes are carried out, but few of these processes have drifted so aimlessly towards commonsense development as the schemes for standardising the sizing of type bodies upon a systematic basis.

When type was first made it was made big, and certainly not to any micrometric measurement, and it at once became apparent that types would have to be made smaller in body in order to include more printing upon a page. Thus we know that 30-line Indulgences soon became 31-line; and 36-line Bibles soon became 42-line.

No definite demand for a national standardisation of type body sizes seems to have been apparent until comparatively modern times, although Moxon in 1683 tabulated the type sizes then in use, and

published the following list showing the number of lines to the foot:

Pearl	184	English	66
Nonpareil	150	Great Primer	50
Brevier	112	Double-Pica	38
Long Primer	92	Two-line English	34
Pica	75	Great Cannon	17½

Moxon refused to recognise Small-Pica "because it differs so little from the Pica".

It will be observed that type names still familiar to us had in Moxon's time become established, and also that some sizes were just double some other size, such as Pearl and Long Primer, Nonpareil and Pica, but there was no regular degree of progression from one size to another. Although there was considerable opposition by typefounders to the making of additional type sizes which nearly approached the sizes of existing types, there were, on the other hand, many printers who encouraged the making of irregular body sizes so that their types could not be borrowed by competitors.

Reliable measurements of old type sizes cannot be ascertained from specimens of printed sheets, as all printing was done on wet paper, and the shrinkage in drying was not a definite quantity.

Coming to more modern times, Pierre Simon Fournier, the celebrated French typefounder, was the first to advocate the standardisation of type body sizes, and

invented the term "point" to represent the base unit of measurement. This was in 1737, nearly two hundred years ago. His scheme did not by any means achieve instant success, for in writing about it in 1764 he said his system was "new and unknown". Referring to the ordinance of the French Government for regulating the height and bodies of type, Fournier said that apparently no person had been found who was competent to give correct information to the Government concerning these matters, and that such a person was much needed. He complained that printers had been the only parties consulted before the ordinance was passed, and contended that they were not qualified to make rules for a branch of the art of printing which they did not practice.

Fournier explained in concise detail his system of increasing the thickness of type bodies by equal and determinate degrees, called "points", so that an accumulation of lines of similar or different body sizes would always total in length to a definite number of "points".

In his historic pamphlet Fournier introduced a table showing the number of points allotted to the various types, and amongst these Nompaille was given six points and Cicero twelve points. The tables of types and their point sizes were preceded with a scale, equivalent to approximately two inches of the pre-metric French foot. These two inches were divided into 144 equal parts, each representing one "point"; there were, therefore, about 72 points to the inch (French).

Fournier's system was adopted as a standard by French typefounders, but shortly after his death François Ambrose

Didot, another famous typefounder, advocated that Fournier's system should be based definitely upon the legal foot measure of France, still retaining 72 points to the inch, and instead of relying upon names he gave each size a number, such as 6 point, 7 point, and so on. In doing this the alteration in measurements made the cicero equivalent to eleven points, against twelve of Fournier's. This destroyed the value of the cicero as the standard of composing room measurements, and was the chief cause of preventing Didot's system from being universally adopted in France, many printers for years preferring to continue with Fournier's method.

German printers adopted Didot's measurements, but insisted upon calling twelve points a cicero, instead of eleven, and French printers followed their example.

Fournier's system, so carefully planned in other respects, was not based upon any legally established measure, and Didot's is based upon the old Royal French foot, which no longer exists; but coincidentally 100 points of the Fournier scale is approximately 33 millimetres, and later on we shall find how this coincidence had an influence in deciding the size of what is called the "American point", the standard now used by American and English typefounders. The Fournier point measured .0137 English inch; the Didot point measures .0148 English inch.

Reverting to English type measurements we may here state that Luckombe, in 1770, published a table in which it is observed that type sizes had changed since Moxon's time. Here are the revised measurements, as gauged by the number of lines to the foot.

THE "POINT" UNIT OF TYPE MEASUREMENT

Pearl	178	Small Pica	83
Nonpareil	143	Pica	71 and an n
Brevier	112 and an n	English	64
Bourgeois	102 and a space	Great Primer	51 and an r
Long Primer	89	Double Pica	41 and an n

The thickness of a space, or n, or r seems to have been left to the imagination. This table discloses the general adoption of small pica and the inclusion of bourgeois.

The next important evidence of an existing desire in this country to standardise type sizes was the publication of the scheme formulated by James Fergusson, of Scotland, in 1824, nearly ninety years after Fournier's scheme was first put forth. Fergusson proposed that nonpareil should be taken as the fundamental standard, and that twelve lines should measure exactly one inch; eleven lines of nonpareil should be the standard type height. Fourteen lines of nonpareil was to be taken as the common measure for all other founts; this measure to take in five lines of great primer, six of English, seven of pica, eight of small pica, nine of long primer, ten of bourgeois, eleven of brevier, and twelve of minion.

By Fergusson's proposed method the sizes of these body founts would have come very closely to the average sizes then prevailing. The scheme never got beyond the proposition stage, and this applies to the efforts in this direction of many other printers and typefounders.

In the "Dictionary of Printing" published in 1842 by Savage, the following variations in number of lines to the foot between the type sizes of various foundries were given:

Pearl 178, 180, 184	Nonpareil 144
Brevier 107, 111, 112	Bourgeois 101½, 102, 103
Long Primer 89, 90, 92	Small Pica 82, 83
Pica 72, 72½	

In 1857 Messrs. Shanks' foundry produced types with body sizes based upon a decimal system, in which nonpareil was called ten points and measured .0833 inch, and pica was called twenty points and measured .1666 inch. The scheme did not meet with success.

In the meantime (about the beginning of the nineteenth century) American printers and typefounders began to devote attention to the standardisation of type bodies, and George Bruce, a celebrated typefounder of New York, introduced a system of progressive type sizes based upon a geometric advance, that is, each size was the same percentage larger than the next smaller size as that size was larger than the next below it. In this scheme the size of nonpareil was .0841 inch, and that of pica .1683 inch. Bruce's system did not meet with favour by other American typefounders.

Messrs. Marder, Luse & Co., typefounders of Chicago, planned to base their type bodies upon exactly six picas to one inch, but the cost of the change over and the unlikelihood of other foundries following their example caused them to abandon the idea, and they adopted the standard pica of the successful firm of MacKellar, Smiths & Jordan, which was .166 inch, slightly under one-sixth of an inch.

In 1886 the United States Typefounders' Association held a convention at Niagara, and appointed a committee to report upon the point system. The .166 inch pica was adopted as a base, because in an indirect way it could be made to fit in with the metric system, inasmuch as eighty-three picas were equivalent to thirty-five centimetres! The old Fournier method of one

THE MONOTYPE RECORDER

hundred and fifty years earlier was adopted, i.e., dividing the basic size, pica (or cicero), into twelve equal parts, called points, and thus giving approximately 72 points to the inch. Thirty-five centimetres is equivalent to 13.779 inch, and this divided by 83 makes the pica .166 inch. Thirty-five centimetres divided by fifteen was at the same time proposed as the standard height of types, and this produces .9186 inch. Previously eleven-twelfths of an inch (.9166 inch) was recognised as the standard height for type.

Although one hundred and fifty years had elapsed since the publication in France of Fournier's original idea of dividing the cicero into seventy-two equal parts, events moved comparatively rapidly after the adoption by America in 1886 of the principles of the scheme, and within ten years keen interest concerning the adoption of a "point" system was aroused in England.

Many English printers were in favour of adopting a standard wherein the pica (or twelve points) should be exactly the sixth part of an inch, making the measurement .1666 inch; others favoured the American plan of .166 inch, which did away with the

recurring decimal. Foremost amongst the latter was Mr. Walter Haddon, who traded as John Haddon & Co., who led a strenuous press campaign on the subject, gave many lectures concerning it, and started a type-foundry at Market Harborough to produce types and composing room material made entirely to the point system measurement of .166 inch to the pica. Not only were all his types made to points bodywise but the same system was applied to the "sets" of type, the width of every letter being made to some definite number of points or half points.

The advocates of the exact sixth-of-an-inch standard fought a stubborn battle, but those favouring the .166 inch prevailed and the system is to this day justly referred to as the "American Point" system. It is now in universal use in America, Great Britain, and all the British colonies. The Fournier system of points, as corrected by Didot upon the basis of the French pre-metric inch, with the cicero of 12 points (.1776 English inch), is used throughout France, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Spain, and other parts of the Continent.

TABLE OF DIDOT AND AMERICAN POINT MEASUREMENTS

	POINTS									Type Height
	1	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12*	
DIDOT	.376 mm. .0148 in.	1.880 mm. .0740 in.	2.256 mm. .0888 in.	2.632 mm. .1036 in.	3.008 mm. .1184 in.	3.384 mm. .1332 in.	3.760 mm. .1480 in.	4.136 mm. .1628 in.	4.512 mm. .1776 in.	23.56 mm.†
AMERICAN	.01383 in. .3515 mm.	.0691 in. 1.757 mm.	.0830 in. 2.109 mm.	.0968 in. 2.460 mm.	.1106 in. 2.812 mm.	.1244 in. 3.163 mm.	.1383 in. 3.515 mm.	.1521 in. 3.866 mm.	.166 in. 4.218 mm.	.918 in. 23.317 mm.

\* For standard composing room measures 12 points represent a cicero in the Didot system and a pica in the American

† French type height is equivalent to 62 $\frac{2}{3}$  Didot points

## THE "POINT" UNIT OF TYPE MEASUREMENT

Thus are the haphazard methods of typographic practice perpetuated, as referred to in the beginning of the article. Printers of the English-speaking world have a type unit based upon no aliquot part of the national lineal measure, and the users of the Didot method work to points based upon a French lineal measure which is no longer recognised or remembered. The English pica might logically have been exactly one-sixth of an inch, but because Messrs. MacKellar, Smiths & Jordan made their pica .166 inch, coupled with the coincidence that this was almost exactly the 83rd part of thirty-five centimetres, we have been committed to a base unit which is not an aliquot part of the English foot measure, but which possesses the inconsequent advantage of eliminating the recurring decimal in the pica measurement.

From the foregoing it will be gathered that the standardisation of our present type sizes has been arrived at in a muddling manner quite unworthy of the craft, and the English-speaking countries have consequently become tied to a system the unit of which is not an aliquot part of an inch (an unimportant matter), and cannot be represented decimally without the disadvantage and inconvenience of a recurring figure.

In the light of events it would seem that the committee which met at Niagara in 1886 attached greater importance to deciding the size of the "pica" rather than to deciding the size of the "point". The committee seemed to have been obsessed with

the idea that it was necessary to attach some mnemonic attribute to the pica measurement, and this obscured the necessity of giving to the "point" a measurement that could be multiplied accurately to represent any greater size of type. But of what value is it to the typefounder or the "Monotype" caster attendant to call to mind that eighty-three picas or fifteen type-lengths are equivalent to thirty-five centimetres—a measurement that signifies nothing in particular?

It has been proved in practice that there is no disadvantage in using a typographical unit-measurement that is not an aliquot part of an inch, but there is great disadvantage and inconvenience in having a "point" measurement with a recurring decimal which always leaves in doubt the correctness of the fourth figure in any type size measurement, and concerning which no two books of reference give the same figures.

Therefore, as the .166 pica cannot be divided decimally by 12 or the inch by 72, without introducing a recurring figure, would it not have been more satisfactory if that American committee had decided to make the "point" definitely .0138 inch, and the pica .1656 inch? There would then never have been any doubt as to the accuracy of the fourth figure of any type size, and it would have been easier to impress indelibly upon the brain that a "point" measured .0138 inch than to remember that eighty-three picas are equivalent in length to thirty-five centimetres.

## TECHNICAL QUERIES

Q.—In a trade paper a query was put regarding a slight reduction of output on narrow measures. How does this come about?

A.—At the end of each line two revolutions of the caster are occupied in positioning the justification wedges for the line next to be cast. These pauses are naturally more frequent on narrow measures than on wide measures. With a machine running at 160 revolutions per minute it takes 80 lines to lose one minute's production, no matter whether the measure be narrow or wide.

Q.—What is the difference between Sanserif, Gothic, and Grottesque types?

A.—Sanserif applies to the whole family of type faces which have no serifs. Gothic applied to sanserif is a misnomer, as gothic is the family of types known also as "Old English" or "Text" types. Some American typefounders applied the word gothic to a sanserif type, and the name has since remained. In England some forms of sanserif are called grotesque or doric.

Q.—In the trade papers there has been a discussion regarding the output possible on typecasting machines, it being claimed that non stop runs on the "Monotype" can produce an output of 40 lb. an hour, but that, allowing for non-productive causes, 20 lb. an hour should be considered a reasonable basis of output. How is it that in solid composition I can only obtain 13 lb. an hour, including the usual stoppages for changing copy and galleys?

A.—The claim made that 40 lb. an hour can be produced on non-stop runs refers to display type above 14 point. On small type, on account of the small cubic content of metal in each type cast, the weight cast per hour diminishes as the size gets smaller, as the machine cannot be driven faster than a reasonably defined limit. The "solid composition" to which you refer contains a large percentage of low spaces and quads, and this reduces

the weight cast per hour when compared with a non-stop run on one type of average thickness. The possible weights cast per hour on type only are: 6 pt. 7 lb., 8 pt. 12 lb., 10 pt. 20 lb., 12 pt. 29 lb., composition outputs would be about 6 per cent. or  $7\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. less in weight for the same number of pieces cast, on account of the presence of spaces and quads.

Q.—Although close spacing of composition is the fashion at present, we often have jobs which are ordered to be widely spaced. The usual 4-unit minimum justifying space is too narrow; can we not use a minimum 7-unit space?

A.—Yes, the justifying space could be obtained from the 9-unit space in the matrix-case, and a special stopbar case could be supplied to register 7-units from this position. A special space keybar would be required to locate the matrix-case accordingly.

Q.—Is it not possible to supply moulds to produce cored type for body sizes such as 10-point and 12 point, so as to use less metal for a given amount of composition?

A.—It is not a practicable proposition to make such moulds. It is strange how printers take opposite views upon the matter of output; some demand weight, others quantity. In the case of composition which has only to be used once there is little need to endeavour to produce absolutely solid type; but if the printer requests it the caster attendant can see to it that greater solidity is obtained. Composition should be gauged by quantity of ens produced; type for case by weight.

Q.—What is the limit of casting letter-spaced characters?

A.—The limit is the matrix seating on the mould; the matrix must surround the mould blade opening sufficiently to ensure a perfectly metal-tight fit to prevent the metal squirting past the matrix. See book on "Unit-Adding and Letter-Spacing on the Monotype".

# THE PRINTER-STATIONER

## I. THE HOLIDAY GREETING

Charles Reade in "The Cloister and the Hearth" has given us an idea of the emotions with which a professional calligrapher gazed upon the first book which he could identify as the product of his remorseless enemy, the printing press, which at every fast turn of its wooden screw squeezed away his livelihood. Yet should an old scribe be able to visit the average small printing office today, he might well jump to the conclusion that penmanship was keeping the printers going—so often would he see windows crowded with fountain pens, blank books, note books, and all the other material which proves that writing is by no means a lost art.

The Worshipful Company of Stationers is one of the few City companies which recruits its membership from a living craft. That craft is called "printing and its allied industries". But the stationery trade, now the staunch ally of printing, is much older than the Black Art, as can be deduced from the title and history of the Company. Today, there are stationers who announce themselves as printers because they take orders for printing, but, on the other hand, there are thriving printing houses which find that trading in stationery is something more than a profitable sideline; it is a means of constantly keeping in touch with new printing orders. It would be idle to point out to any but the lay reader that a firm which repeatedly orders stenographic notebooks or files is in the market for printed forms and advertising literature. What most printer-stationers are looking for today is some small line which can keep the presses busy without necessarily depending upon special orders in varying quantities. Everyone knows that the small shop's best ladder out of a depression is a speciality—one to which the ever curious public will attach the name of that shop.

Every stationer sells Christmas cards. A growing number of people have solved the problem of remembering all their friends with a personal, dignified and pleasant message at Christmas time, by ordering greeting cards specially engraved with their names. A growing number of people are not willing that their greetings should be exactly like those sent out by anyone else, and they accordingly order the reproduction of some favourite work of art, with a specially composed message. In most cases all these arrangements will have been made before the middle of November.

This is, so far, a matter of specialists' work, and preparations well in advance; but there remains a very

good opportunity for the small local printer to create his own Christmas cards. There is a type of person who cannot bear to look as far ahead as the holidays when summer has hardly passed; yet that person is the first to realize, when the holly first appears in the shopkeepers' windows, that a personal and unique Christmas card will at once record the benevolent spirit of the holiday and give a chance to remember all one's friends and acquaintances, rather than to confine remembrance with gifts to the chosen few.

In every community of any size there is an Art School, and a library containing reproductions, at least, of ancient books and manuscripts. Anyone inspecting the senior art classes in any of a score of schools in this country will be struck by the ability of at least one or two of the students to handle flat masses of colour in simple designs. Anyone turning the pages of a fine liturgical book of the Fifteenth or Sixteenth century, will at once see what infinitely more dignified compositions it offers for a Christmas card than a stale repetition of scenes of Pickwickian revelry.

It is to be hoped that some day the Art Schools will not only hold competitions amongst students for the best designs for Christmas greeting cards, but will offer the exclusive use of these designs to those people in the community who wish both to encourage young talent and to have a unique card of greeting; and that this offer will be made on the condition that a local printer does the work.

In searching old libraries for suitable material, several warnings have to be observed. A photograph is better than a tracing, and permission to photograph must be obtained from the library. No attempt should be made to match the illustration to a black-letter type, because there are very few true and ancient black-letters in existence, and the result is apt to look "mock antique". Christmas is a religious festival, and greetings which keep this fact in mind—both by the pleasant sobriety of their typography and by the subject of the illustration—are always in far better taste than any other kind.

Christmas is a religious festival; and for that reason it is considered bad form to send any but private and personal greetings in commemoration of that day. The shop or business house which sends out a greeting at this season should confine itself to a message of cordiality and goodwill at the approaching New Year, when pleasant business relations may be remembered and renewed.

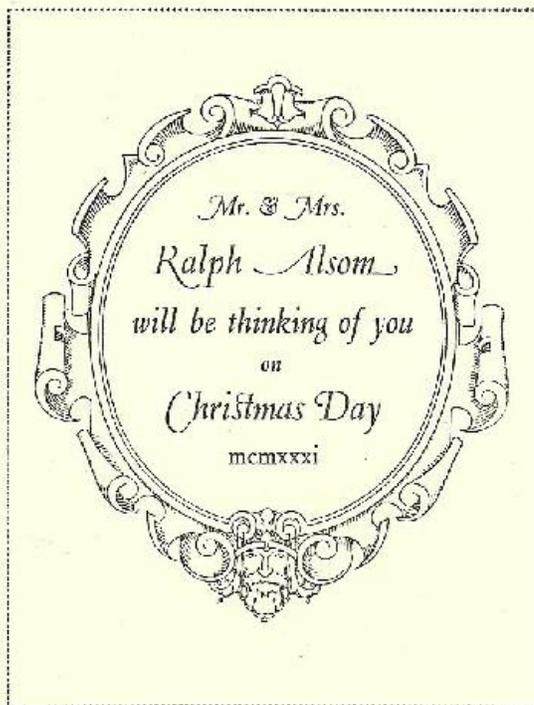
## THE MONOTYPE RECORDER

Here again, the printer has a chance of securing orders of which he does not always avail himself. Nothing could be more suitable for, say, a draper's greeting than a specially printed almanac, pointing out ways in which the firm could serve its customers at different seasons of the year. Booklets of general interest tracing the history of the firm and its plans for the New Year are appropriate; so are calendars—not the conventional lithograph of one conventional scene which is supposed to hang up all the year round in an office, but twelve generous sheets, each of them offering a new reason for buying the goods!

On the 1st of last January a certain business man showed us a tall stack of calendars, only one of which had sufficient dignity and interest to have gained the

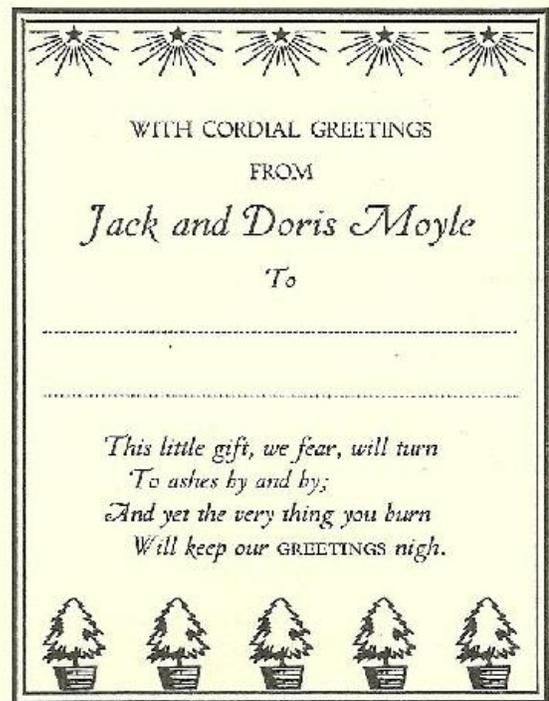
coveted place on his wall. "But", he said, "I was very glad to have this little diary notebook from So-and-so, and this very convenient renewable scribbling block with a calendar; and here's another firm that has sent me a whole book of blotters with a cheery message on each sheet!"

Printers, having the raw materials ready to hand, can naturally be expected to do more advertising of their own goods than any other kind of manufacturer, though they do not always live up to that expectation. But this article cannot wander into that aspect of holiday printing, as it is mainly concerned with the services by which the printer-stationer can make personal friends and potential customers amongst an intelligent and well-to-do portion of the community.



The Alsom's card departs from the stereotyped formula of a "greeting" without losing dignity. It would look well on a fine hand-made paper. Every printer has some decorative border material suitable for such a card. The italic is "Monotype" Lutetia, Series No. 234.

The "Monotype" user has many special Christmas Borders, etc., to draw upon.



The Moyles are sending so many boxes of cigarettes this year that they were pleased when the local printer suggested this gummed label on silver paper, printed with their own names in red and green. The border units are B395 (top) and B398 (bottom).

# THE MONOTYPE CORPORATION LIMITED

43 Fetter Lane, London, E.C.4

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