

American Typecasting Fellowship

NEWSLETTER

News of ATF Formation Spreads Quickly; Enquiries Are Varied

As information has spread regarding the typecasting conference held in July, enquiries have come from far and wide requesting information about our American Typecasting Fellowship.

These enquiries make it abundantly clear there is a strong interest in metal typecasting, even though there aren't that many folks writing telling of having their own casting equipment.

Several enquiries have come from persons still involved in hot-metal typecasting commercially. They wish to keep "in contact" with others doing the same, whether commercially or as a hobby.

Other enquiries come from persons still in typesetting but now removed from their first love—hot metal. They're happy to hear the art is being kept alive and want to receive our newsletter, etc.

The third category includes persons interested in typography and specifically metal typography. They, generally, are hobbyists with their own private presses and wish to stay close to those who have taken up typecasting so to assure themselves of future supplies of "precious" metal type.

All are welcome to receive future editions of this newsletter and certainly would be welcome at any future meetings we might have. They are welcome, too, to participate in the two-way communication this newsletter might afford as long as their requests, etc., relate to matters of typecasting and metal typography.

A strong emphasis will continue, however, on the specifics of typecasting and on those who have their own equipment. That will be in keeping with ATF's mission as implied by its name—a fellowship among American typecasters.

There obviously *is* as need for what amateur typecasters, collectively, can provide. To-wit: "I am an amateur book printer and printmaker. I'd like to design, cut, and hand-cast type for my press and need all the advice I can get." This comes from Kirklynn Cook of Mt. Kisco, N. Y.

Barney Rabin of Florida indicates he makes his own *Linotype* matrices. This interest, along with that of several others, indicates a "section" of ATF, perhaps, should be devoted to linecasters.

All told, the American Typecasting Fellowship is off to a good start. Your comments and advice will be appreciated—and especially technical information on the subject of typecasting as it is being re-discovered by hobbyists from Maine to California.

Sophisticated Computer Stuff

I thought the *Radio Shack* had to be the last place I ever would encounter Monotype equipment or accessories, but the sign on the winder obviously was made of keyboard controller tape. So I had to enquire. The response: "Oh, that's very specialized *tractor tape* for an advanced computer. I bought the surplus from a run at a paper converter factory where I used to work." A computer my foot. I proceeded to explain that it was a very close resemblance to controller tape and after all was said, he admitted he didn't know what it was, but that he had several cartons of the stuff. Well, I do too, but wonder if anyone else needs controller tape. If so, I will try to get it from him. I brought a sample home and it is the real stuff! Let me know if you need any tape.

Got Authentic 'Fat Face' Mats?

Enquiry has been received from *Old Sturbridge Village*, Sturbridge, Mass. 01566. Craig D. Mabiuss seeks an authentic "fat face" for the shop there, which seeks to be authentic for the 1820-1840 period. Does anyone have or know of the availability of such matrices? The contemporary Ultra Bodoni is a poor copy of the fat face letters he seeks. Write directly to him. He says, "before becoming director of crafts at Old Sturbridge Village, I was in charge of the Isaiah Thomas Print Office. And of all the problems to overcome, good reproduction type posed the biggest dilemma."

Of all faces, *Cheltenham*? I provide two reasons for those who question my taste. First, I wanted a solid face to fight this hard, textured paper. Second, I wanted to show good old Chelt as a reminder to those who get any passionate ideas about that cheap imitation of the true master. I allude to ITC Cheltenham, a "new" photo face just cast upon an unsuspecting modern market.

Cooper Old Style Italic is the nameplate. Border is a design cut by Paul Hayden Duensing.

NUMBER TWO, January 1979

The Poor Man's Remelt Furnace

If you have been feeding your Thompson a diet of scrap type, you know the trouble caused by excess dross, not to mention the exciting aroma of an occasional rubber band. The most desirable arrangement would be an automatic feeder gently lowering a long ingot of metal into the pot, maintaining a constant level of beautifully clean metal. But, lacking that, feeding your pride and joy small pigs of clean metal is the next best thing, and to do that you need to remelt your old type.

I had been on the trail of a remelt furnace, but had not been able to find one I could afford. A chance conversation at Terra Alta gave me a solution. Andy Soule commented that he had used a common deep fryer to melt old type. On my return home, I canvassed the neighborhood and found a retired but still usable deep fryer for \$3.00 cash.

This fryer had a cast aluminum pot with an integral heating element. The thermostat was erratic, was only calibrated to 500°, so I wired it out. Temperature can be controlled by simply unplugging the pot when the temperature gets too high. My pot holds eight quarts—almost 100 pounds of type metal.

To retain heat and assure high enough remelting temperature (750°), I insulated the pot. I finally found an insulation supply house that stocked high-temperature insulation in the Yellow Pages under "Pipe and Boiler Covering Materials." They had a ceramic fiber insulation, *Durablanket*, manufactured by Carborundum. This is a white flexible fiber blanket about one inch thick and withstands temperatures up to 2300° F. It is expensive—\$4.00 per square foot. But when I went out, they had a scrap about 24" x 18" left over from a roll and they gave it to me. I offered to hug the young lady at the front desk for her kindness, but she declined....

I removed the bottom from the fryer, disconnected and removed both the pilot light and the thermostat, and connected the cord directly to the posts of the heating element. I then lined the pot with insulation—between the side of the pot and the outer liner and between the bottom of the pot and the bottom shell. I reassembled the fryer, filled it with type, plugged it in, and within an hour the temperature was crossing 600° on the way up.

If you have gotten this far on your remelter, you will find a few other implements indispensable. First is a pig mold. I was lucky enough to have one. Or you might try to find an old-fashioned cast-iron cornbread pan. Little lead corn cobs should give your foundry that down-home look.

Another necessary item is a skimmer—or better, two: a small rectangular one for the Thompson, and a larger, round or oval one for the remelter. You can make them out of sheet iron—not galvanized. Tom, my printer's devil, is in metal shop at high school, and sheared mine out of stock

about a sixteenth inch thick. The small one is 1¼ x 2½". Drill ½ holes all over the skimmer to let the metal flow through while stopping the dross. Mount it on a piece of ¼" steel rod either by welding or riveting. Plain steel rod is rather hard to find, so I used galvanized by grinding the zinc coating off. My handles are 18 inches long, which is satisfactory for a small operation.

The larger skimmer for the remelter is 2½" diameter, again with the holes and the 18-inch handle. After drilling it, I worked it over with a ball pein hammer until it was slightly convex. This helps hold the dross on the skimmer as you dip it out.

To complete the outfit, I liberated a stainless steel soup ladle from Hazle's kitchen. I have now converted about 150 pounds of miscellaneous type into neat little pigs, and have a much cleaner pot on the Thompson. Operations, though infrequent, are much simpler and no aroma of burning rubber bands lingers to make my foundry an unwelcome addition to the household.

Roy Rice

Proper Alignment for Sorts

(Original leaf published by Lanston about 1939)

It is our purpose to make our matrices so accurately that it will only be necessary to line up the Cap H and then run the rest of the font without further test. With some faces such as Garamont, Kennerley and No. 337 Caslon that is the only way they can be run because their faces have been purposely designed for irregular alignment.

In all cases, however, after the font is cast, one type of each character should be assembled and locked up and a proof taken to test alignment or appearance.

Some customers such as trade plants, who cast a large quantity of each character, check the alignment of each character as cast. For this purpose the following table will be useful.

The bottom of the following letters should be lined with the line standard of the face to be cast:

f. h. i. k. l. m. n. r. x. z. fi. fl. ff. ffi. ffl.

Take alignment from top of lower case "m" for the following:

g. o. p. q.

Take alignment from bottom of lower case "o" for these:

a. b. c. d. e. s. t. u. ae. oe.

Take alignment from top of lower case "x" for the following:

v. w. y.

Take alignment from top of lower case i for lowercase j.

Align bottom of following capital letters with line standard:

A. B. D. E. F. H. I. K. L. M. N. P. R. T. X. Y. Z. AE. OE.

Take alignment from top of the capital "H" for the following:

J. U. V. W.

Take alignment from bottom of capital "U" for the following:

C. G. O. S. &.

Take alignment from top of capital "O" for capital Q.

Equipment Acquisitions

Of all persons, **Paul Duensing** now in a new home at Vicksburg, Michigan, must have changed his typesetting facility more radically than anyone else since the conference. He has obtained a rare English Thompson caster, and has obtained an equally rare 16x17 composition caster with keyboard. Also, he has acquired a Ludlow mat holder for his Thompson along with a stunning list of Ludlow mats (Caslon Bold, Cheltenham Bold, Karnak and Tempo).
Stunning?

Roy Rice of Atlanta, Georgia, also has acquired a composition caster—a 15x17. Roy drove all the way to Detroit to haul it out of its shop and into a warehouse for future delivery to Atlanta. The keyboard, which he hauled home in his half-ton pickup, gave enough trouble transporting and Roy is glad he didn't try to haul the caster.

Who Was Thompson?

Of increasing curiosity is the Thompson typesetter. Can anyone tell us more about the name and about the company which made the machine before Monotype took it over? Can anyone give us a comprehensive list of the Thompson Company's matrix offerings? The numbering is different and there are some different faces offered. I have Beton Extra Bold (Argh!) which is not found in Mono lists and I am sure there are others. It would be helpful to know more of the inventor and his (?) company. Harold Berliner: was this the man to whom you referred in your after-dinner speech at the type conference? If so, please answer some of the questions posed here.

Goudy's 'Companion'

Two conference participants show evidence of their efforts to revive Goudy's almost-lost Companion Old Style type design. **Les Feller** of Niles, Illinois, obtained the electro matrices by chance and now has issued a sales sheet offering 14 pt. roman, small caps and italic, 18 pt. italic and 36 pt. roman and italic. His circular also lists such jewels as Thunderbird, Relievo, Concave, Staccato, Tuscan Ombree, and several others.

Richard Mathews, who operates the Konglomerati Press with Barbara Russ at Gulfport, Florida, avid Goudy fans, pursued the face since its discovery and has completed composition for the first book ever to be done in the Companion face—hand-set in 14 point. The book, *Water Colors*, by Hale Chatfield, will be available later in this year.

The next issue of *Typographic Curiosities*, which I do occasionally at the Hill & Dale Press, will concern itself with the re-discovery of this Goudy design.

A Bit of Nostalgia from Paul Duensing

The passing of every age leaves its casualties, both in terms of machines and of the people who ran them—once valued technicians and their instruments of commerce, now suddenly displaced by a new technology.

Recently, when I saved some equipment from the junk yard, I had occasion to notice a fine typesetting and casting machine in the workyard of the firm. Technology no longer demanded its finely honed surfaces, close tolerances and the creative genius which gave birth to it. Its day had passed. It has been dipped in a heavy coat of scarlet paint and now it sits on a small concrete pedestal as an advertisement for the typesetting firm it had supported so long. Silent, immobilized, it sits...like a fine, gifted, dignified lady...painted up like a bawd, in its coat of raw, gaudy red....

Only those who know the outlines of this form, now covered by this crimson mantle, know the significance of what the machine could do, how many hours of service it once performed, of the millions of letters it once cast... of the one brief silver moment in history when this tainted, rusty bawd performed like the gifted lady she really is. From those who know, she still merits a salute with the eyes, a mental tip of the hat, a silent tribute to a fine old friend.

Phase Converter

After seeking for one year some means of converting my three-phase motor for single-phase operation, I discovered a small ad from Reliance Electric Manufacturing Co., Route 2, 1024 W. Lake Brantley, Maitland, Florida 32751. They advertised a phase converter for \$49.95 postpaid. I sent a check and promptly received a converter. Although not yet used, it seems totally adequate and they do have a satisfaction guarantee with it. Seems a lot cheaper than changing motors, etc.

Czarnowski Opens Again

Leah Warner provides details on Herb Czarnowski's activities of late. As you may recall, he attended the conference at Terra Alta shortly after the dissolution of Baltotype, where he was vice-president.

Leah reports Herb has recruited two of Baltotype's caster operators (the best in the business, he says) and is starting a new typefoundry. He now has all of the Baltotype faces in sizes from 6 to 12 point and most of the 14 point. The address is: Volker Brothers, care of Herbert S. Czarnowski, Baltimore, Maryland. Phone (301) 668-7420.

How Do You Heat Old Bruce's Pot?

After watching Andy Soule and Pat Taylor whip that Pivotal Caster into shape at Terra Alta, I felt inspired to get the Bruce at the Smithsonian going. The week after the conference, I began by disassembling the parts and getting them all adjusted properly. My only remaining problem was to heat the pot.

I checked around for the kind of burner Pat had on his machine. As far as I could tell, it was pretty much like the burners on old-fashioned water heaters, but these haven't been manufactured for quite a few years and I couldn't locate a supplier that had one. Not wanting to get bogged down, I tried the burner from a gas range. It burned well, but it just wouldn't get hot enough to melt the metal.

I decided a heating expert should be able to suggest something suitable, so I called my specifications in to a fellow at the heating company. He said he had just the burner. It had a flame spreader that was six inches in diameter and it stood 11 inches tall. It just sounded great. However, when I looked at the burner, I could tell it wouldn't do—the silly thing was for a furnace and would generate perhaps 30,000 BTU's. That would probably do more than just melt typemetal!

Now I am seeking a gas burner from a Thompson caster. If anyone has a suggestion or can give more detailed specifications for heating a Bruce caster, I would enjoy hearing from him.

Stan Nelson

Intercepted Letters/Messages Received

Herb Harnish of Ft. Wayne, Indiana, confirms that he has a yet-to-be-run Thompson. "My purchase consisted of a Thompson with a passle of nearly 200 fonts of mats and 20 or 30 pounds of Lino mats of the decorative type, borders, dingbats, and the like... I have been making haste very slowly, not wishing to break anything on the caster through ignorance..." My response to this caution was to "go ahead and try it. It's harder to break a Thompson than you imagine."

Andy Dunker of Jackson, Michigan, advises me: "I'm glad to see that you are interested in the process of making matrices via the electrolytic process. Certainly someone else should get into this if the future of typecasting is to be continued. I think you should also acquire some knowledge of electrochemistry, some data on power supply for the tank, and certainly some knowledge of mechanical machine work to finish the matrices, if you don't already have this. Then there is the additional expense of metal-working machinery, not only for finishing the work, but also to make the many small tools and fixtures one will need along the way. This is not to discourage you in any way, but rather, to get you to look at the whole picture before you enthusiastically start on the initial part and then discover a rocky road ahead..."

Bert Williams of Hayward, California, asks: "Have you heard of these? 4 comp casters, 3 keyboards, 1 rule material maker, matrices. Free list. Hoflund Graphics, Box 8569, Denver, Colorado 80201."

Vance Gerry writes to Paul Duensing: "I met a young couple named Chayt who cast and set type for their books. They have solved the space problem by renting a loft in a warehouse (3,500 square feet)—they live there too. When they visited me, I uncovered the Thompson for them to see and discovered that a mouse had made her home in the pot and was disinclined to leave. Possibly no private casting machine in the U.S. has been so neglected as V. Gerry's..."

Paul Duensing comments: "You mention 'that grand typefoundry in the sky.' You don't think they really might have a typefoundry up there, do you? If I had had any idea, I might have been a better boy all these years. I always assumed that to have a foundry, you had to go where the heat was... and also I assumed most of the printers would be down where the lead melts..."

From **James F. Burns, Jr.**, editor of *Printing Impressions*: "We'll run your report on the First National Conference on Metal Typecasting & Design in our November [1978] issue." An article I submitted received good play on page 8R. Unfortunately, this section was not in all copies of the magazine.

Mac McGrew of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, has a knowledge of Monotype, Linotype, Intertype, foundry, etc., that just won't quit. He has a list from Lanston which is the most comprehensive I ever have seen. It includes what sizes were made, the "set" for all composition sizes, how many matrices were in each font, etc., etc. It encompasses some 13 pages. If interested in a reproduction of this list, write and we shall attempt an offset copy in a subsequent issue of this newsletter. (I have just studied my three Mono specimen books and find the same list in a copy of the book which must have been put together in 1939. I date it by some of the dated material elsewhere in the book.)

Both **Mac McGrew** and **Dave Norton** of Syracuse, New York, indicate very extensive knowledge and resources regarding the American Type Foundry list of faces which was published in the last newsletter. If interested, contact them.

Several persons have written regarding the initials of our organization—ATF. "Surely coincidental," as one person put it. We shall hold off complete discussion of the subject and allow Harold Berliner, the man who drafted our extensive constitution, opportunity to digress on the subject for 45 minutes at our 25th anniversary meeting.

On the Loaning of Matrices

Correspondence from **Vance Gerry** of Fallbrook, California, indicates the general tone of all those who wrote regarding loaning matrices to one-another. "I have in the past loaned mats to people I know and would loan them to any ATF member in the future, I think. I have very few mats, and, of course, I mean to loan only commercial mats. *Proprietary mats will not be loaned.* For the circulating list of mats, anyone wishing to make his mats known should send a clean proof or typed or printed list to the guardian of lists who would make up Xeroxed copies, compile them and mail them at a charge to those requesting them..."

So far, I have experienced no requests for *any* faces. If you are desperate for a particular size of a particular face, perhaps we can get started by reporting your "wants" in the newsletter.

Dave Norton of Syracuse, New York, has a good suggestion: "I'd suggest not loaning but making an arrangement under which owners of mats would cast for others on request, either for pay or for credit toward casting they may request from others. In this way, any damage to your mats will be your responsibility..."

Hot Metal Typesetting Chill

Jim Fitzgerald, sales manager for Hartzell Machine Works, American representative for Monotype, gets upset when reports exclude Monotype as a principal typesetting medium—reports such as the following. Jim hopes to provide us with better information on Monotype's current status, but sent along an internal Mono sales piece indicating seven casters had been sold in Hungary and India within a two-month period. Perhaps Mono will outlive the other guys?

Perhaps not. A typesetting newsletter recently reported Monotype Corporation was in a state of financial distress, but that Barclays Bank and the National Enterprise Board had banded together to form a rescue in the form of 6.75 million pounds. The funds should help Monotype launch its "all-British, computer-controlled, laser typesetter." Monotype's troubles have been attributed more to takeover via financial maneuvering than because of its product line.

Anyway, here's the hot-metal report, a clip from the *New York Times*, August 6, 1978, sent in by **Mark Carroll**:

For decades, they were the printers' workhorses—the Mergenthaler Linotype and the Harris Intertype. They cast molten metal into type and thousands of newspapers and print shops across the country. Today, computer terminals and photographic equipment cast "cold type." It is speedier and cheaper.

But a hot-metal ember remains. Although Mergenthaler and Harris no longer make Linotypes and Intertypes in this country, they continue to build a handful in England.

Joseph Juhasz, director of marketing administration at the Mergenthaler Linotype Company in Plainview, L.I., says the overseas plant is building but "12 or 14 machines a year, because we only have one customer who buys new machines"—a printer of personalized bank checks in the United States. In the heyday of hot machines, he notes, Mergenthaler turned out "200 a month at least" for 40,000 potential customers.

In Winchester, Va., Donald H. Neale, manager of operations for Intertype says Harris is building 60 to 70 new machines a year in England, compared with 1,000 on two continents 20 years ago. No one in the United States is buying new Intertypes, he says. Foreign newspapers are the main customers.

As for used Linotypes and Intertypes, American dealers report paying \$100 to \$325 and getting about \$650 at retail—if they're fortunate enough to find a buyer. When new, the machines cost from \$10,000 to \$37,000 apiece.

Used machines "usually go to the junkyard for scrap," reports Peter Kantor, president of the Linotype Supply Company in Manhattan. Most of the survivors are stripped for parts. "A few," he says, are sold intact.

Colophon

Letterpressed for page one, offset for the rest because of a pressing need to get it out, this Newsletter is produced for the American Typecasting Fellowship by R. L. Hopkins, Box 263, Terra Alta, West Virginia 26764.

Insulating Your Thompson

My Thompson has been cold-natured from the start. When I first hooked it up, the gas piping on the machine was $\frac{3}{8}$ " galvanized iron pipe. The pot temperature barely got to 500°. I brought gas to it with $\frac{1}{2}$ " galvanized pipe and a $\frac{1}{2}$ " flex tube next, but still no success.

Consultation with a Linotype man then led me to drill out the orifice in the burner, which gained another 75° or so, but still left me with a maximum temperature of just under 600°. I cast my first font of type (18-point) at this temperature and it worked OK, but I still wanted to be able to raise the temperature if necessary.

In a conversation with Dick Hartzell at Terra Alta, I mentioned my problem, and he suggested I insulate the pot. Dick said that they packed the pot liner with insulation when they reconditioned machines using asbestos high-temperature insulation. So I tried it, using a ceramic fiber insulation*—asbestos is no longer available due to federal health and safety standards.

After carefully packing insulation all around the pot, it was immediately obvious that Dick and I had not communicated effectively. First, the fire refused to burn, except around the lower rim of the pot. Obviously lack of oxygen was the answer, so I poked channels in the insulation at about 60° intervals around the pot. Now the fire burned well enough, but still the pot would not heat—about 450° was the max. So...out with the insulation.

The final arrangement was a one-inch strip of insulation at the very top edge of the pot, with a two-inch space above the nozzle, and two one-inch spaces about 60° around each side. This allowed sufficient draft for a good hot fire, and by having a restriction at the top of the pot, retained a maximum amount of heat. The two-inch opening above the nozzle is to direct as much heat flow to this area as possible for free working of the choker valve.

Looking back over the misadventure (only one of a bunch) in my encounter with the Thompson, it is clear that Dick was talking about an electric-fired machine while I was talking about a gas-fired machine. So, if you have an electric pot, by all means insulate, but go easy on the gas model. Happy casting!

Roy Rice

*See article "A Poor Man's Remelt Furnace."

On the Next Page

It definitely looks like a Thompson and apparently is an example of Japanese ability to "copy and improve." The leaf on the next page was sent to me by Paul Duensing. He says he got the leaf in the late 1950's and has no knowledge as to whether the machine still is manufactured.

The "change mats as you run" feature would be great for Oriental ideograms, where the set width remains constant. My guess is that it's less useful for our Roman alphabet.

'Koike'

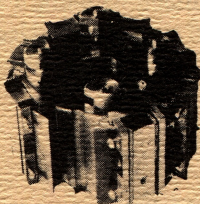
HOW TO ELEVATE THE EFFICIENCY OF YOUR PLANT ? WHILE THE TYPE CASTING IS CONCERNED

"KOIKE" NEW AUTOMATIC TYPE CASTING MACHINE is an ideal machine just to answer to that question. The unique feature of the new caster is the introduction of a MATRIX MAGAZINE. Our old type casting machine was equipped with a single matrix holder which can cast a required number of type by using a single matrix. When a round of work is done the machine must be stopped for a time to remove the matrix for another matrix to be set, each round causing loss of time and labour.

THE NEW CASTER, electrically drive the matrix magazine and transport casted types into the type case. The labour economy due to introduction of electrical operation has simplified the work and made lighter for a worker to handle two machines together.

FEATURES

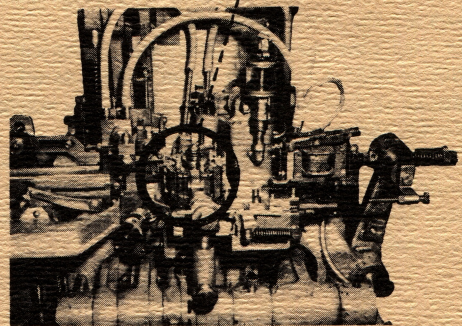
In the MATRIX MAGAZINE 8 matrices are housed and each matrix is set in its own MATRIX FRAME. Arrangement of matrices is simply accomplished by taking off the matrices from the matrix frame. Prepare spare frames with one each being set in a frame so that it is possible to put in the matrix magazine while in motion. The matrix magazine, electrically driven is possible to continually cast types using 8 matrices.



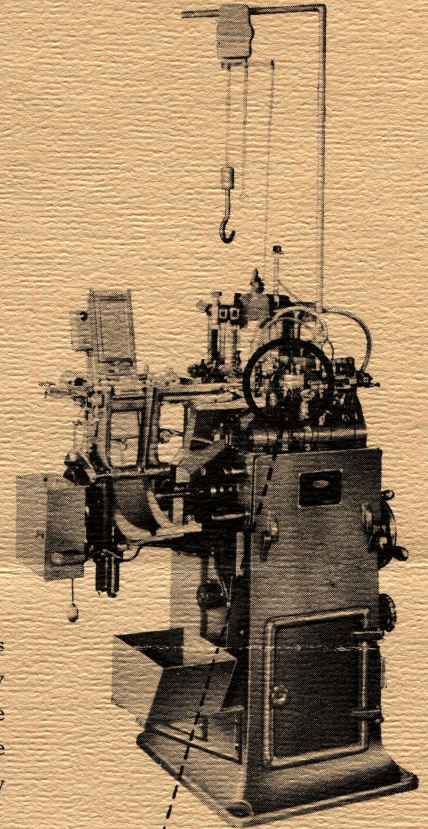
Matrix Magazine



Matrix Frame



Matrix Magazine



For example, when 8 matrices A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H are housed in a matrix magazine set the graduations on the electrically operated sign board by the required number of types. Begin with casting type "A" and when required number of types has been casted, the matrix magazine automatically turns and the types automatically casted are received in the type case. When the case becomes packed fully, another case comes round to its regular position to receive types. The same round of operation continue until all 8 different types being completed.

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Put your money where your mouth is! The list of persons interested in the AMERICAN TYPECASTING FELLOWSHIP is growing daily. The first newsletter was sent to about 70 persons. This issue will almost double that figure.

Although our *by-laws* specifically forbid "dues," surely if your interest in ATF is high enough, you will not object to paying a *nominal* fee (to cover postage and handling) for receiving this *Newsletter*. I will continue to cover costs of production in the interest of "keeping things alive."

Kindly forward \$5.00 to cover the first five issues of the *Newsletter*. You will not receive future issues if your interest is not high enough to "fork out" this nominal fee.

Send check, payable to *Rich Hopkins*, to Post Office Box 263, Terra Alta, WV 26764.

Your comments and discussion of your current activity also would be appreciated.