

THE PASTIME PRINTER

Number 4 Front Royal, Virginia March 1957



COMES FULL CYCLE AFTER 51 YEARS IN ECLIPSE

MOVING in an orbit of approximately 102 years, Clarendon typeface - in the ascendant in 1851 - entered obscurity about 1902 - again emerged in 1953.

THIS typediculous yogi contends that type styles change on a frequency of 17 years, and that the popularity of faces runs in cycles of 17 years or multiples, as 34-51-68, etc. The sole basis for this contention is observation, and no reference is had to astrology, kinetics, or the recurrence frequencies ridden by grasshoppers in Kansas or Utah.

TYPE STYLES change when fashions change - fashions in apparel, furniture, decoration, amusements, behavior. Letterforms in common use reflect trends, but inertia in scattered areas of the broad picture, and the overlapping aspects contributed by personal likes and dislikes of an aging but influential minority, forinst all change, pose some deviational factors that confuse any observer who attempts to pin down a cyclic pattern, even for the past.

THE type called Clarendon was started in England about 1845. It was a protected design for three years only, after which it was copied by every free-loading pirate. By 1851 the Clarendon bandwagon carried 'Egyptian' characters, variously named, that enjoyed an extensive vogue until about 1896, at which time an American named Bertram Goodhue came up with a new basic letterform. When a demi-black version of Goodhue's face, Cheltenham Bold, hit the market in 1902, Clarendon had had it - until 1953.

THE PASTIME PRINTER

«POUR LE SPORT»

RUMINATIVE REFLECTIONS OF A RETIRED
SAILOR-SOLDIER-SALESMAN, A PRINTER
BY TRAINING AND BY FIRST INTENTION

*Typeset and wrought off by hand
at Skyline Bend Farm*

STEVE L. WATTS, BOX 226, FRONT ROYAL, VIRGINIA

"Sans Obligation"

IN THE BEGINNING it was said that this amateur sheet was to be gotten out for our friends, *sans obligation*, as frequently as the moving spirit would allow.

We announced that salty slang words and GI phrases, along with printers' jargon, would impose a language barrier for readers not familiar with men of the Armed Forces or traditions of the back office where ink meets paper.

Moreover, it was explained that we must do the best we can with the tools we have, *all for the fun of it*, without pretension to any superior virtues or talents.

The foregoing reiteration is for newfound friends. To all readers we extend thanks for letters and encouragement. Many suggest a small charge to cover the cost of paper, envelopes and stamps, but *sans obligation* works both ways. Take it for free, praising Allah!

The unexpected and generous reception given PASTIME PRINTER has increased circulation beyond the list of readers we envisioned at the start. Libraries ask about back numbers to start a file, but we must tell them with sincere regret that they're gone with the wind that dried last year's dillies.

You said it!

Fanmail for THE PASTIME PRINTER

*I'm fully aware of the work that goes into
Every issue of THE PASTIME PRINTER.
Rollo G. Silver, Boston, Mass.*

*Your presswork is not nearly as pediculous
as you maintain. A 'spit' underlay, in its
proper place, can make a fine impression.
John Anderson, Philadelphia, Pa.*

*Can you help me track down origin of the
myth about typeset? It would make a tale
for ORKIN TALKIN [post control organ].
Frances J. Black, Editor, Atlanta, Ga.*

*I see to it that PP gets around here at RIT.
After all, its fine spirit may be catching!
Alexander Lawson, Rochester, N. Y.*

*May the master of Skyline Bend apply
himself--zealously and immediately--
and give us more like 'Right Off the Cob.'
Helen E. Middleton, Sarnia, Ont., Canada.*

*Come down here and set type for a PP at
ISLAND PRESS. Print it by lithography.
Jerry Anderson, St. Thomas, Virgin Islands.*

*Plaudits for Pastime Printing Projects.
Fröhe Weihnachten und HAPPY NEW YEAR!
Marjorie and Elmer Frank, Stars & Stripes,
European Edition, Darmstadt, Germany.*

*You've always been a rhetorical maverick.
Originality with which you string words
together makes them ring with euphony.
Casey Pratt, New York City.*

*I would deeply appreciate being on your
mailing list, even *sans obligation*. Printing
in this land of cherry blossoms offers
greater challenge than in Deutschland.
Gordon Skean, PacificStars & Stripes, Tokyo.*

*Fine escape literature. Stick to printing!
As court martial defense counsel you were
not in your métier. Out the gate in 1958!
G. I. Schwarzhandler, Penopolis Isle.*

AN OLD FOGY'S LAMENT

Why speak of Prosperity, crimping our pay
To finance *this* kind of life,
While spendthrift sons of the shoeless ones
Make waste and largess rife?
Must they have that word for a sugarteat,
Or in skyhigh neon spelled,
While our substance drains like the desert rains
And Thrift is the cat that's belled?



What price Security, piddling away
The earnings we sought to save
Against the day our west'ring way
Brought us closer to the grave?
Our pelf is shrunk as the dollar shrinks,
Diminishing day by day;
Retirement planned on a spot of land
Grows leaner in every way.

Why prate of Progress, the gains we've made,
While the simpler joys we knew
Are laughed aside in the high-and-wide
Inflation we're whirling through?
Where are the sports we could all afford?
And our little brown jug, to boot?
Three-squares-a-day have gone the way
Of the three-for-a-nickel cheroot.



What price do we pay when we cast away
The Freedom we cherished most?
Freedom, indeed! with taxes that bleed,
And debt for the strength we'd boast.
There's left no place in our giddy race
For sensible pride or shame,
While Deficits reign and we sigh in vain
For times nevermore the same.

*They'd tell us that we never had it so good
(Tis granted there're some as does),
But nothing's the same as it used to be . . .
I reckon it NEVER was!*



Skyline Bend Scuttlebutt

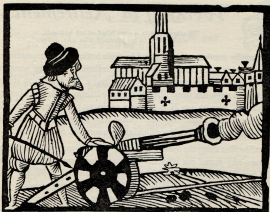
Whoo's-whooh at The Good Old Farm

VISITORS to our mountainside barony in the boondocks made 1956 a year of happy reunion with old friends from far places. Harry Blumenthal, a printer and photographer extraordinary, sometime contemporary of Sam Drebin and General Lee Christmas when happenings in Mexico kept headline writers humping, celebrated his eightieth summer by backseat driving from Loce Ahng-hayl-ais. Harry and his kid brother, Lane, retired newspaper printer and also a shutterbug, vied with each other in photographing our redoubt and the surrounding terrain, sending us prints and negatives of superb exposures. The Skipper acted as their guide on a trip to Washington, where the boys biked him from the Capitol to the White House. The last time *that* happened was the inaugural parade for President Wilson.

UNEXPECTED (but noisily-welcomed) guests were Mr & Mrs Charles Henrich and their stalwart son, Charles Jr, from Mukwanago, Wisconsin. Chuck and the ladies heard some tall tales when the former shipmates on the ill-fated Battleship Arizona and in the Naval Transport Service got to batting them out. Some of these tales will be preserved for posterity in a future *feuilleton* of PASTIME PRINTER.

ANOTHER day with a ring around it, on our calendar, marked the arrival of Martha and John Loeser, residents of Ridgewood, New Jersey; our constant friends for more years than can be politely enumerated with due regard for those of the feminine persuasion. Commander Loeser, now on the Navy's retired list, was also our shipmate in ww-1.

PLEASANT visitors for a shorter time included the Urban Smiths and Byron Smiths of Catasaquua, Penna.; Herman Cohen and family, Karl Bernhard and family, Aaron and Florence Burns, all of New York City; the Sylvan Swinks of Utica; the Reid Hammonds of Washington; Colonel Hal Randall and his wife, stationed at Fort Lawton, Wn.



A NEWCOMER, who in our book rates twenty-one guns, eight sideboys, a beat to quarters and a whistling buoy, is BRUCE GORDON WATTS, *geboren* 27 October 1956 to D & D at Elizabeth Town in the Jerseys. Don and Doris fetched Watts, B G, to Skyline Bend for a week in January. He intimated his satisfaction with all he surveyed. Doubling his displacement in eleven weeks, our braw laddie bids fair to swing a mean claymore when old enough to battle the ailanthus with his gran'ther. Grandmama is still a-dither.

POWER of the press was demonstrated following the account of Ginger's jeep accident in PP2. She now pilots a Plymouth Savoy, while the Yellow Peril is deadlined for chores about the place. The Plymouth took us to Gillette, New Jersey, for the family's Christmas gathering at Ralph and Nancy Babcock's fine new castle. For the uninformed, we wish to explain that our overage children, Donald and Nancy Fay, married Doris Harman and Ralph Babcock, respectively, in 1955. No wrong fonts in our new faces!



Working at Retirement

"Retirement is a new kind of job in itself,
which has to be learned like any other."

Judging by sentiments expressed in their letters to your pastimer, retirement is not a bowl of cherries (regardless of financial security and pleasant environment) for some retirees. The quotation at the top of this page has been lifted from the writings of Mr. Joe Murray of Kansas, who at age 77 is starting again, as publisher of a small newspaper, the *Winchester Star*. One who apparently shares our skittish regard for the perpendicular pronoun, Mr. Murray says:

"The first thing the masculine member of this partnership [Agnes & Joe—ed.] found out after his retirement last January was that he had been beholden to his job for much more than shelter, clothing and the three meals a day which he had done his best never to miss. The job got him up in the morning, told him what to do, guided his steps and his actions and most of his thoughts through the working day, and more or less gently prodded him when he felt like slacking up.

"In those days he wished for all or a reasonable facsimile of all the things mentioned in this little verse (cribbed from an unknown author). But in retirement one does not wish quite those things or wish them in the same way. What one wishes for is something to do that has to be done right now."

I WISH I were away from town
As far as I could get,
With all the bills I've got to meet
Met.
I wish I were out on a farm
A-basking in the sun,
With all the work I've got to do
Done.
I wish I were beside the sea
Or sailing in a boat,
With all the things I've got to write
Wrote.

Mr. Murray goes on: "So, getting up in the morning under one's own power and laying out a schedule for the day, knowing one may take it or leave it, but hoping to take it, is a new kind of job"

"The score for the year seems to add up to no meals missed, more dishes wiped, more waiting for the mail man, more talk about the weather, more false starts and fewer arrivals at a task's completion. We suspect that all this doesn't make a man any easier to live with."



Shop Notes from Privateer Press

COLUMBIA, a typeface designed by Walter McKay of New York and developed at Typefoundry Amsterdam in Holland, was used for body matter on the preceding page. The Columbia family includes:

Columbia

Columbia Italic

Columbia Bold

Complete specimens of Columbia and other importations may be requested from Amsterdam Types and Graphic Equipment, Inc., 268 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y.

CRAW CLARENDON and *Craw Clarendon Book*, in the 8-point size, are used for body matter on the front page. This is a modernized version of Clarendon, designed by Freeman Craw for American Type Founders Co., Inc., of Elizabeth, N. J. The circular device is printed direct from type, attached to adhesive tape and bent around a short piece of copper tubing. To provide counterplay with the lines of wide type, the heading was set in 16-point Extra Condensed Title Gothic No. 12, its 'vertical stress' acting as a foil. Not having another size of the same type that looked right for the masthead, the line of Spire was dug out of a box of pied type that came from a defunct shop. The first 'R' is damaged, but there was no replacement.

"TYPORHYTHMICS" on the back page is set in corps 24 of *Romantique No. 1*, cast by *Fonderies Typographique Française*, and sold by Amsterdam Types in New York.

2000 COPIES of this number. If you desire future issues, and have not told us so before, a letter or postal card to that effect is indicated. Don't forget it!



J. DePol, *Scalpsit*

OUR NEW HOUSE FLAG is a product of the burin wielded by our friend, up-and-coming John DePol, who makes the chips fly at his Endgrain Press, 35-35 62nd St., Jackson Heights, N. Y. Among the designs shown in James L. Weygand's book, **A COLLECTION OF PRESSMARKS**, John engraved those of Marvin Neel's *Backwoods Press*, John Fass' *Hammer Creek Press*, Ben Grauer's *Between Hours Press*, Lewis F. White's *Privy Council Press*, James Weygand's *Press of the Indiana Kid*, and John's own *Endgrain Press*.

A Pastime Cerebration

TYPE DESIGN RESEARCH

FURTHER to our typological observations, respecting Clarendon and type styles. Lest the scorner may sneer at and wittlings defame us, please examine the record established by a few types, stylish in recent years. Notice that these are *B* and *C* faces only; that we did not ransack the whole catalogue to select just those which happened to be the right fish for our net:

NAME OF TYPE FACE	START	17 YR	34 YR	51 YR	68 YR	85 YR	102 YR
Baskerville Roman	1761	1778	1795	1812			
Baskerville (revival)	1914	1931	1948	1965			
Bodoni	1774	1791	1808	1825			
Bodoni (revival)	1910	1927	1944	1961			
Bulmer Roman	1792	1809	1826				
Bulmer (revival)	1930	1947	1964				
Caslon Oldstyle	1726	1743	1760	1777			
Caslon (revival)	1845	1862		1896	1913	1930	
Century Expanded	1900	1917		1951	1968		
Cheltenham Bold	1902	1919	1936	1953			
Clarendon Bold	1851	1868	1885	1902			1953
Cloister (Jenson) OS	1892	1909	1926	1943			
Commercial Script	1906	1923	1940	1957			

Baskerville Roman was revived by ATF in 1914. Apparently it was made from pattern type obtained from Stephenson Blake's Baskerville Old Face, a version originated about 1768. The Sheffield foundry had no Baskerville Italic, recommending Georgian Old Face Italic as a suitable companion for Baskerville Roman. ATF's Baskerville Italic was cut in 1916, 6 to 18 point sizes only. It looked about the same as Century Catalogue Italic but with a few fancy capitals added. The Baskerville revival lagged until about 1931, when it gained favor as a machine-set face. Demand for foundry Baskerville had noticeably diminished by 1948.

Bodoni flourished for nearly 50 years, then was dormant until revival in 1910. 17 years later, Bodoni hit the jackpot when Hal Marchbanks and other *avant garde* typographers cast about for contrasty thick-and-thin type to 'make it look different.' Bodoni proved to be a natural for advertising, publication headlines, and general commercial printing. The Bodoni revival in 1910 was ill-timed, for Bodoni did not march well with less formal oldstyle faces which were riding high in the saddle at the time. Bodoni's right-ascension, therefore, should be reckoned from 1927, placing it on our meridian as of 1952-3, and destined for obscurity by 1978.