The Identification of Type Faces
in Bibliographical Description

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Two suggestions may be helpful to descriptive bibliographers in working out a method for describing the typography of a book: bibliographers should base their measurement of type on its appearance on the printed page rather than to infer the size of the type body; and their system of classification of type designs should be graduated so that different degrees of detail can be presented under differing circumstances and for the several periods of book production.

In 1938 Beatrice Warde explained the "clumsiness and inadequacy" of many of the basic terms relating to printing in this way: the technicians would have been able to produce new terms, she said, but "the design of printed matter has very largely passed into the hands of people who have only theoretical knowledge of type and printing, and when the latter began, as it were, to eavesdrop on the jargon of the shop, they lacked the self-confidence to challenge terms which had become antiquated."[1] The descriptive bibliographer often finds himself in a similar position: he is called upon to give some account of the typography in the books with which he deals, but he feels rather uneasy manipulating the conventional terms and is not sure how to go about selecting the most meaningful information to present. Of course, some bibliographers will also be typographical experts, just as others will have made a special study of paper; but none can be equally proficient in all aspects of book production, and a standard system for the identification of type in descriptions of books would be a great help. Fredson Bowers, in his *Principles of Biblio-*

1. "Size of Print," *Penrose Annual,* XL (1938), 75.

graphical Description (1949), sets forth the essentials of measuring the type page and indicating the vertical measure of twenty lines (pp. 300-06, 444-46), but his recommendations about referring to specimen books (p. 445) require some experience to carry out and suggest the need for a detailed guide. As Stanley Morison puts it in his comprehensive introduction to *Type Specimen Facsimiles* (ed. John Dreyfus, 1963), there should be a companion volume to Bowers entitled "Descriptive Principles of Typography" (p. xxviii).

My purpose in this article is far less ambitious, for I am subject to the same lack of confidence in technical matters about which Mrs. Warde spoke. I only wish to make two suggestions—which I hope may help point the way toward the kind of descriptive manual that must some day be produced. The assumption at the outset is that a precise description of the type used in a book is a proper part of the total bibliographical description of that book, a point not unanimously granted. Some bibliographers make no comment on type at all; and Desmond Flower, in his recent review of Frederick Woods's bibliography of Churchill (1963), remarks, "There may be a valid argument for recording what type a book is printed in, but I doubt if the length of the line in ems will ever be found of vital importance. . . . generally speaking modern book production is a rather pedestrian mechanical matter and complicated details should only be recorded if they help to resolve or clarify a problem."[2] The contrary view, however, is that descriptive bibliography, like any other descriptive discipline, must describe—concisely but exactly—all aspects of the object being examined, whether they are interesting or pedestrian. That a particular book should be described at all is enough to justify a description of its type. This information may not in every instance be significant for literary students, but a bibliographical description has a mixed audience. One cannot in any case know what is relevant to a given pursuit until a body of data has been accumulated, and Carter and Pollard's *Enquiry* should have made clear that early books are not the only ones in which it pays to look at typography.

If this point of view is granted, then it follows that descriptive

2. *Library*, 5th series, xx (1965), 161-62.

bibliographers should be expected to have at least a rudimentary knowledge of typographical matters, beyond that obtainable from a reading of McKerrow. They should be familiar with a few basic books,[3] such as A. F. Johnson's *Type Designs* (1934, 1959), Stanley Morison's *On Type Designs* (1926, 1962), Legros and Grant's *Typographical Printing Surfaces* (1916), and D. B. Updike's *Printing Types* (2 vols., 1922), and they should know what to expect from Rowe Mores and T. B. Reed, from Moxon and his descendants;[4] they should have something more than a passing acquaintance with the essays of Stanley Morison, Beatrice Warde, Oliver Simon, A. F. Johnson, W. Turner Berry, Ellic Howe, James Mosley, and Lawrence Wroth[5], and they should have pe-

3. An excellent survey of the basic literature is Ellic Howe's "Bibliotheca Typographica," *Signature,* n.s. x (1950), 49-64; he had earlier covered the ground more briefly and suggested tasks still to be done, in "Typographical Studies," *Library,* 5th series, I (1946-47), 250-53; and he surveyed the course of typographical research of the last forty years in the *British Printer,* LXXIII (Feb. 1960), 106-10. Another important summary of scholarship is Stanley Morison's "On the Classification of Typographical Variations," in *Type Specimen Facsimiles* (ed. John Dreyfus; London, 1963), esp. pp. xvii-xxviii. See also W. Turner Berry, "Books on Type and Type-founding," *Book Collector's Quarterly,* IV (Oct. 1931), 67-75; Horace Hart, "Bibliotheca Typographica: A List of Books About Books," *Dolphin,* I (1933), 161-94; Berry, "A New Literature of Printing," *Penrose Annual,* XXXVII (1935), 53-55; and George Parker Winship, "The Literature of Printing," *Dolphin,* III (1938), 471-91. For earlier works, the standard guide is E. C. Bigmore and C. W. H. Wyman, *A Bibliography of Printing* (3 vols.; London, 1880-86); for later references there are helpful annual surveys in various journals—such as those by Berry and Mosley in *Penrose Annual* (LII, 64-69; LIII, 61-63; LVI, 155-60) or those labeled "Books for Typographers" in *Typographica* (no. 10 ff.). There is a good selective check list in A. F. Johnson's *Type Designs* (2nd ed.; London, 1959), pp. 167-78.
4. The relationships among the books produced by Moxon's successors are traced by Lawrence C. Wroth in "Corpus Typographicum: A Review of English and American Printers' Manuals," *Dolphin,* II (1935), 157-70—reprinted in *Typographic Heritage* (New York, 1949), pp. 55-90—and by Herbert Davis in "The Art of Printing: Joseph Moxon and His Successors," *Printing and Graphic Arts,* V (1957), 17-32. Herbert Davis and Harry Carter's edition of Moxon (2nd ed.; London, 1962) is the outstanding work of scholarship in this area, but brief articles have appeared on some of the other manuals—such as A. F. Johnson, "Typographia, or the Printer's Instructor," *Penrose Annual,* XLIII (1949), 26-28.
5. John W. Carter has compiled *A Handlist of the Writings of Stanley Morison*

rused the contents of the *Fleuron* (1923-30), *Signature* (1935-54), the *Penrose Annual* (1895-   ), the *Gutenberg Jahrbuch* (1926-   ), the *Monotype Recorder* (1901-   ), and the new *Journal of the Printing Historical Society* (1965-   );[6] they should know some standard anthology of printed pages, like Morison and Day's *The Typographic Book 1450-1935* (1963) or Morison's *Four Centuries of Fine Printing* (1924; 4th ed., 1960), and they should be aware of such collections as those at the St. Bride Institute in London, the American Typefounders Library at Columbia University, the Wing Foundation at the Newberry Library, or the Plantin-Moretus Museum in Antwerp.[7]

The bibliographer, thus convinced that a paragrpah on typography belongs in his descriptions of books and prepared to ap-

(Cambridge, 1950); a list of Johnson's work is included in Alan Rae Smith's "A. F. Johnson: Historian of Printed Books," *Signature*, n.s. xiii (1951), 47-56; a few of Beatrice Warde's essays are reprinted in *The Crystal Goblet* (London, 1955).
6. For an extensive catalogue of periodicals, see Carolyn F. Ulrich and Karl Kup, *Books and Printing: A Selected List of Periodicals, 1800-1942* (New York, 1943); and *Catalogue of the Periodicals Relating to Printing and Allied Subjects in the Technical Library of St. Bride Institute* (1950). Cf. H. S. Williamson, "They Marched with Banners: Some English Art and Typographic Periodicals, 1890-1930," *Signature,* vi (July 1937), 18-27.
7. See Ellic Howe, "Typographical Libraries and St. Bride," *Penrose Annual,* xlviii (1954), 58-59, and "The Printer and the Museum," *Penrose Annual,* xl (1938), 80-83; and William Bentinck-Smith, "The Literature of American Typefounding," *Printing and Graphic Arts,* i (1953), 21-26 (which includes a discussion of American collections). The Plantin-Moretus Museum is often discussed: Charles T. Jacobi, "The Plantin-Moretus Museum," *Penrose Annual,* xxiii (1921), 17-22; Léon Voet, "The Plantin-Moretus Museum as Study Center," *Printing and Graphic Arts,* i (1953), 80-82; Harry Carter, "The Types of the Plantin-Moretus Museum," *Printing and Graphic Arts,* iii (1955), 53-58; Ellic Howe, "Plantin at Antwerp: A Typographical Adventure," *British Printer,* lxxiii (1960), 84-87 (Jan.), 106-10 (Feb.), 100-03 (Mar.), 96-100 (April). Articles on other centers include Robert F. Lane, "The Bodoni Punches, Matrices and Molds at Parma," *Printing and Graphic Arts,* v (1957), 61-69, and "Parma Honors Bodoni with a New Museum," *British Printer,* lxxvii (March 1964), 61-63; Harry Carter, "The Typographical Museum at the Oxford University Press," *Gutenberg Jahrbuch,* 1958, pp. 376-79; A. Ruppel, "The World-Museum of Printing," *Penrose Annual,* xxxiii (1931), 23-28. The St. Bride Institute's *Catalogue of the Technical Reference Library* (London, 1919) is an important reference work; see also Charles T. Jacobi, "The Saint Bride Foundation Technical Library," *Penrose Annual,* xxix (1927), 92-95.

proach the problem with some understanding, still must work out a method. It is toward this end that my two suggestions are directed, and they are concerned with the two essential ingredients in any identification of type—the indication of its size and the description of its style or design.

I

For the descriptive bibliographer, the determination of type sizes is a different kind of problem from the one faced by the printer when he specifies a particular point size: for the pirnter is working with the types themselves, whereas the bibliographer has only the type faces—the impressions made by the types—to look at. The question which the bibliographer must answer at the beginning is whether he is recording the measurement of the face type or of the type itself; for the size of the type face he has direct evidence in the impressions on the page in front of him, but to identify the size of the physical type (the type body) he can only make deductions based on the composite arrangement of the impressions on the page. It is therefore most sensible to begin the descriptive note on a book's typography with a measurement of an entire type page—a procedure further justified by the fact that the purpose of the description is not simply to determine the size of an individual piece of type or a type face, but also to record the typographic design of the book in terms of the way those individual types are placed together.

The measurement of the type page, begun by the incunabulists (for whom typographical evidence is particularly crucial) and described by Bowers for books of all periods (pp. 344-47, 300-06, 444-46), is now a standard procedure. One finds a characteristic page and then records the number of lines, the dimensions of the type page (length of text, then in parenthesis the length including headline and direction-line, then the width), and the vertical measurement of twenty lines: e.g., "23 *ll.* (p. 17), 128 (141) x 80 mm.; 113 mm. for 20 *ll.*"[8] For details of the system, one should

8. Measurement of a page is, of course, from the top of the ascenders in the first line to the bottom of the descenders in the last line; measurement of twenty lines is from the top of the ascenders (or any other point) in one line to the top of the ascenders (or the corresponding point) in the twenty-first line below.

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consult Bowers; the only points which need be raised here are the adoption of a twenty-line standard and the choice of millimeters over inches. As to the first, the convention of a twenty-line measurement is so well established for early books that it is futile to consider changing it; ten lines, however, are much more convenient (as McKerrow realized) and should, I think, be preferred for more recent books. On the second matter, it has been argued that inches are more appropriate for recent books, since the point system is based on inches and since the standard sizes of paper in England and America have been set in terms of inches; but in view of the recent discussions of the possibility of adopting the metric system in England and America, to say nothing of its inherently greater logic, there are strong grounds for preferring it even for modern books.[9] It would be possible, of course, to give the type page dimensions in inches and the ten- or twenty-line measurement in millimeters, but the result might be less, rather than more, convenient to readers. A similar compromise has been suggested by John C. Tarr, who constructed a table by means of which twenty-line measurements in millimeters can be converted to the corresponding point size; he advocates including this point figure in parentheses following the twenty-line measurement.[10]

His table emphasizes the fact that the measurement of a given number of lines can serve as a guide to the body size of a type only if the lines are set solid—that is, with no leading between them. But modern type faces are sometimes cast on unusually large bodies to give the effect of leading; thus it is impossible for the bibliographer, limited by what he can deduce from the printed impressions, to tell whether a given type is, for example, a 12-point type with 2-point leading or a 12-point face cast on a 14-point body. Either of these descriptions would convey the appearance accurately enough, but one of them would be factually wrong. In the face of such difficulties, the only logical—and honest—procedure is to base typographical description on appearance. The bibliographer, instead of attempting to identify the size of the *type* used (which he cannot do anyway except

9. The new sizes of paper (with dimensions in the ratio of $\sqrt{2}:1$), set forth in British Standard 3176:1959, are based on the metric system.
10. "Measurement of Type," *Library,* 5th series, I (1946-47), 248-49.

through inference), must describe the size of the *type face* (the impression of which is available for direct observation). For earlier periods, the logical dichotomy between these two approaches does not result in important practical difficulties; but at least for nineteenth- and twentieth-century books the gap cannot be bridged satisfactorily, and the bibliographer has no sensible choice but to concentrate on the appearance of what he is describing rather than to hypothesize what lay behind it.

One solution would be simply to report a point measurement as before, but clearly labeled as "face" rather than "type." However, points are traditionally a measure of type bodies;[11] they can obviously serve to measure type faces as well, but to use the same unit for both does not effectively dramatize the important difference in approach and may even promote confusion between the two. Besides, the point (or $\frac{1}{72}$ of an inch) is too small a unit for a bibliographer to employ accurately without proper equipment for magnification. Millimeters would seem to be the best workable unit, for they are a conveniently manipulable size in themselves and are easily convertible to points. Since a point is .0138″ and a millimeter is .039381″, the margin of error is only about .002″ when three points are equated with one millimeter. The bibliographer can easily estimate thirds of millimeters when measuring a type face, but beyond this he cannot go with any assurance—nor is any greater accuracy required for his purposes. So if he records a face as 3.67 mm., anyone wishing to think in terms of points can immediately visualize an eleven-point face, but no one will be under any illusion that an eleven-point *type* has been posited. If external documentary evidence (such as the printer's record) is later adduced to show that the type used was actually twelve-point, the bibliographer's account is in no way invalidated, for he had not pretended to be describing the type; he had simply indicated its appearance, using a system of measurement

11. A brief history of the standardization of the point, along with a proposal for a new point of .0125″, is given by Walter Tracy in "The Point," *Penrose Annual*, LV (1961), 63-70. Essential background information—about the point size and other aspects of the physical type—is conveniently summarized in David T. Pottinger's "A Fount of Type and Its Case in England and America 1500-1900," *Gutenberg Jahrbuch,* 1940, pp. 269-80.

less accurate certainly than that of the printer but yet at the upper limit of accuracy possible (without producing meaningless discriminations, indecision, and diminishing returns), given the nature of his position, his equipment, and his audience.

Two other considerations are worth mentioning. First, the appearance of modern types is often greatly altered, even within the same design, by manipulating the lengths of the ascenders and descenders in relation to the total face. The middle part of the face, exclusive of the ascenders and descenders, is generally referred to as the "x-height" (the height of an x and similar letters); thus a face with a proportionately large x-height (short ascenders and descenders) will appear larger than one with a small x-height even if both faces have the same over-all height.[12] Terms like "12-point appearing" have been used in describing this phenomenon but are rather clumsy, and it would be better simply to record both the "face" and "x" measurements. The bibliographer who is describing the appearance of a type face should certainly include both figures, for, if he lists only the face measurement, he is still giving his reader no idea of the proportions of the design. The x-height in millimeters (perhaps labeled "x" for clarity) can be inserted in parentheses following the figure for the total face—e.g., "face 4(2.33x) mm." This notation concisely reports the essentials of the size of a type face and is analogous to the standard notation in measuring the type page, with two related figures together, one in parentheses. A further convention suggests itself: since the bibliographer will normally record the other type faces in a book, besides the one used for the text (running title, chapter heading, and the like), the reader may assume that, whenever an x-height is not provided, the type is from a titling font (or at least is used in the book under discussion only in upper-case).

12. This phenomenon is discussed in all basic books on typography; it is also a chief factor in such articles as John C. Tarr's "A Critical Discursus on Type Legibility," *Penrose Annual*, XLIII (1941), 29-31, and "The Use of Space in Typography," *Typographica*, I (1949), 19-25; and Beatrice Warde's "Size of Print," *Penrose Annual*, XL (1938), 75-79. The related matter of the standardization of the size of the beard, in proportion to the body and the length of the extruders, is taken up in most technical manuals; a clear explanation of these "Point Common," "Point Title," and "Point Script" lines, by A. Monkman, can be found in *Practical Printing and Binding*, ed. Harry Whetton (London, reprinted 1948), p. 17.

Second is the question of whether to include ten- (or twenty-) line measurements for modern books. Bowers suggests that notation of the point size of the type (ascertained perhaps by reference to specimen books) may replace the measurement of twenty lines. If the point size could be directly established, and with certainty, it is true that a twenty-line measurement would serve no purpose. But if, because of the impossibility of certainty in most cases, the bibliographer decides consistently to follow the approach of describing *appearances* outlined here, he will find that a ten-line measurement is meaningful, even though the lines may be leaded. The measurement of any given number of lines, less than a full page, since it is made between identical positions in two lines, provides information which the total measurement of the type page (made between the tip of an ascender in the top line and the tip of a descender in the bottom) cannot easily reveal. For example, if ten lines measure 50 mm. and the face is 4 mm., one is informed at a glance either that there is leading of 1 mm. or that the 4 mm. face has been cast on a 5 mm. (or 15-point) body (or else some intermediate combination of leading and oversize body totaling 1 mm. per line); however, to know that the full type page of 23 lines measures vertically 114 mm. is not to be aware of this same information without troublesome calculation. The convenience gained outweighs the small amount of space which the notation requires.

Under this system, then, the full description of the size of the text face for H. G. Wells's *The Discovery of the Future* (New York: Huebsch, 1913) would go as follows:

23 *ll.* (p. 17), 128 (141) x 80 mm.; 10 *ll.* = 56 mm.; face 4 (2x) mm.

If millimeters were clearly established as the unit of measurement, this could be further condensed: "23 *ll.* (p. 17), 128 (141) x 80; 10 *ll.* = 56; face 4 (2x)." The nature of the technological developments in printing in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries makes some such approach imperative for dealing with books of those periods. Even for the eighteenth century, as Philip Gaskell's important work in this area has shown, a method based on type *face* rather than *body* may be useful; in a very helpful

chart[13] he has indicated, for eighteenth-century types, the face height of text and titling capitals (with a twenty-line measurement) in millimeters and the body size in points—emphasizing once again the need to keep firm the distinction between types (bodies, points) and their impressions (faces, millimeters). And this, after all, is the crux of the matter. The system outlined here would inevitably require modification in practice, but my concern is not so much with details of notation as with the concept lying behind those details. The descriptive bibliographer who records only *type sizes*, however valuable and accurate his information, may appear to be working backward, for observation must precede analysis, and the naming of a type size from the examination of a printed page is an act of inference rather than observation. Certainly the bibliographer should be encouraged to take this second step, but with each new technological development in the printing process it becomes more difficult to take with assurance. This is not a counsel of despair but a recognition of the essential nature of the descriptive process.

II

The description of the style or design of a type face is a different sort of problem from the specification of its size. Once a unit of measure and a method for employing it are established, anyone can perform the actual measurement; but to recognize the characteristics of forms and shapes—and to express those characteristics verbally—requires some aesthetic perception and a specialized vocabulary, as does any other commentary on art. It may be assumed that the bibliographer, with the minimum knowledge of typography described above, is able to make certain basic distinctions—between "old face," "transitional," and "modern," for example—and is acquainted with several important faces (perhaps Caslon, Garamond, Baskerville, Bodoni) and a number of historic specimens of various periods. Even so, in order to produce

13. "Type Sizes in the Eighteenth Century," *Studies in Bibliography*, v (1952-53), 147-51. Allan Stevenson, in his important introductory volume to Part II of the *Catalogue of Botanical Books in the Collection of Rachel McMasters Miller Hunt* (Pittsburgh, 1961), provides a chart of eighteenth-century type sizes (p. ccxxviii) and comments on the need for a handbook of types for bibliographers (p. clxxxi).

efficient descriptions, he must have at his disposal a standard nomenclature and framework of classification. Besides being *standard* (in the sense that it is widely used and understood), such a system should also be *graduated*—that is, it should provide a series of levels of increasing complexity and detail, so that the bibliographer could choose the level on which he would operate according to the requirements of each situation. In some cases it may not be possible—or even desirable—to furnish an elaborate description of a type design, while in others precise identification may be essential; the bibliographer should be able to vary his description, under differing circumstances and for the several periods of book production, and yet remain within one coherent master scheme.[14]

As far as basic vocabulary is concerned, it should not be too difficult to achieve general agreement that the British Standard for *Typeface Nomenclature* (BS 2961: 1958) be adopted. This Standard does not furnish a classification of faces but does give definitions of essential terms; it also serves an important negative function in excluding certain terms from the list of definitions, thus delimiting as well as establishing a standard vocabulary. Such words as "font," "series," and "family," as well as the names for parts of a type or face, are of course defined; but for descriptive purposes, the adjectives relating to *weight* (blackness) and *width* are especially important and may be grouped as follows:

WEIGHT		WIDTH	
Light	*Bold*	*Condensed*	*Expanded*
semi-light	semi-bold	semi-condensed	semi-expanded
light	bold	condensed	expanded
extra-light	extra-bold	extra-condensed	extra-expanded
	ultra-bold	ultra-condensed	ultra-expanded

Obviously such terms are relative to the standard (or "medium") weight and width of a given family as issued by the manufacturer

14. This kind of system, with several levels of increasing accuracy, is similar to the one worked out by Kenneth L. Kelly for specifying colors; see "A Universal Color Language," *Color Engineering,* III (Mar.-April 1965), 2-7. Cf. its application in G. T. Tanselle, "A System of Color Identification for Bibliographical Description," *Studies in Bibliography,* xx (1967), 203-34.

and do not imply any absolute notions as to what constitutes variation from the norm. Nevertheless, the scheme provides a set of terms logical in its arrangement and promotes uniformity of terminology by eliminating such words as "heavy" and "Clarendon."[15]

The next step is to arrive at a system of classification of the type designs themselves, a framework into which these standard adjectives can be fitted as required. Not surprisingly, this is an area fraught with disagreement, and many alternative plans have been proposed.[16] The trouble with the traditional terminology and with a number of these other schemes is that the classification is not logically arranged (with unlike items—such as "roman," "sans serif," and "egyptian"—given parallel status) nor consistantly based—neither on form, nor chronology, nor use. "Old face" is a historically oriented term, while "sans serif" refers to formal characteristics; the "didones" of Maximilien Vox's system involves an allusion to the names of two designers of type, while his "lineales" is derived from the form of the face. Of the systems so far devised, the one by which descriptive bibliographers would be best served is probably the German standard, DIN 16 518, as outlined by James Mosley. Although it, like its predecessors, is not entirely consistent in the basis for its terminology, it

15. Geoffrey Dowding had earlier presented a similar proposal for standardizing the adjectives relating to weight and width, in his "Type Faces: A Plea for Rational Terminology," *Typographica,* IV (1951), 9-13. On general terminology, see Joseph Thorp, "Towards a Nomenclature for Letter Forms" and "Experimental Application of a Nomenclature for Letter Forms," in *Monotype Recorder,* no. 240 (April-May 1931) and no. 246 (July-Aug. 1932).

16. An extremely useful survey of these plans is James Mosley's "New Approaches to the Classification of Typefaces," *British Printer,* LXXIII (Mar. 1960), 90-96. The two most widely noticed recent systems are Maximilien Vox's *Pour une nouvelle classification des caractères* (Paris, 1954) and the Deutsche Industrie Normen-Ausschuss *Klassification der Druckschriften* (DIN 16 518; Berlin, 1959). Sir Cyril Burt, W. F. Cooper, and J. L. Martin, in "A Psychological Study of Typography," *British Journal of Statistical Psychology,* VIII (May 1955), 29-57, include a section entitled "Aesthetic Preferences and the Classification of Type Faces" (pp. 38-44), which furnishes "an independent classification of type faces similar to what may be called the historical classification, but differing suggestively in minor details." Alfred Bastien's *Encyclopaedia Typographica,* Vol. I (West Drayton, 1953), classifies type faces into twelve groups (pp. 328-29; cf. pp. 48-49, 129).

points the direction in which a satisfactory system for descriptive bibliography must be developed. The three large divisions of the DIN-Mosley classification are "Roman," "Fraktur," and "Exotics" (or, in the terms of the British Standard, "non-latin"); subdivisions are assigned decimal places for reference (allowing other such categories to be inserted later). The "Roman" section is of principal concern here:[17]

1. *Roman (or Italic)*[18]

1.1 Renaissance	1.3 Neo-Classic	1.6 Block Roman
1.11 Early	1.31 Early	1.61 Early
1.12 Late	1.32 Late	1.62 Late
1.13 Modern	1.33 Newspaper	1.63 Modern
	1.34 Modern	1.64 Typewriter
1.2 Baroque	1.4 Free Roman	1.7 Script
1.21 Dutch	1.41 "Jugendstil"	1.71 Broad-pen
1.22 English	1.42 Serifless	1.72 Flexible, pointed pen
1.23 French	1.43 Individual form	1.73 Strokes of equal thickness
1.24 Modern	1.5 Linear	1.74 Brush script
	1.51 Early	
	1.52 Modern	

In this terminology, "Renaissance" of course is the equivalent of "old face," "Baroque" of "transitional," "Neo-Classic" of "modern," "Linear" of "sans serif," and "Block" of "egyptian." The system is essentially historical in approach, though the divisional heads 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, and 1.7 (and a few of the subdivisions as well) are based on form; the inclusion of script and linear forms under "Roman" (that is, "Latin") is logically correct, and the decimal numbering allows the names of individual type faces to be assigned numbers under the proper subheadings.

17. The form of this outline is derived from James Mosley's presentation in the *British Printer* article mentioned above.
18. This section should perhaps be headed "Latin," to use the terminology of the British Standard. Because "italic" is now generally taken to mean the slanting form which is a subsidiary accompaniment to a given font, each of the terms under section 1 may be either "roman" or "italic," and all are "Latin." (An *r* or *i* could be attached to the reference numbers to indicate this distinction.)

Assuming for the moment that the DIN-Mosley system is the most workable and logical one available, it is possible to set up a six-level plan for describing the forms of type faces:

Level 1: The lowest level of discrimination distinguishes only among the largest sections of the scale—between "Roman," "Italic," and "Fraktur," for example. Bibliographical description in most cases will be expected to operate on a higher level.

Level 2: Here the principal divisions are recognized. A Latin face will be classified as "Renaissance," "Baroque," "Neo-Classic," or one of the other divisional terms. These three labels, in particular, have more meaning than the traditional "old face," "transitional," and "modern"; and it is important to reserve the word "modern" for twentieth-century designs based on earlier models (as 1.13, "Modern Renaissance Roman" or "Modern Renaissance Italic"—not a "modern" face, in the old sense, at all). The bibliographer may be expected as a matter of course to understand the distinction between "Renaissance" and "Neo-Classic" faces ("old face" vs. "modern"),[19] and this is the minimum level which should be employed in a bibliographical description.

Level 3: The next level moves to the second decimal place on the DIN scale and discriminates among varieties of Renaissance, Baroque, and Neo-Classic faces. It should be emphasized that these distinctions do not involve reference to specimens for the names of individual designs but simply general recognition of the main traditions. Knowledge that the oblique cross bar of the *e* is a characteristic of Early Renaissance (or "Venetian"), for example, is the kind of information required on this level. Again, most bibliographers, having read Johnson, Morison, and Updike, will remember such features; but the point is that, even if they

19. Any basic book, like A. F. Johnson's *Type Designs,* explains this distinction. A classic essay on the subject is Beatrice Warde's "Type Faces, Old and New," *Library,* 4th series, xvi (1935-36), 121-43; see also her "What Does 'Modern' Mean in Typography?", *Penrose Annual,* xxxviii (1936), 44-47. A helpful introductory discussion is Paul A. Bennett's "On Type Faces for Books," in *Books and Printing* (Cleveland, 1951), pp. 402-07. A. F. Johnson gives authoritative historical accounts of these matters in many articles—e.g., "The Evolution of the Modern-Face Roman," *Library,* 4th series, xi (1930-31), 353-77.

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occasionally do not, they can simply consult the standard general histories to pick up the details needed for this level.

Level 4: In contrast to the first three levels, the upper three do involve reference to specimen books, illustrated historical surveys, or encyclopedias of designs. On the fourth level, one gives the specific family name of the type design. A face falling in the category "Late Renaissance" (1.12), for instance, would then be further classified as Caslon, Garamond, Granjon, Janson, or one of the others of this general style. A modern version can be labeled "Caslon-derived," "Garamond-derived," and so on—in other words, the essential task here is identifying the family characteristics, not the particular design or re-cutting. Most bibliographers will be able to recognize automatically a few such families, but they will doubtless need to turn to reference works from time to time. For this purpose founders' or printers' specimen books are not required, although a good one would serve the function. What will usually be consulted, however, if this is the highest level of identification required, is one of the anthologies of type faces intended for a general audience or any other work which contains a wide and representative sampling of type designs. A natural choice would be W. Turner Berry, A. F. Johnson, and W. P. Jaspert's *The Encyclopaedia of Type Faces* (3rd ed., 1962), with its 1,500 faces; but one could use Alfred Bastien's *Encyclopaedia Typographica* (1953, 1961), or the display of faces in Chapter 6 of Kenneth Day's *The Typography of Press Advertisement* (1956), or at the back of the University of Chicago Press *Manual of Style* (11th ed., 1949), or (though more limited in scope and usefulness) such books as R. S. Hutchings' *The Western Heritage of Type Design* (1963).[20] An inexpensive ($1.25) paper-covered book which bibliographers may find convenient for these identifica-

20. Other possible books are *Alphabet Thesaurus* (New York, 1960); Alfred Bastien and G. J. Freshwater's *Printing Types of the World* (London, 1931); William Longyear's *A Dictionary of Modern Type Faces and Lettering* (Pelham, 1935). More detailed information on individual families of type faces is sometimes available in series of articles in printing journals—such as "Learning to Identify Text Types," *British Printer,* Sept. 1954-Dec. 1955; or the "Let's Take a Look At ————" series, *British Printer,* Mar. 1956-Aug. 1958; or A. F. Johnson's "A Guide to Present-Day Types," *Paper and Print,* Mar. 1932-Spring 1934.

tions is *Specimens of Type Faces in the United States Government Printing Office;* and R. Randolph Karch's *How to Recognize Type Faces* (2nd ed., 1959), though it does not furnish specimens of complete fonts, employs an ingenious scheme for quickly identifying about 1,700 faces in terms of the family characteristics required on this level.

Level 5: Once the design family has been determined, it is possible to apply the standard adjectives (listed above) indicating weight and width. Since they are relative terms, they cannot meaningfully be applied at any earlier level, for one must have some idea of what is "normal" or "medium" in a particular family before one can label a specific face as "bold" or "expanded." In order to speak of Caslon bold condensed, or Caslon bold extra-condensed, for example, one must know what regular Caslon looks like. To be sure, these proportions may vary with the founder; but given the nature of the terms, the goal on this level is only to make an intelligent estimate (in standard language) of the weight and width of a face, based on some knowledge of what is normal for the family, so as to give an added dimension of detail to the description. The same kind of reference works employed in the preceding level are helpful here, too, but those which give more extended showings of various condensed, expanded, light, and bold series within a family are obviously most useful in gaining an idea of the practical meaning of the terms. A book like the *Graphic Arts Type Book* (first 2 vols., 1965, for machine serifed and linear faces), though it contains a limited number of families, displays those it does include in great detail; and specimen books, even when not used for precise identification, are of great value in illustrating these distinctions. With experience, the eye can be trained to make extremely accurate judgments, which the resulting use of the terms for weight and width will reflect.

Level 6: When the bibliographer has reached the point where he is able to distinguish weights and widths with some confidence, he is ready to locate the exact *series* in the proper specimen book. A *series*, according to the British Standard, is a type face "exemplified by one or more sizes, which can be identified by name and/or number as emanating from a specific manufacturer." To

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trace the type face used in a given volume back to its manufac-
turer and to record it by citing a name and number from the
manufacturer's specimen book of a particular year—these two
activities constitute the highest level of accuracy and detail which
the bibliographer will generally attain in the description of type.
(For earlier books, the comparable activity may often be the
location of the specific face in one of the standard scholarly his-
tories—such as Gordon Duff's for incunabula, Frank Isaac's for
the sixteenth century, or Horace Hart's for the Fell types.) But
the process is cumulative and the recording of a precise reference
to a specimen book does not make unnecessary the classification
(at least the DIN figure) obtainable on a lesser level, for unfa-
miliar names of faces do not convey any immediate descriptive
meaning without an indication of their place in a larger frame-
work. Identifications on this level, therefore, should read "Ken-
nerley Old Style, Lanston Monotype 268 (DIN 1.13)" or
"Stephenson Blake Grotesque No. 9 (DIN 1.52)" or "Walbaum,
Monotype 374 (DIN 1.34)"—if indeed the classification is not
given in words. The use of specimen books (and particularly
locating the proper one) may be a troublesome process: the early
ones are very scarce and the later ones are often not conveniently
accessible. Specimens fall broadly into two types—those issued by
founders (for the use of their customers, the printers) and those
issued by printing firms (for convenience of their customers, the
publishers and others requiring printed work).[21] While printers'
specimens can be useful (as can any large collection of type faces)

21. On specimens, see Geoffrey Dowding, "Printers' and Founders' Type Speci-
mens," *Typographica,* vi (1952), 6-16 (which suggests a standardized plan);
D. B. Updike, "The Planning of Printing," *Fleuron,* ii (1924), 13-27 (with a section
on the arrangement of specimen books); A. F. Johnson, "English Type Specimen
Books," *Penrose Annual,* xxxv (1933), 19-22, and "Notes on Some XVIIth
Century English Types and Type Specimens," *Typography,* vi (Summer 1938),
17-22; Ruari McLean, "Printers' Type-Specimen Books in England, 1920-40,"
Signature, n.s. v (1948), 33-49 (surveys 25 specimens); "Typefounders' Specimens
Today," *British Printer,* lxxii (April 1959), 77-79; "Typefounders' Specimen
Books," *British Printer,* lxxii (Dec. 1959), 90-94. A. F. Johnson includes a chapter
on "Type Specimens" in *Type Designs* (2nd ed.; London, 1959), pp. 159-65;
Graham Pollard's *Catalogue of Typefounders' Specimens* (Birrell & Garnett
catalogue, London, 1928) is indispensable.

One further refinement is to identify the *individual* font—the *particular* collection of physical types owned by a given printer. John Cook Wyllie, for example, in his Rosenbach lectures of 1960, referred to a system he has devised for "fingerprinting" type by examining minute peculiarities of individual pieces of type, resulting from the casting process.[27] This kind of analysis is obviously of great value in assigning books to particular printers. But since it concentrates on unintentional peculiarities (not part of the letter design), identifiable through comparative reference to other books printed from the same and related types, it is not logically a seventh level in the sequence here outlined; rather it is an analytic technique which may be applied at any level, for it is essentially not dependent on knowledge of the classification or origin of the type design.

There is every reason to expect that standardized methods for measuring and classifying type faces will eventually be agreed upon. The present two suggestions, however, are not intended as prophecies of the millennium; if they have any merit at all, it does not lie in their details but only in their general pragmatic drift: an appearance system of measurement and a multiple-level plan for classification. A favorite analogy of the incunabulists at the turn of the century was that their method of observing and describing type faces was like the Linnaean system of biological classification; and one writer, looking back on less rigorous days, could refer to the "happy-go-lucky bibliographers of the old school."[28] It would perhaps be salutary to revive the scientific parallel today.

27. See the summary of his lectures in Jesse C. Mills, "Detective in the Book World," *Graphic Arts Review,* xxiii (May 1960), 7-8, 46-48.
28. Wilfred Voynich, "On the Study of Early Printed Books," *Library,* 2nd series, iv (1903), 189-99.

POSTSCRIPT

This essay is reprinted here exactly as it appeared in the Second Quarter 1966 number of the *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, with the exception of a few phrases which have been slightly altered. Since its original publication, several important typographic studies have become available, and some of these are discussed in "Typographic Research and Bibliography" in the April 1967 number of this *Journal*. One other recent work which should be familiar to all bibliographers is Stanley Morison and Harry Carter's *John Fell: The University Press and the 'Fell' Types* (Oxford, 1967).

One statement in the second paragraph perhaps requires further comment: "That a particular book should be described at all is enough to justify a description of its type." In the context, this sentence was meant to suggest only that a paragraph on typography in a bibliographical description requires no defense, since type-impressions constitute one of the principal physical elements of any book. It was not intended as a denial of the much-discussed "degressive principle"—indeed, the idea of various levels of complexity, set forth later in the essay, springs from the assumption that different degrees of detail are appropriate under different circumstances. Conceivably certain bibliographies, or certain classes of entry within those bibliographies, could be set up with abbreviated descriptions in which any discussion of type would appear excessive —for the proportions of the entire description must always be kept in mind (a point I tried to elaborate upon in the *Times Literary Supplement*, September 22, 1966, p. 884). Nevertheless, the typography of a book is so important a part of its total makeup that any bibliographical description which seeks to present a well-rounded view of the book as a physical object cannot avoid some comment on its typography; whether this comment is on the most elementary, or the most detailed, level is a matter to be settled in terms of the general proportions of the complete description.

G.T.T.

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Octavius A. Dearing and the "California Case"

"The next notable improvement offered the trade and rejected was the California case of 1867." This statement from an article by Chas. H. Cochrane, "The Lay of the Case" *(Printer and Bookmaker,* December 1899), is interesting in two respects. It gives the year 1867 as the date of the introduction of the California typecase and gratuitously says it has been rejected. The century of acceptance by the trade—almost seventy years since the foregoing statement was made— can hardly be considered rejection.

Since there apparently is no published material on the history of the California typecase, it seemed appropriate to make this brief study in the centennial year of its origin. The earliest published reference to the California case found is in *Type and Graver,* a four-page publication issued by Ellis Read's Printers' Furnishings Warehouse and Scotch Type Agency, San Francisco. It reads, in part: "This department is under the management of Mr. O. A. Dearing, whose long experience as a job printer, and as foreman of one of the largest job offices in the State, renders him particularly competent to advise and assist printers in the selection of their outfits and the arrangement of their offices . . . ." And among the printers' materials offered is "the Dearing Case—the only really practical two-thirds case ever made . . . invented by our Mr. Dearing, and manufactured by Simons & Co. The decidedly antiquated and fossil method of arrangement still pursued by manufacturers on this coast has been avoided. Over three-quarters of the case is devoted to the letters, while the general appearance of the case is unchanged from the usual style of upper-case—the fourteen useless boxes having been dis- carded and the remaining boxes enlarged. It is, in fact, the only two-thirds case made that will hold an ordinary font of job letters larger than pica, without overrunning the boxes. We have sold several hundreds of this style case, and the demand is still increasing. Price, $1.25 each."