

LESSON NINE

Letter-Spacing

Type as it comes from the foundry has what is called a certain "set" — that is, the width of the body on which the letters are cast depends on the width of the letters themselves. Generally this set is as narrow as can be used on any given letter without having it overhang, or look awkward. This comparatively narrow set gives the printer an opportunity to vary the appearance of his work considerably by letter-spacing — using spaces of greater or lesser width between the letters themselves. It also enables him to make the necessary wording fit the available space better.

The main thing to avoid in letter-spacing is using it to such an extent that it reduces the readability of the text. Wide letter-spacing is undesirable for this reason.

The use of spaces between letters requires insertion of wider spaces between words in the same copy, to preserve the correct proportions. Spaces should also be omitted between letters like T and A where the shape of the characters normally provides enough without more.

WAR WAR
(unspaced) (spaced)

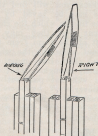
At the other end of the scale, we find some typographers notching or mortising letters like T and A, so that they can fit them closer. Such time-consuming work is, of course, out of the question for the average commercial job.

Letter-spacing can be of help, and will often make a style or size of type fit handily which would otherwise require the use of a less close fitting variety, or the purchase of new type.

This line is letter spaced.

Making the Changes In the Type Form

To get at a letter which must be changed, raise the whole line by lifting first one end and then the other. If only one character needs to be changed, you can hold onto it while you shove the rest of the line back. The most important point in that case is to keep the line the same length as it was before. When you replace a



Showing how to grab type with tweezers. Too close to face of type is likely to damage it if tweezers slip and snap off.

character with another of exactly the same width, nothing need be done about spacing, but if it is not exact, the line must be re-spaced. The safest way is to take the line out and put it in the composing stick, then it can be handled easily. If more than one correction is to be made, putting the line in the stick is advisable anyway, due to the likelihood of uneven spacing otherwise. The only exception is on a job with figure changes. Most styles of type have all figures set on the same width of body, so that they can be easily altered.

If words have to be added, so that the line overruns into the next one, you will, of course, need to justify this and any changed

lines in the composing stick. If a word or words are to be removed, you'll want to respace properly, and that may mean bringing back one or more words from the following line if spacing out in the same line will cause overspacing.

How to Make Quick Figure Changes in a Form

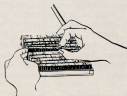
If you are running a job which requires the frequent change of a figure, letter or any character, such as on tickets, you will find that much time may be saved by so spacing the line in which the characters occur that they may be pushed out of the form from the back without unlocking the whole chase-form. The line must be spaced tightly enough so that the characters will not pull out too easily, however.

The character to be replaced must of course be exactly the same width as the replacement.

How to Make Corrections Safely

Tweezers are handy around the print shop, but they can cause damage to the face of your type if they slip. The picture shows how you can raise a line of type enough to get a character you want to change without using tweezers.

Press the line with several fingers of your left hand, and lift it



enough so that you can get hold of and pull out the letter to be changed. After you have a firm

hold of it, release the pressure and let the rest of the line drop back. When inserting the new character, be sure that it goes in the right place.

If you still feel that you want to use tweezers, you can raise the line in the same way and take firm hold of the character to be displaced on its body, not near the top where a slip might cause damage.

Making A Revised Proof

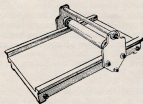
After the corrections have been made, another proof, called a revise, is pulled, and this proof, after checking, can go to the customer. If the customer is not to see the proof, it should be gone over very carefully, because this will be the last time to catch errors. The next step, after all corrections are made and checked, is to lock the form in the chase.

Proof Taking and Proof Presses

Before taking a proof, or locking up a form for the press, run your hand over the face of the type to make sure nothing is sticking up. If there is, and it won't push down, investigate. There may be a piece of metal, wood or hard ink under the characters, so that using a planer may damage the type face. If undue force is needed to plane down a form, there is probably something wrong which should be corrected before going any further. A quoin key or something similar will provide all the tapping power necessary on the planer on most job press forms. When the mallet is used, the butt end of the handle rather than the head should be applied (see illustration).

We have already seen that a proof can be taken with little more than a hand or press roller, a

block of wood and a mallet. This very simple operation can be improved upon and elaborated by using one of the various proof presses on the market. These vary all the way from the simple kind illustrated, up to machines with grippers and automatic inking which are practically short run printing presses. These more complicated machines will have detailed instructions furnished with them by the manufacturers.

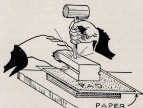


A Proof Press

Without doubt a proof which is taken on comparatively hard rather than soft paper, with less embossing on the back side, will, if done nicely, give a better idea of the form, and show up any actual imperfections in the type more clearly, than one taken hastily on dampened news stock. The kind of proof taken must, therefore, be governed by actual needs. On most job printing the simple kind will be entirely adequate.

When using a hand roller on a form for making a proof, be sure that the ink is just as evenly distributed over the roller as you would if you were taking a proof on the press with the regular rollers, and that you run the roller over the form evenly and without too much pressure. Don't take the actual printed impression until you are sure that all lines of type are standing up squarely, and none of the characters are off their feet. The face of any character

not on its feet can be worn or damaged by the pressure used in taking the proof. Our illustration shows the simplest method of taking a proof. In addition to the ordinary wooden planer, there is the proof planer, which had a felt-covered surface, and eliminates the necessity for laying a felt pad on the form.



Making a hand proof

Wherever possible, slide rather than lift type when making corrections, or when handling for any other reason. Even the best and most skilled of printers occasionally has something drop out when he picks up a form or part of one.

Securing A Form In the Galley For Proving

The form may be tied up as described previously for proving, or it may be done in the following manner:

The form being in one corner of the galley, and the galley braced at an angle so as to prevent pi, put a piece of metal or wood furniture the exact width of the form at the bottom, against it. Use long furniture on the other side — longer than the form itself — and fill the galley with it. Use leads, slugs or reglets to make a snug fit, but not one which will bend or spread the galley. The galley may then be put on a flat surface, to make a proof, or for any other purpose.

Grammar in Printing

It is not our purpose to go into those details of grammar which may be obtained out of text books. There are some other points, however, which printers need to watch. Every printing plant of any size has what in any other line of business would be called its policy, but which in graphic arts is known as "office style" to cover methods of composition and points of spelling and grammar. Thus, while it may be permissible grammatically to spell a given word two different ways, the office style of the shop dictates which way shall always be used there unless the customer wants it otherwise. The small man probably isn't worried much about such things, since he either sets his own composition or is available to keep watch on those who help him.

Beyond this, there are some regularly accepted ways in layout and composition which you will want to pay attention to. Where it is necessary to divide words, for instance, the dictionary should be consulted, and divisions made only between syllables. When you divide words, you can avoid wide spacing, by reducing the size of the spaces between words to accommodate the last words on the line, or as many syllables of it as possible.

Two or more lines following each other with hyphens on the ends are not good practice. Syllables consisting of one letter at the beginning or end of a word should not be split off for dividing purposes. It is not desirable to divide short (four letter) words even though they have two syllables, nor to carry over a last two-letter syllable of any word onto the next line.

Most of these rules make sense when you stop to think of the improved appearance they give.

Unfortunately, you will see violations of them every day, because in the rush to get out newspapers, magazines and printed matter generally, they are overlooked.

Widow lines, that is, the placing of the short end of a paragraph at the top of a page, are in the same category. It is not good practice, and should be avoided. While a little out of place here, a word on quotation marks will do no harm. A few faces of type have special characters which cover quotations, but the majority do not, and it is customary to use two inverted commas at the beginning and a pair of apostrophes at the end. The fact that some faces have the special characters, and some do not, seems to be confusing.

The University of Chicago Press has a "Manual of Style" for sale, which is of particular interest and value to printers.

A good book on English grammar is a handy thing to have around the shop. It will settle many questions in short order. There are also books on English usage which cover much the same fields.

Correct Spelling

Of Firm Names

If you are doing a job for a firm, and printers are not guiltless of such mistakes, be very careful that you get the "firm style" correct, that is, the exact wording, including punctuation, of the firm name as it is used by the firm itself. One of the most common errors in newspapers is the use of "Co." when it is a "Corp.," the omission or addition of an "&," "The," or some similar careless handling of names which they are using, and while some people don't care how they are labelled, most firms of any size do, and many small fellows are

even more touchy. The addition or omission of a comma sometimes causes trouble. If the name has the letters "Inc." after it, ascertain whether a comma goes between the "Inc." and the rest of the name. If you are handed a piece of printed matter by the customer, verify the correctness of the firm style with him, because the previous printer may have made a mistake. Many concerns are incorporated, but don't use the word in their name, ordinarily. Some states have strict rules about people calling themselves a "Company," requiring the words "Not Incorporated" to be used after the "Company" unless the concern is actually incorporated.

A reputation for getting small things right will help you to get business.

The Use of the Word "Mr."

A student writes:

"Today I was in hot water, so as to speak. A customer said I had ruined his cards by putting "Mr." before his name. I have been in the habit of using "Mr." on short names or small type to balance the line. My customer tells me that this is positively wrong, improper, not used and several other expressions not fit to repeat. I told him I could see no reason for not using it."

The use or non-use is partly a matter of preference, and partly a matter of formality or informality, mostly the latter. A gentleman's formal visiting card carries "Mr.," and whether it should be used on a greeting card depends on how formal the sender wishes the card to be. Business cards almost never carry "Mr.," and the use of it in signing a letter shows either ignorance or juvenility.

In the printing of greeting cards it might be just as well to ascertain the wishes of the customer be-

forehand, so as to prevent trouble after the job is done. You will probably find a greater portion of those preferring it are getting cards for man and wife — "Mr. and Mrs." In that case the prefix doesn't look quite so stiff as when used for a single man.

Proper Position of Quotes

This is a question which seems to bother a great many people. Putting the period, comma or any other kind of point after the quotation marks makes an awkward looking spot, and while it may be grammatically correct, it is not good practice from a typographical standpoint. If you are doing work for a person whom you know to be fussy, you can find out which he likes. Otherwise, better hide your commas, periods, etc., inside the quote.

There are cases where, if strict grammatical rules were to be followed, commas or other points would follow quotation marks. This would make a very awkward typographic appearance, as you will see if you take a proof of work set up that way. Therefore, put your commas, periods, and other points inside the quotation marks unless the customer insists otherwise.

Pronunciation of Printing Terms

Printing terms are often mis-pronounced. Printers are divided, even on the word "Envelope"—those who pronounce it as it is spelled, those who pronounce it "envelope," and those who use either one or the other, thinking that both are correct.

EN-velope is right, and there is only one dictionary in this country which recognizes ON-velope even as second choice. While we are quite independent ourselves,

and don't always go for dictionary pronunciations when we don't feel like it, we usually trail along if a word is pronounced correctly as it is spelled. This is one of those cases.

When dealing with customers it is well to be tactful, using whichever style they employ—if you find out first. That's a good rule in many other cases, but hard to follow if your habits are fixed.

Another much mis-pronounced word in the printing industry is *ITALIC*. Most printers bring it out as Eye-talic, but that is just as wrong as Eye-talian. (We once heard the president of a large radio concern pull that one over a nationwide hook-up). The *IT* is correctly sounded just as in the word "it", although of course the syllable breaks before the T.

Once in a while we hear the word *Platen* pronounced with a long "a" as in plate, but usually it is not done among the printing fraternity. In this case logic is with the wrong way. By rights it should be spelled platten, and then there would be no misunderstanding. However, typewriters have platens, too, and the ramifications of the various other industries which use it, plus the natural reluctance of anybody to change, would make the move extremely difficult.

Nonpareil, the old and still much used term for six points, is pronounced, correctly, by most printers, nonpaRELL, but it has several other meanings, which bring it into common speech, and many people who are not printers mispronounce it nonpaREEL. Another case where logic is with the wrong way, as we find so often in English.

Here is another on which printers themselves often go astray, particularly the older ones. Reglet is reglet, and there is no other proper spelling for it. We often hear "riglet", or "riglits". Sel-

dom does it get into print that way. We can find no authority for such a spelling beyond the very doubtful one of putting in type a common mispronunciation.

The word "font" is spelled "fount" in England, and once in a great while seen that way in this country. The dictionaries list it, so there is nothing incorrect about that spelling, or accompanying pronunciation. Here again we find it more common among the older than the younger generation. Incidentally the derivation of this word is usually attributed to the close ties between the early printers and the church, but much more probable is the theory that it comes from the word "found" (to cast) and is therefore related to the word "foundry".

"Asterisk" is often rendered in speech as "asterix", and this bodily change of the word is not confined to printers. Probably it is usually due to carelessness of speech, rather than to any misunderstanding about spelling. Like all such twists, however, it creeps into letters we receive, and presumably has some currency otherwise. No can do.

Once in a while we run across someone who says pica as if it were spelled peeka or picka, instead of good old pie-ka (correct) but only the unpredictable English language can be blamed for such uncertainties.

A vignettted halftone (one with fadeaway edges) sometimes gives people trouble, but the word, being from the French, is pronounced "vinyettted". As you can see, English sometimes borrows a rough approximation of the foreign pronunciation as well as the spelling—but not always!

We believe this covers all the important questionmarks in the printer's vocabulary, if we exclude tympan, which is elided or slurred into "tempin" by 99 out of a hundred printers, with the result that

if anybody uses the dictionary way, "tim-pan" he is likely to be considered either green or prissy. However, we're not going to try to reform either the spelling or the pronunciation of that one, either.

If readers find any other words used in printing that puzzle them, we shall be glad to help. Pronunciation, not definitions, because the Printer's Dictionary takes care of that.

Lesson Nine—Questions

1. Describe the various ways of taking a proof.
2. What is letter-spacing and when would you use it?
3. What must be looked for aside from ordinary typographical errors, such as wrong font letters, misplaced letters, etc.?
4. Describe how you would secure a form in a galley for proofing.
5. Describe the actual making of corrections in the type — how it is best done.

The Printer's DICTIONARY

Commercial A—This (@) character, which is used in price lists and similar work to mean "at" or "to".

Complementary Colors — Those colors which, together, contain all the elements of light—for instance, red is complementary to green, blue is complementary to orange, etc.

Composing—In printing offices does not mean creating music or poetry, but the setting of type. A compositor is a typesetter. This latter word is a little more exclusively a printing term.

Composing Rule — A piece of steel or brass rule, type high, with ends or ears that project out wider than its body, used to make setting of type easier in a composing stick. When a composing rule is used between the last finished line and the one on which you are working, it prevents the new line from stick-

ing on any of the pieces of type in the other line, and therefore makes spacing out the line, or justifying, as it is called, more accurate and easy. Composing rules may be home made from ordinary brass or steel rule.

Composing Stick—A holder for type, held in the hand while lines are being set up in it. Type set up



Composing Stick

in the composing stick is afterward transferred either direct to the chase, or into a galley when you are making up a job.

Composition—Actually, the setting of type, although sometimes stretched to cover everything pertaining to getting the form or job ready for the press. See also *Imposition* and *Make-up*.

Compound Word—Two words connected by a hyphen. Of late years there has been a growing tendency to get along without the hyphen, although not necessarily with the approval of grammarians.

CONDENSED TYPE slender Letters

Condensed Type—Narrow faced type like the specimen above.

Copper Spaces—Same as brass spaces, but one-half point thick. See *Brass Spaces*.

Copy—Any matter which is to be set up, in whatever form, is called copy. Like hay, water and other similar words, it is, when used in this sense, never prefixed with the article "a". Other meanings of the word are, we feel sure, well enough known to require no explanation.

Copyright—Exclusive right to publish or print original matter obtained from the Register of Copyrights, Library of Congress, in Washington, D. C. If you want to prevent anyone else from using your original printed matter, full information about copyrighting a book, paper, or any other printing may be obtained with the proper application blanks from the Register of Copyrights.

Corner Quads—Pieces of metal made in the form of a right angle, used to hold the corners of rule together in forms which are surrounded by rule.



Corner Quads

Corners, Fancy — Ornamental pieces of type used on the corners of cards and all printed matter. Pieces of border may often be used as fancy corners.



Fancy Corners

Corrections—Any changes made on the printed proof for alteration in the form, whether mistakes or otherwise.

Counter—A device for keeping track of the number of impressions made on the press. Counters should not be confused with numbering machines, which actually print



Counter

numbers in rotation on the job as it is being put through the press.

Cover Paper — Various grades and kinds of paper suitable for use as covers of books, circulars, catalogs, pamphlets, etc. Many kinds of cover papers are used for other work as well, so that the term is used to indicate stock of certain characteristics, rather than for cover use exclusively.

Creasing—The use of creasing rule to mark cardboard or heavy paper so that it may be folded along the line without cracking, wrinkling or breaking.

Creasing Rule — Rule used for scoring or creasing. See above.

Credit Line—When an extract or article is reprinted, the name of the publication from which it is taken, or the name of its author, when put at top or bottom, is called the credit line.

Crowded—Type set close.

Cut—Any kind of an engraving or block used for illustrating or decorating. An electro of a type form, while it is a plate, is not



Illustration of a Cut

strictly speaking, a cut. See definition of electro.

Cut-Outs — Irregularly shaped pieces of printed matter, usually cut out with steel dies, altho sometimes made with steel cutting rule.

Cutter—Applied both to the machine which cuts, and to the person who does the cutting. See Paper Cutter, Rule and Lead Cutter, etc.

Cylinder Press—A press having a cylinder which carries the paper or card stock over the flat bed of the machine, in which is fastened the chase. This same term may be applied to presses which print from curved plates mounted on cylinders, such as newspapers, but is usually confined to flat bed presses described above.

“D”

Dagger—One of the reference marks (†) furnished in fonts of auxiliary characters.

Dandy Roll—In paper making the cylinder under which the wet paper pulp travels, and on which, when bond paper is being made, the trade name or watermark is carried and impressed in the paper.

(To be continued)