

# Book Reviews

***Typefounding in America, 1787-1825.*** By Rollo G. Silver. Charlottesville: Univ. Pr. of Virginia for the Bibliographical Society of the University of Virginia, 1965. xiii, 139p. \$7.50. (65-19396).

In the five essays which make up this monograph Professor Silver has traced the early development and emergence of American typefounding. Although by 1769 there were sporadic attempts at typefounding, it was not until the Revolution had ended that any real interest in a domestic industry appeared. When that time arrived the persons best qualified to direct the fledgling industry were European emigrants. Thus, Professor Silver has chosen 1787—the year that a Scottish typefounder was first known to be active in this country—to begin his chronological coverage. By 1825, the year with which this study closes, American typefounding was firmly established.

The first chapter, "Typefounding as a Permanent Industry," focuses on the achievements of two other Scotsmen, Archibald Binny and James Ronaldson, who produced the first professional and cheap American type. Among the persons discussed in the chapter on "Some Minor Typefounders and Punchcutters" are the peripatetic Benjamin Franklin and his grandson, Benjamin Franklin Bache, who was trained by French typefounders. Unfortunately, neither established a permanent firm. Other minor typefounders were Francis Bailey of Philadelphia and Samuel Sower, whose Baltimore foundry turned out a large quantity of type from 1804 to 1820, including the popular "diamond." The third chapter, "Growth and Expansion," presents the achievements of such men as E. W. White, George and David Bruce, and William Hager. Hager enjoyed an international reputation in the industry as the owner of the Bruce Type Casting Machine. The final essays, "Inventions and Patents" and "The Importation of Type," are closely related, for the developments outlined in the former chapter were to have an influence upon the importation of type. Type continued to be imported throughout the entire period

covered by this work because of the persistent preference of American printers for European type, particularly that of Caslon, Fry, and Wilson. As a means of partial redress American typefounders turned to tariffs, and a sympathetic government laid duties on imported type. By 1825, American typefounding was sufficiently developed and protected to begin a period of rapid growth, but that, as Professor Silver notes, is another story.

The book is handsomely printed and designed. The thirty-six plates include a good selection of specimen sheets; students of the history of American printing will find this feature particularly useful. The index is comprehensive.

We are often confronted with evidence of the contributions of these early typefounders. For example, much of the type used in the text of this work is Monticello, the linotype adaptation of Binny's elegant roman. One need look no further for another example than a recent issue of *Publishers' Weekly* (September 5, 1966, page 72). The Mergenthaler advertisement on that page notes, among other facts about the Monticello, that it has been used as the text face in eight of the fifty Books of the Year of the past five years. Other individual examples abound. It is to Professor Silver's credit that for the first time there is now available a comprehensive study of the contributions of early typefounders in America.—Robert D. Harlan, *University of California, Berkeley*.

***Harper's University: the Beginnings; a History of the University of Chicago.***

By Richard J. Storr. Chicago: The Univ. of Chicago Pr., 1966. xvi, 411p., illus. \$8.95. (66-13890).

How anyone could write a dull history of Harper's University is difficult to understand, but Professor Richard J. Storr has done just that. As if in apology for some criticisms which surely will be leveled by his disappointed readers, the author notes "the circumstances of its founding, the names of the persons associated with it,