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I admit that among those of your tasks which require physical effort that of the scribe, if he writes correctly, appeals most to me; and it appeals, perhaps not without reason, for by reading the Divine Scriptures he wholesomely instructs his own mind and by copying the precepts of the Lord he spreads them far and wide. Happy his design, praiseworthy his zeal, to preach to men with the hand alone, to unleash tongues with the fingers, to give salvation silently to mortals, and to fight against the illicit temptations of the devil with pen and ink. Every word of the Lord written by the scribe is a wound inflicted on Satan. And so, though seated in one spot, with the dissemination of his work he travels through different provinces. The product of his toil is read in holy places; people hear the means by which they may turn themselves away from base desire and serve the Lord with heart undefiled. Though absent, he labors at his task. I cannot deny that he may receive a renovation of life from these many blessings, if only he accomplishes things of this sort, not with a vain show of ambition, but with upright zeal. Man multiplies the heavenly words, and in a certain metaphorical sense, if one may so express himself, that which the virtue of the Holy Trinity utters is written by a trinity of fingers. O sight glorious to those who contemplate it carefully! With gliding pen the heavenly words are copied so that the devil's craft, by means of which he caused the head of the Lord to be struck during His passion, may be destroyed. They deserve praise too for seeming in some way to imitate the action of the Lord, who, though it was expressed figuratively, wrote His law with the use of His all-powerful finger. Much indeed is there to be said about such a distinguished art, but it is enough to mention the fact that those men are called scribes (*librarii*) who serve zealously the just scales (*libra*) of the Lord.

Cassiodorus Senator (ca. 480–575), *An Introduction to Divine and Human Readings*, Chapter XXX; translated with an introduction and notes by Leslie Webber Jones (New York: Columbia University Press, 1946).

Allen Hutt

In its original concept, Times Roman was an "oldstyle" typeface, and essentially a restyling of Monotype Plantin. It was designed for a newspaper produced under high production standards which no longer exist. Its usefulness as a newspaper text face is waning, but it has continued wide acceptance for periodicals and books, particularly in the United States. The various modifications of Times Roman—e.g., Times Bold, Times Titling—are discussed and illustrated.

The start of the 1970s seems an appropriate time to reassess Times Roman, more particularly in its primary role as a news-text type face, for the evidence suggests that it will not survive the decade as a major news-text, at any rate in hot-metal form for rotary letterpress printing. I make that qualification since the situation may be somewhat different with photo-set, offset-printed Times; this is considered below. The twilight of Times Roman is sensationally confirmed with the indication that after a date sometime in 1975 it will not continue to be the text face of *The Times*, for which it was originally designed under Stanley Morison's direction nearly 40 years ago.

"Mid-1975" has been scheduled by the Thomson Organization for the closure of the historic Printing House Square offices and plant in the City of London—birthplace of *The Times* in 1785—and the transfer of the famous morning paper's production to the suitably enlarged establishment of the *Sunday Times* some couple of miles to the north. The motive here, of course, is one of economic and technical commonsense. The increasing run of *The Times* calls for additional press capacity which cannot be provided at Printing House Square. That press capacity is available at the *Sunday Times*, now working uneconomically with only one night a week on full production. Combining the daily and Sunday production in a single plant

maximizes productive efficiency and economy, and this applies to the composing room as well as to the presses.

Clearly this combined operation in the composing room only makes sense if a single text range is provided on the linecasters, and it is quite certain that the *Sunday Times* would not consider abandoning its Intertype Royal (comparable to Linotype Corona) for Times Roman. Equally, I conceive, *The Times* would never agree to abandon its own, now historic, text face for Royal. What then? Neither paper is likely to favor the admirable new Linotype Modern, because of its initial pre-emption by the *Daily* and *Sunday Telegraph*. Thus there appears to be only one possibility, already being confidentially canvassed; namely that a new news-text should be designed for the common use of Times Newspapers.

Any attempt to discuss this last point is bound to be speculative and, indeed, irrelevant to the argument of this article. What is germane, is the general assumption that Times Roman is no longer an effective news-text in the current production conditions of Times Newspapers, daily or Sunday; and it is significant that one other well-produced national newspaper, the *Financial Times* (for many years set in Times Roman) decided to scrap it and, after experimenting with existing news-texts to secure a suitable replacement, has now gone over to Royal.

Like many others, I was an early enthusiast for Times Roman. In 1935–36 when I was redesigning *Reynolds News*, I was keen to use Times for that now defunct Sunday paper's text, but in those days the necessary 8-point size was not available in linecaster matrices, and the parsimonious co-operative proprietors of the paper jibbed at the modest £400 required by Linotype & Machinery Ltd. to cut it. Later experience, however, modified the enthusiasm. Ten years ago, in the first edition of *Newspaper Design*, I stressed as the "essential fact" of Times Roman that "it was designed for the text of a newspaper in a class of its own. The impeccable presswork and high-grade paper of *The Times* is necessary to exhibit Times Roman in its proper brilliance." I added that "rough presswork and common newsprint" gave the face "little chance"; further, "the stylishness of the close-set Times had to be paid for by excessive matrix replacement, due to the speedier breakdown of the ultra-thin sidewalls." It is noteworthy that Times never caught on as a news-text in the United States; the

reports of the American Newspaper Publishers Association show that in December, 1968, there were 382 plants using Corona for text and only three using Times.

Times Roman, in short, was designed for production conditions which have ceased to exist. In 1932, and for long after, the nightly run of *The Times* was modest; it was produced without undue haste on high-grade, bulky mechanical printing which enabled color to be kept strong. Since Lord Thomson acquired control of *The Times* in 1966, its run has vastly increased to nearly half a million, perforce produced at high speed on newsprint inevitably lower in quality and bulk, resulting from the increased run and growth in paging. Under these conditions it is not possible to sustain the crisp presswork and strong color necessary; and while Morison could rightly claim in 1932 that Times Roman was "readable . . . not only in a good, but in a bad light"¹ this is no longer true. In 1970 it is only necessary to compare the thin, grey look of *The Times*—though its news-text is uniformly 9-point—with the more colorful appearance of the Linotype Modern in the *Daily Telegraph*—mainly in 8-point—to perceive where greater legibility lies.

The story of the conception and birth of Times Roman, including the nature and effect of Morison's celebrated *Memorandum* of 1930, has often been told.² But all commentators, including myself, have hitherto entirely missed the simple fact that Times Roman is a sharpened-up, tighter, re-proportioned version of Monotype Plantin 110, with an increased x-height and some letters modified—the splayed M, for instance, and the crossed W. This is scarcely surprising, since the late Victor Lardent, the artist in the publicity department of *The Times* who drew the alphabets for the new design under Morison's direction, recalled that Morison initially handed him a photo-copy of a page from a book printed by Plantin. Morison might just as well have handed Lardent some specimen sheets of 110, the first (1913) and still one of the greatest of the Monotype recuttings of the classics.

The comparative specimens show the differences, as well as the similarities, between Times Roman 327 and Plantin 110; on the whole it is the similarities that are the more striking. When *The Times Literary Supplement* changed its run-of-paper headline style in the first week of January, 1970, from 327 to 110, I doubt whether even informed readers were instantly conscious of the difference, in

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNO P Q
RSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Figure 1. Monotype Plantin 110, 24-point.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNO P Q
RSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
*ABCDEFGHIJKLMNO P Q
STUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz*

Figure 2. Monotype Times Roman 327, 24-point.

Type, the voice of the printed page, can be legible

Type, the voice of the printed page, can be legible

Figure 3. Monotype Plantin 110 (top) and Monotype Times 327, 24-point.

36-point lower-case, between Times and Plantin. In text sizes I have sometimes been taken in, surmising at first glance that Plantin 110, printed with minimum color and kiss impression on coated paper was Times 327. The reason is clear; both types are old face, and the one is derived from the other.

In one of his earliest expositions of the new face (1932), Morison himself admitted as much. That is to say, he did not admit the Plantin provenance, but he said plainly that Times Roman was “something of a reaction” from the conventional newspaper “modern” back to old face, of which Times possessed “many structural features.” However, he went on, “it is not exactly an old face, for its sharp serifs are tokens of modern face. It is a newspaper type—and hardly a book type. . . . A modified design will be cut for bookwork.” Times could be classified, he concluded, as a “modernized old face.”³ I doubt whether the sharpness of the serifs is enough to justify entirely the adjective “modernized”; sharp they certainly are, and that sharpness makes Times more brilliant than the general run of old faces, contributing markedly to its enormous and permanent success for book, periodical, and general work; but their bracketing and angle is old face, not modern, as is the diagonal stress of the whole design. In passing it is worth noting that Morison was wrong when he opined that 327 was “hardly a book type”; for it is in that version, with or without the alternative long descenders, that Times has become one of the universal book faces of this century, not in the “modified design—for bookwork” (Times Wide 427). It was in its standard version that Times made its impact on American magazine production, when it was adopted, after extensive experiment, by the Crowell-Collier Publishing Company of New York, publishers of *Collier's*; they enthusiastically called it “a heaven-sent medium for any periodical.”

A few years later Morison offered a quite different, and indeed rather odd, characterization of the nature of Times Roman. Discussing “The Editorial Text” in 1936, he developed the correct criticism he had previously voiced of the then new Mergenthaler Linotype Ionic news-text, with its heavy color and monotone strokes. He then described the origin of Times Roman in these words: “The authorities at *The Times* [i.e., S.M.] made three decisions, (1) to retain the proportions of the Modern, (2) to increase the weight of

the face by relating it to Ionic, (3) to dilute the heaviness of Ionic by reducing the weight of the sub-strokes where they join the main-strokes. When the traditional thick and thin structure thus reappeared it was found to save the composition from the flat monotony of Ionic . . . while, at the same time, occupying a great deal less space.”⁴ No word here, it will be noticed, about the “reaction” from modern to old face; and it may well be concluded that to describe the construction of an old face like Times as a combination of the characteristics of Modern and Ionic, with some specific reductions in stroke weight, is hardly more than a typographical version of going to Bannockburn by way of Brighton Pier. Alternatively, it can only be regarded as a piece of Morisonian mystification that bore no real relation to the end-product.

It is interesting that Morison seems to have had Modern on his mind at that particular moment. In an illuminating passage in the same article he praised the technical superiority of the re-drawn American Ionic to the conventional linecaster news “moderns” hitherto available, adding: “But a similarly high degree of technical ability given to the old-fashioned ‘modern’ would have transformed it into a very desirable face. It is more than probable that such a revised ‘modern’ would be more readable than . . . Ionic.” Why, then, did Morison produce a spruced-up old face instead of a revised and transformed modern? Not until 30 years later (1967–69) did Walter Tracy absolutely justify Morison’s prophecy by designing Linotype Modern, already referred to—a news-text which satisfies current production conditions in a way Times Roman was never intended to, and cannot, do. Tracy, however, is himself a draughtsman, which Morison was not. Morison almost certainly had a subjective leaning towards the elegance of old face. Finally, he was obsessed by the problem of space-saving.

Throughout the initial development of Times Roman, Morison constantly stressed the need for a news-text to be relatively condensed, to have a certain “slenderness,” as he used to say, in contrast to Ionic—“too circular . . . too expensive of space.” Times Roman emerged as the news-text most economical in lateral space; in 8-point its lower-case alphabet length was 109 points as against the 127 points of Ionic. This space-saving quality, however, was only of significance in relation to the style of *The Times* at that period, namely

AFTER the introduction comes the *solid text* itself; the too, too solid text as it was in the classical newspaper days of the last century, when even paragraphing was virtually unknown and any subheading in text utterly unheard of. Suitable paragraphing is indeed the primary way of breaking solid text, the first aid to ease in reading.

This may sound a very obvious commonplace; but the important word is ‘suitable’ and to secure that, it is necessary to grasp certain technical principles which are not at all commonplace. They are, however, entirely commonsense.

The main principle is the relation

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This may sound a very obvious commonplace; but the important word is ‘suitable’ and to secure that, it is necessary to grasp certain technical principles which are not at all

Figure 4. Top: Linotype Times (left) and Linotype Modern. Bottom: Linotype Jubilee (left) and Linotype Ionic. All 8-point.

of wide measures (14 ems) and infrequent paragraphing. Given those conditions, there was meaning in Morison's comparison of a dozen lines of 9-point in Ionic or Times Roman—the former rating 55 words, the latter 72. With the 11-em measure, and frequent paragraphing, common to contemporary broadsheets, the relative width of the text type is of no consequence. The multiplication of breaklines absorbs the difference between types of varying alphabet lengths; when the *Telegraph* changed over from the narrower Jubilee to the wider Modern last year a precisely reset page showed only three places in its eight 22-inch columns where the Modern made an extra line.

On all counts, then—its old-face elegance (requiring strong color on high-grade paper) and its space-economizing “slenderness”—Times Roman as a news-text functioned only in terms of conditions which, in hot metal and rotary letterpress, no longer operate. Its qualities were specific and not general. Here, perhaps, is the appropriate moment to put the question: is there a future for Times Roman when it is photo-set and offset-printed? When Times Roman is set, for instance, on a Linotron 505 the nagging problem of matrix replacement through sidewall breakdown does not exist; and web-offset production enables the necessary strong color to be run. The agreeable effect of Times so set and printed can be seen in *The News*, the Portsmouth, Hampshire, local evening and its associated weeklies produced in the publishers' new, computerized plant at the Portsmouth suburb of Hilsea. The remaining consideration here is one of style and taste; that is to say, is the elegance and urbanity of Times the most apt typographical vehicle for a popular newspaper in the last third of the twentieth century?

So far I have only been concerned with the normal weight of Times Roman (Monotype 327 and its linecaster equivalent). Times Bold (334) is entirely different; as Peggy Lang put it “it is a companion letter, rather than a bold variant . . . ‘Modern’ in character, though not consistently so in detail.”⁵ The modern-style flat serifs of Times Bold immediately catch the eye (in the roman, that is) for the bold italic strangely went back to old face. Times Bold Italic is a thickening-up, a bold variant, of the 327 italic and thus works uneasily, especially in the large display size, with the bold roman. The lower-case of Times Bold roman appears to be more condensed than the normal weight, since the thickening has been arranged within the

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQR
STUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnpqrstuvwxy
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQR
STUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnpqrstuvwxy

Figure 5. Monotype Times Bold 334, 24-point.

Tories refuse
Maud plans
Tories refuse
Maud plans

Figure 6. Monotype Times Bold 334 (top) and Ludlow Century Bold, 42-point.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMN OPQRSTUVWXYZ
XYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstu vwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMN OPQRSTUVWXYZ
YZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstu vwxyz

Figure 7. Monotype Times Wide 427, 18-point.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMN OPQ
RSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstu
vwxyz

Figure 8. Monotype Times Semi-bold 421, 24-point.

letter; it compares, in display, with the lower-case of Century Bold, though the caps of that purely modern face are more closely proportioned to the lower-case than are the caps of Times Bold. A glance at the big lower-case display of the *Guardian* (Century Bold) and *The Times* (Times Bold) suggests that in overall effect there is little to choose between them. Times Bold is somewhat sharper but its slightly greater condensation is not really an advantage.

Of the other members of the Times family I have already mentioned the book version (Times Wide 427; a long-descender variant is designated Times Book 627). To meet the needs of German bookwork, where the multiplication of initial caps can make for a spotty-looking page, a set of lighter capitals (727) was cut to sort with 327

ABCDEFGHIJKLM
NOPQRSTUVWXYZ
XYZ

ABCDEFGHIJKLM
NOPQRSTUVWXYZ

Figure 9. Monotype Times Bold Titling 328 (top) and 332, 36-point.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMN
OPQRSTUVWXYZ

Figure 10. Monotype Times Extended Titling 339, 30-point.

lower-case. Times Semi-Bold (421) was first cut in 1936 as a bible text for the Cambridge University Press; later it was variously used in *The Times*, from double-column introduction and captions to the author-title-publisher paragraphs heading the reviews in the *Literary Supplement*; in the display sizes it is a useful medium-weight letter, although it may be felt to have some slight coarseness in cut.

Most interesting of all, perhaps, despite the current trend away from caps in display, are the Bold Titlings. Morison himself said, referring to the re-dress of *The Times* in 1932, that “the most important difference in design” was not to be found in the body type “but in the headlines.”⁶ He meant that the color relationship, and contrast, between headlines and text was logically organized and controlled for the first time; and it must be conceded that, for the old well-spaced “decker” headline style in caps throughout, the new Titlings worked splendidly.

In the passage cited, Morison went on to describe the Titlings as “heavier versions of the caps belonging to the text founts.” This was an over-simplification. There was certainly a relationship; but the fine condensed Bold Titling 328—Linotype Times Heading Bold Condensed—was mainly “modern” in character, modifying certain letters, like the R (and the same could be said of the thick and little-used, but not unattractive, Bold Titling 332). The Extended Titling 339—Linotype Times Heading Bold—is one of the finest cap alphabets in the roman letter at the printer’s disposal, much superior to the caps of Times Bold. Some may feel it a pity that fashion today prefers lower-case to caps in display (not, of course, without reason) and that the utility of this grand Titling is therefore less than it might be.

1. *Monotype Recorder*, XXXI, No. 327, p. 15.

2. See my *Newspaper Design*, 2nd edition, pp. 58–61; Peggy Lang, *Alphabet & Image*, No. 2, pp. 5–17; James Moran, *Monotype Recorder*, XLIII, No. 3, pp. 22–23 (Morison memorial issue).

3. Quoted by Moran, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

4. *Monotype Recorder*, XXXV, No. 1, pp. 3–6.

5. Peggy Lang, *op. cit.*, pp. 16–17.

6. *Printing The Times*, 1953, pp. 69–70.

Proposed American National Standard: Presentation of Alphameric Characters for Information Processing

Foreword

This foreword is not a part of Proposed USA Standard Presentation of Alphameric Characters for Information Processing.

An early step in a data processing cycle is the transcription of data from a form legible to humans to a form capable of being sensed by machines. Prior to this transcription act, data are often transmitted from man to man as hand-lettered documents. It has long been recognized that certain characters (including the alphabet and numerals) may be readily mistaken for other characters when the data are being transcribed into machine language. Over the years individual data processing activities have developed techniques of writing these characters in such a way as to reduce ambiguity and subsequent misunderstanding by the transcriber. The passage of time and the increase in data processing activities has rapidly increased the number of the character representation techniques.

It has been a common practice to add a distinctive mark to one of a pair of characters when experience has indicated that the two were similar enough to be easily confused. The distinctive mark and the choice of character to which it is added have been largely matters of local determination. As an example, a letter O may be marked with an underline, a horizontal bar through the middle, or with a virgule (slant line) through it to distinguish it from a zero. Another data processing activity may decide to mark the zero with a virgule and leave the letter O without mark.

EDITOR’S NOTE: This proposed American National Standard has been accepted for publication by American National Standards Committee X3, Computers and Information Processing. In order that the final version of the proposed standard reflect the largest public consensus, X3 authorized publication of this document to elicit comment and general public reaction, with the understanding that such a working document is an intermediate result in the standardization process and is subject to change, modification, or withdrawal in part or in whole. Comments should be addressed to the X3 Secretary, Business Equipment Manufacturers Association, 235 East 42 Street, New York, N.Y. 10017.