Galliard: a modern revival of the types of Robert Granjon

Matthew Carter

The types that Galliard hopes to revive were cut by a French artist, Robert Granjon, who worked between about 1540 and 1590. I should begin by sketching in the historical circumstances. In the early part of the sixteenth century, Paris became the center of the book arts in succession to the northern Italian cities. The æsthetic Renaissance and the new humanist learning from the Catholic south met the religious reforms of the north in France and, whatever else these powerful currents stirred up, they certainly made bookselling profitable. Competition among printers benefitted the emergent trades of typecutting and typefounding.

Parisian types for roman and italic were based, as their names in both French and English tell us, on Italian models; in fact on the types of Aldus Manutius cut in the last years of the previous century, which the French lettercutters naturalized and surpassed. The man seen by his contemporaries — and by us — as personifying the French ascendency in lettercutting was Claude Garamond, whose name has come down to us for the genus of majestic old-style romans from which the whole subsequent evolution of roman has sprung. Within Garamond's own lifetime (he died in 1561), there began the first commercial typefoundries.

Originally printers had made, or had had made, their own types. In time, they traded in types with one another and bought new ones from independent punchcutters. Typefoundries made the step to capitalism: they stocked faces by many cutters and dealt

with the printing trade at large. I think it was their need to distinguish between the various faces they stocked for the common bodies that led them to use the names of cutters to identify and eventually to commend their types, so that from this time (the middle of the sixteenth century) punchcutting ceases to be an anonymous calling. We know the names of many of the cutters of sixteenth-century types.

One of the first typefoundries was that of Christopher Plantin, a Frenchman denizened in Antwerp, a fine printer with a passion for type which he collected and commissioned (Figure 1). He hired out matrices and sold duplicate sets at the regular Frankfurt fairs, disseminating the masterpieces of French letter design through northern Europe.

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Plantin's business declined after his death, but the building that housed his press remained in the family until it was given by his descendents to the city of Antwerp as a museum. A book by the first curator of the Plantin-Moretus Museum, published in 1905, showed that some typographical material survived there, but it was not until fifty years later that an expert assessment was made. The occasion was the quatercentenary of Plantin's first printing, celebrated in 1955, when it was revealed that although the Museum's wooden presses were well post-Plantinian, and there was little or no serviceable cast type of any antiquity, Plantin's entire stock of punches and matrices survived.

This astonishing discovery: that the finest collection of printing types made in typography's golden age was in perfect condition (some muddle apart), was made even more valuable by the survival under the same roof of Plantin's accounts and inventories which named the cutters of his types. The job of matching the material to the documents took about five years, and the results, which have been published, have had considerable impact on typographical scholarship, on bibliography and on the æsthetic appreciation of type design of that period. It is now possible to study a sufficient corpus of confidently attributed work by half a dozen sixteenth-century cutters to get an idea of the quantity of their output, and a proper sense of their individual styles as designers. The first result of such an assessment must be, I am sure, to confirm the stature of Garamond, but to see him no longer as a solitary eminence but rather as first among equals.

Of other cutters well represented at the Museum, two were Flemish, François Guyot and Hendrik van

den Keere, the latter employed extensively by Plantin; and three were French, Guillaume Le Bé, specialist in Hebrew types; Pierre Haultin, a fine and still underrated artist, a red-hot Calvinist and the most considerable printer among sixteenth-century punchcutters; and Robert Granjon.

Granjon's name was not unknown before the Plantin celebrations of 1955. In fact, there is a British Linotype face called Granjon, a very good one. Many of his italics had been identified in French and Italian printing, and most of the twentieth-century Garamond revivals familiar to us have italics that were based, unwittingly, on Granjon's designs. But the Plantin-Moretus collection of Granjon's types really showed their range and virtuosity for the first time to modern eyes.

Mike Parker was one of the researchers in Antwerp who worked on cataloging and identifying the punches and matrices there. In due course, he became Director of Typographic Development at Mergenthaler Linotype in New York. When I joined him at Mergenthaler in 1965, one of our first concerns was to consider whether any of the Plantinian treasures that were familiar to us would yield a good contemporary photocomposition typeface. Our choice fell immediately on the work of Granjon.
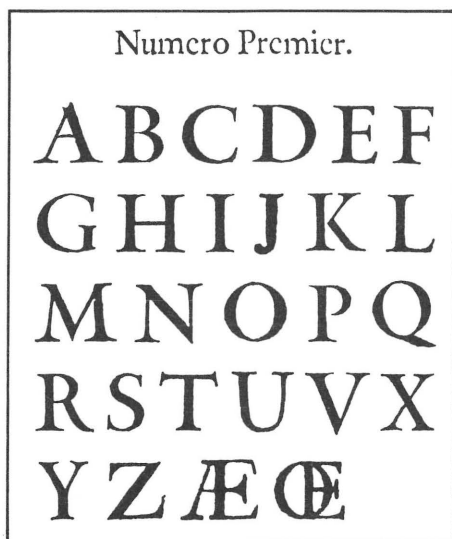
I include here a few biographical facts about Granjon himself. He was born in 1513, about one generation after Garamond. He was a Parisian, the son of a bookseller, and was apprenticed to a goldsmith, though I do not think it is necessary to infer that he was trained to work in precious metals — there is much in common between lettercutting and goldsmithing, two branches of minute metalworking that include the cutting of punches as part of both trades (Gutenberg's punchcutter was a goldsmith, as was Aldus'). On the other hand, I must admit, for one of his early typefaces Granjon was paid in gemstones — perhaps he set them.

Granjon started cutting type in the early 1540's and soon built up contacts with the city of Lyons in southeast France, the entrepôt for the Italian trade. He spent all his life on the move, living at various times in Paris, at others in Lyons (he married a *lyonnaise*, the daughter of an artist), also in Antwerp and in Frankfurt, and ending his days in Rome.

He had a prodigious output. Surviving account books at Antwerp show that for a period of several months he was producing punches at an average rate of two a day. He cut sixty to sixty-five faces in all: eighteen or

CIVILITE PVERILE

2

Numero Premier.

A B C D E F
G H I J K L
M N O P Q
R S T U V X
Y Z Æ Œ

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par Maistr Innoce
tilhomm Boulongnoi

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. Gyfentachtentich naeftcomende, ende fulley
rde hem Gay fijne ketalinghe gheuey kehoozlijc
ie indiey hy Gay des te doey blijft in ghebze
ter daet gheexecuteert te wozdey: (Met Gerftai

4

Eft-il gentil qui cheual efperonne?
Du cil villain qui fon afne tallonne?
De ce,raifon ne rends aucunement,

Rob. Granion

5

nineteen were italics, in at least four distinct styles and ranging in size from 6.5 to 42 point; nine or ten romans; six or seven Greeks; between eleven and thirteen other exotics including Syriac, Armenian, Cyrillic, Arabic and, probably, a Hebrew; seven or eight musics of various notations; eight Civilité scripts; and many decorative fleurons. I think in looking at the work of the masters of the art that his virtuosity is unequalled.

Figure 2 shows a book for children about courteous behavior, *La Civilité Puérile*, printed by Granjon in 1558, which gave its name to the style of type used in it. The bullrush in his mark on the title page is a rebus for Granjon's name — *grand jonc* means 'big rush.' Civilité type imitated ordinary handwriting of the period, the equivalent of an informal script face today. Granjon, who invented the style, considered it indigenous to France and better for setting French than the imported roman or italic. Figure 3 is a close-up of the same face, showing its wonderfully dynamic rhythm.

A more sober version of the same Gothic style is shown in Figure 4. This is a tax form for the City of Antwerp printed by Plantin, who was not above jobbing printing. Civilité is interesting as being one of the very few types once well established that have completely fallen out of the present-day typographic repertory.

Figure 5 shows an early roman face by Granjon from about 1549, cut before his maturity, and looking Garamondian. Figure 6, by contrast, is a titling face (24 point capitals) of ten years later — Granjon in full flower (discount 'J', 'U' and the dipthongs which are apocryphal). I find in these letters a splendid confidence, the result of artistic assurance expressed through technical mastery.

I would like to try to explain what Mike Parker and I saw in Granjon's letterforms, and what gives them their individuality. This can best be done by making a contrast: Figures 7 and 8 show capitals by Garamond (the 'J', again, has no business here). When I look at them, words such as 'stately,' 'calm' and 'dignified' come to mind.

The letters in Figures 9 through 11 are unmistakably Granjon's. Looking at them, adjectives like 'spirited,' 'tense' and 'vigorous' come to mind. I see considerable differences in drawing between Garamond's shapes and Granjon's. To me these springing forms are more obviously stylish and more individualistic than those of Garamond, and of other contemporary letter artists.

One of Granjon's romans that we studied most closely when looking for a model for a photocomposition design was the *Gros Cicero* (large pica) shown in Figure 12, an interesting face, and one of the pioneering designs in the move away from the canonical proportions of Aldine and Garamond romans — in other words, one of the first large x-height faces, forerunner of seventeenth century Dutch designs and of Caslon.

Figure 13 shows a close-up of the *Gros Cicero*, and Figure 14 is a specimen of the same face from the book on the Plantinian archives published in 1905 that I mentioned earlier, showing a corrupt 'a' in the font. This specimen was the basis of a fine Monotype face named Plantin, which preserves the wrong 'a' (Figure 15). To the extent that Times Roman is thought to have been conceived as a refinement of Monotype Plantin, the *Gros Cicero* can claim a considerable influence on our present-day typography.

It is easy to admire Granjon's work; one also feels drawn to the man. Like Fournier le Jeune and Vincent Figgins, for example, his work suggests an attractive and interesting person.

Granjon had an endearing habit of printing small specimens to celebrate the completion of projects, and he was also the first (so far as we know) to give his faces names other than those of the bodies on which they were meant to be cast. The type in Figures 16 and 17, an 8 point, has the name we adopted for our revival, *La Gaillarde*. A galliard was a dance, a sprightly jig, appropriate to the man and his work. Other names he gave his faces were *La Valentine, L'Immortelle, La Granjonne* (I suppose a tribute to Antoinette, his wife), *La Poétique, La Mignonne* — charming names.

The flowers in the specimen are also his. It is not strictly true that he invented modular fleurons in elements that can be combined in various patterns, but he certainly perfected and popularized them. One can perhaps see in these arabesque ornaments so reminiscent of embroidery the influence of Granjon's contact with Lyons, the center of the silk trade in France.

Figure 18 shows a Granjon italic of the style adopted in recent times as the companion to Garamond romans. It was described by Granjon, and Plantin, as *pendante* or *couchée*, meaning hanging or lying — relative terms. There are no less than four different ampersands in the font, all seen on this page, typical panache on Granjon's part. In Granjon's time, italic was acquiring its present function as an ancillary to roman, but also
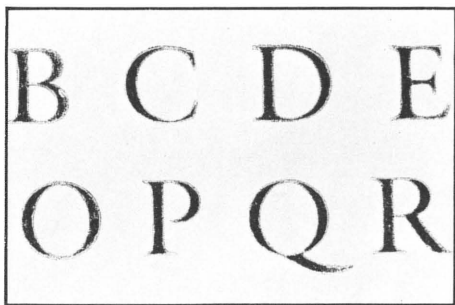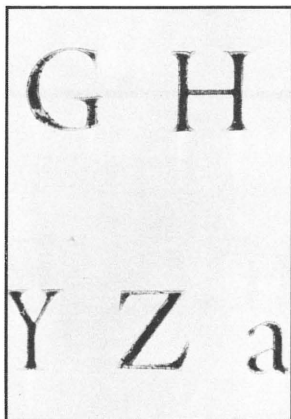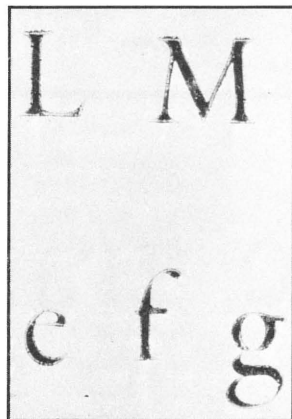
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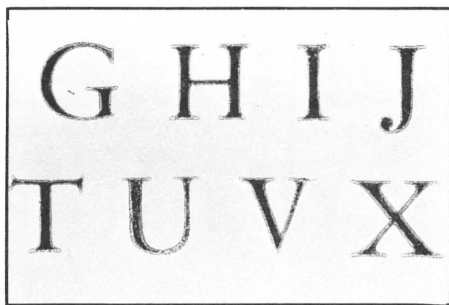
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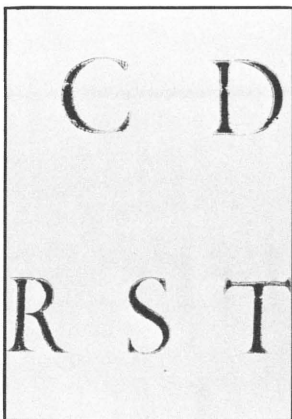
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CICERO ROMAIN GROS ŒIL,
Numero XXXIV.

Outre ces Divinitez communes & univerſelles, dont nous
avons parlé juſqu'à préſent, il y en avoit d'autres dans la
créance des Payens, qui n'étoient attachées qu'au bien par-
ticulier, ou des maiſons, ou des perſonnes.

Les Dieux domeſtiques s'appelloient Larès, ou bien
Penates, & étoient ſouvent de petits Marmouſets attachez
en divers lieux de la maiſon, qu'ils honoroient comme leurs
protecteurs, & de tems en tems leur offroient des ſacrifices
de vin & d'encens.

Chacun encore, à leur dire, naiſſoit avec deux Génies
propres & particuliers, qu'on nommoit Démons, l'un deſ-
quels étoit le bon, qui les portoit au bien, & leur procuroi

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es grands Princes
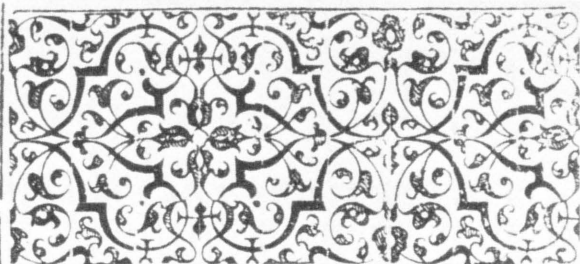
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le matrices, deux

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othetical figures.

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◦§ Epreuue de la petitte Antique ou §◦
Romaine, de Rob, GranIon nom-
mée la Gaillarde. en Anuers
◦§ 1 5 7 0 . §◦

Oratio Suſannæ. Danielis xiij.
Deus æterne, qui abſconditorum cognitor
es, qui nouiſti omnia antequam fiant, tu ſcis
quoniam falſum contra me tulerunt teſtimo-
nium. Et Domine morior, cùm nihil horum
fecerim, quæ iſti malitioſe compoſuerunt ad
uerſum me. Sed nunc tu Domine Deus adiu-
ua me in hac hora: vt benedicam te Deum viuū
qui ſaluas ſperantes in te. Et nunc quæſo ſi non
tollis hoc opprobrium & hanc anguſtiam, tolle
animam meam à me: quia melior eſt mihi mors
quàm vita, ſi tibi placeat Deus meus. Amen.

16

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qui pour obeyr & foy r
endre aux lecteurs de f
ge impropre & deftou
ne fans entendemẽt par
r autant d'imperfectio
fmes dictions, par fois
des anciens. Cõme noz
vn homme, & vn pis
premier introducteur

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um finibus conftituer
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dem & ipfa corpor
λεɩ δύ εϲϑαι poffit, &
ue dividi. Eft quid
juxta ac Pythagoræ
nendi methodus obfc
d jam profeffi fumus

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Rob. GranIon Parifien. Typographus &
Characterum incifor⸗. incidebat Romæ.
1 5 8 3.

Æ T A T I S   S V Æ.   L X X.

and perhaps chiefly, it still retained its original purpose as an alternative text face. Aldus had set books in italic for reasons of compaction, and the practice continued. It would be surprising today to find a book set in italic throughout, but in the sixteenth century it was commonplace. Figure 19 shows a different style of italic, more condensed and regular, known as *droite*, upright — again a relative term by comparison with *couchée* — intended for continuous text.

Granjon spent the last dozen years of his life in Rome in the service of the Cardinal de Medici and Pope Gregory XIII. There he cut exotic faces to equip the Medicean and Vatican presses for the extraordinary publishing enterprise of the Catholic Counter-Reformation; aimed not against Protestantism in Europe but as part of the Jesuits' attempt to convert infidels in the Middle East by means of printing the Christian scriptures in Arabic, Armenian, Syriac and Hebrew. Granjon was held in high regard in the Papal service: the records refer to him as *Mæstro Roberto*, and he was well paid.

Figure 20 is a specimen of one of the faces cut in Rome, an Arabic, that establishes the date of his birth by its imprint. Accounts of payments to Granjon late in 1589 refer to punches as being his last because of an illness from which he died. He would then have been 76 or 77.

The object of designing Galliard was to make a serviceable, hard-working, adaptable, contemporary, photocomposition typeface based on a strong historical style in no way anachronistic but without a true modern version (Monotype Plantin, excellent face though it is, having departed considerably from the model). However, the result is not a literal copy of any one of Granjon's faces, more a reinterpretation of his style. The face was produced by drawing from scratch rather than working over enlarged photographs of punches or proofs, for two reasons. Firstly, in looking with Mike Parker at the early trial drawings of Galliard Roman, he would comment that some letter must be wrong because Granjon would never have cut it that way. I could immediately point to a case where Granjon had cut it exactly so; but Mike was essentially right because the perception of style is subjective; it must be assimilated and re-created as a whole, and not defined by its eccentricities.

The second reason for not following the model too slavishly was that such a dependence led so far and no

24

further. Granjon gave no direct guidance to much that is needed in a modern type family: bold weights of roman and italic, lining figures, superiors, '$', '£', and so on. Some initiative in designing the roman and italic seemed the best training for applying Granjon's style to characters he never knew.

One early choice to be made was between the various different kinds of italic that Granjon cut. We thought the familiar *pendante* had been overdone in revivals (Figure 21). We tried the *droite* but found it hard to read (Figure 22). The problem was compounded by technical restrictions. The development of Galliard began in the days of the 18-unit Linofilm photosetter whose coarse spacing system made it hard to fit the roman properly. Two versions were drawn and scrapped. Then came the Linofilm Quick which I thought was going to be my salvation because of its very fine spacing unit, but the Quick had commercial problems and did not last long in production. It was not until the advent of the 54-unit VIP that we took up the project again. Immediately I felt the roman was more promising, although a good italic still eluded us.

In the end we chose the most novel and calligraphic of Granjon's four distinct italic styles. Figure 23 shows it with its roman counterpart. The pair were cut for the body called Ascendonica (20 point). They were commissioned by Plantin and perhaps, therefore, reflect his own taste in italic letters. Of all Granjon's faces, the Ascendonicas are, I believe, the only pair intended to have what is now the accepted relationship between roman and italic of matching size and color but contrasting texture. We admired the italic, both by itself and as companion to the roman. Figure 24 shows it photographed from the punches which survive in Antwerp.

Herminion se far pel campo sesta,
paruegli questo buon cominciamento,
endossa haveuvna sua soprauesta,
Douera vn Macometto in purargento,
pel campo aspasso con gran sesta andaua,
Di sua prodezza ognun molo parlaua.

21

How is one to assess and evaluate a type
its esthetic design? Why do the pace-mak
printing rave over a specific face of type
see in it? Why is it so superlatively pleasa
Good design is always practical design.

22

Ascendonica Romaine.

Alfonsus rex Arrag. Idem dicere so-
let, ita demùm matrimonium tran-
quillè citraque querimonias exigi
posse, si maritus surdus fiat, vxor
cæca: innuens, opinor, fœmineum

23

Requirements for quire ten courses

25

BALLAD TO HIS MISTRESS

Dishonored beauty, who have cost me so,
All harsh in works, so those sweet looks must be
Liars and false, your love a fiercer blow
Than thrusting steel: O charms attaint to me,
For killing of a heart, in felony,
Pride all contempt, and scorning that you kill,
Hard eyes, lies there in your inclemency
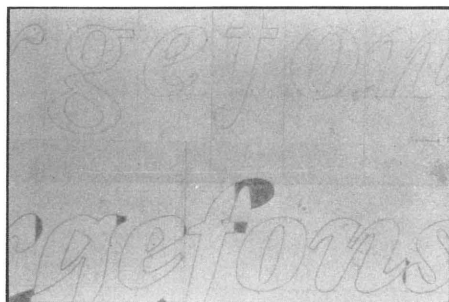Some ease at last for woe, nor wound it still?

26

Il n'est soing que quant on a fain,
Ne service que d'ennemy,
Ne maschier qu'ung botel de foing,
Ne fort guet que d'homme endormy,
Ne clemence que felonnie,
N'asseurence que de peureux,
Ne foy que d'homme qui regnie,
Ne bien conseillé qu'amoureux.

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Figure 25 shows Galliard Roman and Italic together, in a piece of everyday printing. Figures 26 and 27 show them used separately on facing pages in the first book set in Galliard, an edition of Villon set and printed at the Stinehour Press. Until recent times, book-work would have been the extent of the ambitions of a face like Galliard. But to launch and sell a new typeface today, one cannot depend on book designers who tend to be conservative in their choice of text faces. To be commerically successful, a new face must be accepted for the widest possible range of typography. Most importantly, it must gain a footing in advertising typography where it must perform in both text and display (Figure 28).

Although perhaps eighty percent of the total use of a type family is in its normal book weight, even in advertising, it is the existence of heavier weights suited to the rough and tumble of newspaper advertising, for example, that allows the face to be widely accepted by typographers.

Unlike sanserifs and slabserifs whose structures have always allowed them good bold weights, the design of boldfaces for old-styles like Galliard has undergone a change since the advent of photocomposition.

Figure 29 is a comparison between two italics with similar historical antecedents; a Linotype Garamond on top, Galliard below, both of them in the boldest weights in their respective families. Galliard Ultra Italic, the heaviest of four weights, is able to be much heavier than the hot-metal Garamond Bold (the only extra weight), due to the fact that the characters in the photocomposition face can kern. Almost all letters in the bottom line kern (shaded portion), most on both sides. As inter-character space is reduced by bringing the letters closer together, overlapping where necessary, the internal

counters can be reduced in proportion, and the positive image — the letterform — correspondingly increased in weight.

As bolds grow bolder, and bigger type series become possible, the type designer has the problem of reconciling stylistic consistency through the ascending range of weights with intrinsic quality in the bulky letterforms. I found this the most interesting part of the design of the Galliard series. It is one thing to lay out a multi-weight family schematically, it is quite another to draw a workable Ultra Black with personality of its own, a process close to caricature — an exaggeration of normal features to shape forms at once massive and articulate. Without careful design, boldfaces lose definition and look as though they have been dipped in chocolate.

Figure 30 shows a progression of three of the roman weights in Galliard. The Bold still retains some softness in its outline, but as the weight increases to Black and Ultra, the shape becomes more angular to emphasize the sharpness of the image in the interests of legibility. Similarly in Galliard Italic: the crotches become progressively more open and squared off (Figure 31). Of course, the caricature can be overdone. The solution in Figure 32 was forbidden by my editor.

Two of the roman weights were designed by computer, on the Ikarus system developed by URW in Hamburg and now in use widely in type design studios. Galliard was the first original type design to make substantial use of a computer in its creation (in 1977). I drew the Normal and Black weights; the Bold was interpolated and the Ultra extrapolated from the first two. The italics were all drawn by hand, although we did do trials on the Ikarus — pushed to deliberately absurd extremes in the case of Figure 33.

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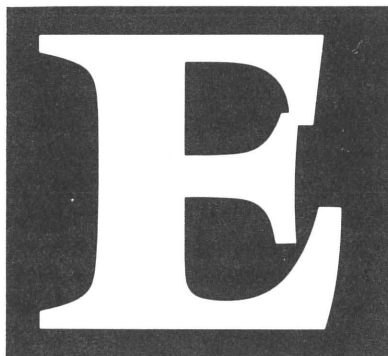
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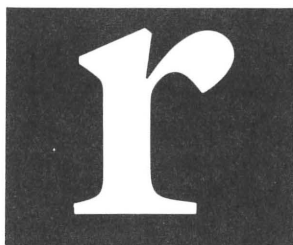
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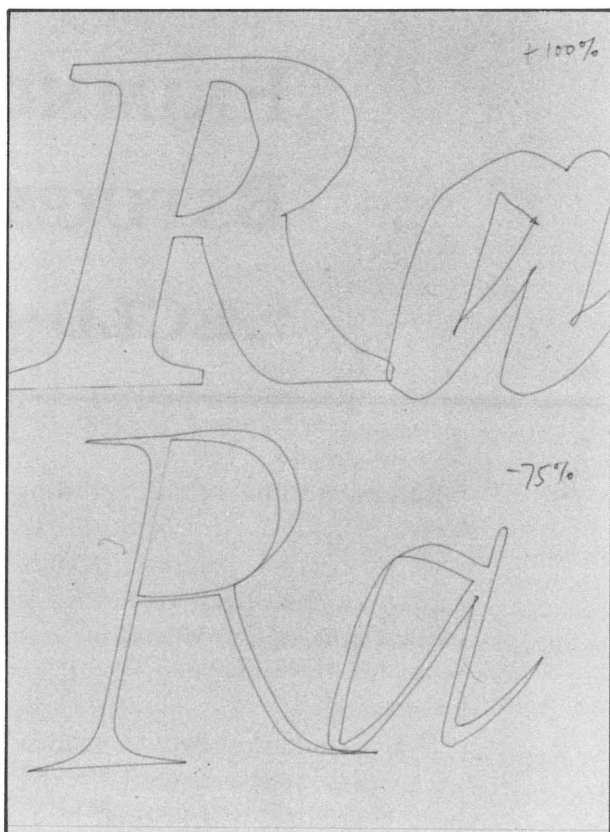
33

¶Hamburgefons†

EABCDEFGHIJLK,

BMNOOPQRSTUV.

XYZ-H&ŒWÆ §2 ‡

34

HABCDEFGHILX?

EKJMNOØPQRW.

BSTUŒVMYZ&H"

"ÆÇŁÐ-O,"!:;np

35

Representations of the printing-press in *La Grant danse macabre des hommes* (Lyons, 1499) and in sixteenth-century printers' devices show the essential features of the later common press. Joseph Moxon's full description in *Mechanick Exercises, vol. ii (London 1683-4)* fits this specimen, apart from variations in the dimensions.

The wooden press was made to hold a forme of twice the area covered by the platen. A full-sized sheet, therefore, was printed by two pulls of the press

38

¶Hamburgefons

HO1234567890.

B600^{$123456789000¢}$

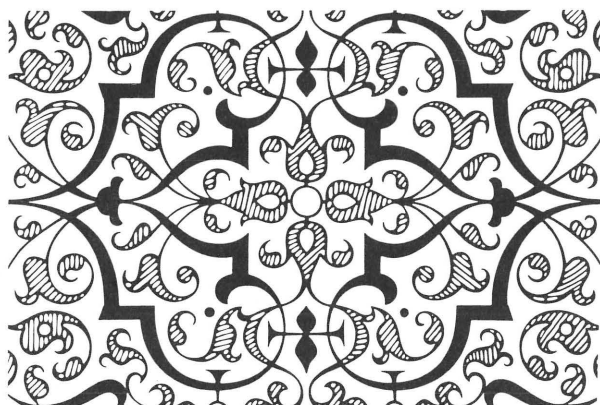EHO2168 ❦§ ❧

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◦§ Ann Holly Carrie
Lorraine Cathy Bob
Gerben Geoffry Abe
Jan Tom Katy David
Jessica Renée Alison
Barbara Amy Jeanne
John Tom Juan Brad
Kristie Anne Claude
Ilisha Doug &Ileana
Merry Christmas §◦

First specimen of Poster Collcard, drawn by the graphic design students at Yale in New...ate, with encouragement from David Crundy, Larry Oppenberg and Matthew Carter.

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Galliard is a fairly complete family; it has two weights of small caps, whose design is an interesting exercise, a rare opportunity for a type designer to draw capitals for use in words with themselves, ordinary big capitals being most importantly initials for words otherwise in lowercase. The small caps are not just re-scaled caps, therefore, but differ in detail (Figures 34 and 35). Galliard has old-style and modern lining figures, superiors, and accents (Figures 36 and 37). We also provided some flourished final letters in keeping with Granjon's exuberant practice — running the risk of over-exuberant use; this tongue-in-cheek setting arrived on my desk at Mergenthaler one day (Figure 38). Figure 39 shows more that I drew but held back from releasing. I also drew a range of Granjon's fleurons, but as far as I know they have never been manufactured and released (Figure 40).

Galliard was launched by Mergenthaler in 1978, and re-launched three years later by ITC who took the face over and released it on a wider basis to manufacturers of typesetters, dry transfer lettering, etc.

I have the pleasant task every couple of years of teaching a short course to the graduate graphic design students at Yale, where communication within the university seems to be entirely by poster. I took with me the 12 point drawings for Galliard Roman and we made a refined version with narrower characters and thinner hairlines specifically for use at poster sizes, say, one inch and up. This I pasted up as a broadside Christmas card to the students who had made the Poster Galliard drawings (Figure 41).

I don't like to end on a note of dissention, but in contrast to the normally amicable relations that exist between board members at Bitstream, there is one particular vendetta directed by a fellow vice-president against the lowercase 'g' in Galliard Italic. The vice-president in question, who happens to be in charge of production, made it very plain to me that ITC Galliard would never be made by Bitstream unless I drew an alternative lowercase 'g' of more acceptable form. Figure 43 was the result.

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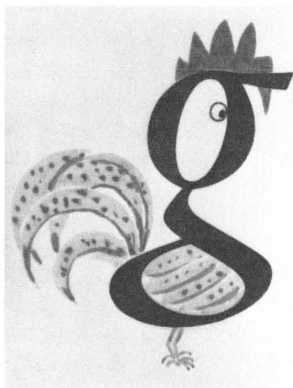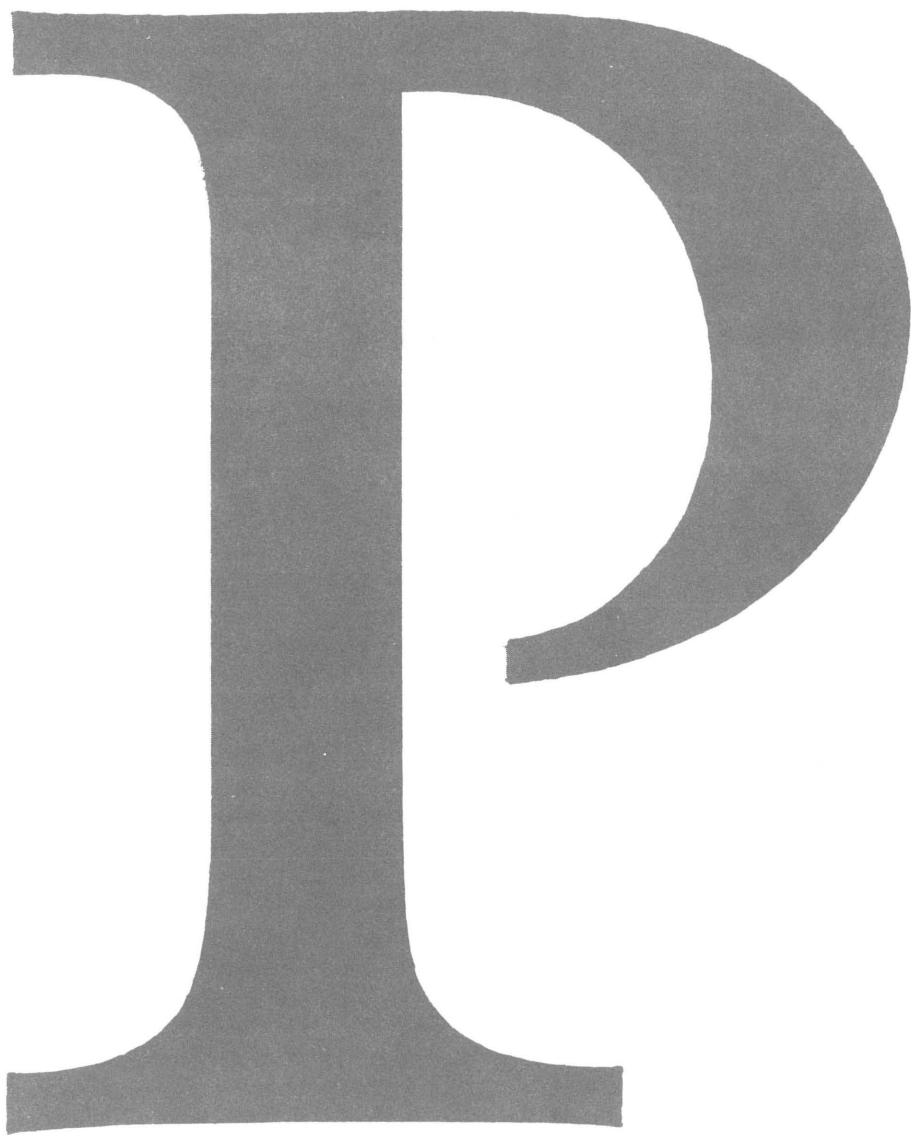
Henk Drost   The punchcutter is a prisoner to the designer.

Sometimes I have to change such little things, that I cannot see the difference.