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Hand Lettering



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Introduction

Occupying over one-half of the profession known as Commercial Art, the study of lettering should have the student's extra attention. It will bring one the earliest financial returns, as it takes only a limited amount of study to produce work of commercial value and designs containing hand lettering are used more generally by commercial enterprises.

For these reasons I would like to urge you to devote early and diligent study to this branch.

In this book I have endeavored to eliminate the uncomfortable dryness which seems to be linked with the early study of subjects of this nature by employing simple explanations, illustrations and keeping away from unnecessary details. However, after you have mastered the study sufficiently to produce creditable work, the dryness will be transformed into a fascination and your ability will be greatly increased.

The demand for hand lettering seems unlimited as it is becoming almost the exclusive mouth-piece for the Advertiser, as type printed matter cannot attract the attention as good hand lettered advertisements will. You will notice that magazine and newspaper advertisers will use a hand lettered heading to attract the reader and use type for only the descriptive matter. Very often you will find a complete hand lettered advertisement, as most of the large advertisers have adopted hand lettered advertisements exclusively, as type matter cannot produce the desired results, because it is limited to one uniform space for each separate letter, while hand lettering has plenty freedom for modifications and design work.

The Author.

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Block Lettering

The ordinary block letter has the largest use so I would like to call your attention to it first.

FIGURE 1.

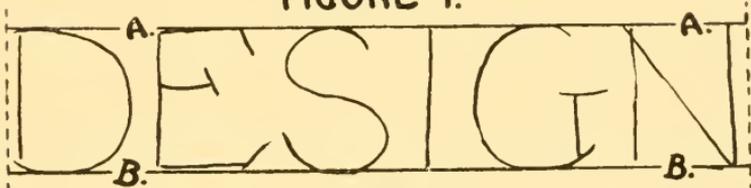


FIG. 2.



FIG. 3.



FIG. 4.



Correct spacing has much to do with the appearance of lettering. A line of letters is most generally made for a given space, so you should indicate on your paper the starting and ending points of the line you are making. Draw two horizontal pencil lines indicating the top and bottom of the letters, such as lines A and B in figure one, roughly layout the letters desired in light pencil similar to figure one. You should correct your rough layout until it has a uniform appearance and not crowded at one end and extended at the other. I would like to caution you against trying to place too much lettering in one line. It is far better to make a second line than have your work look too crowded.

After you have your rough layout uniform you can go over it and make the finish layout in the style of lettering desired, using your eye to measure the bounds for each separate letter as in figure two.

FIGURE 5.



FIG. 6.



You can ink-in your finished layout with good, dense black drawing ink and pen as illustrated in figure three. Use straight-edge and compass whenever it is possible so that the edge of the letter will be straight and true. The little crosses in D and G in figures two and three mark the center or compass point while the ruled lines can also be found.

You can fill in the center portions of the letters with a small brush. The strokes of the brush are shown in the unfinished portion of G and N in figure four.

The correct letter-spacing is the most difficult problem the student must confront, so I hope you will closely study the following rules. The simplest way to govern the letter spacing is to place your letters in your line so that the blank or open space between each separate letter is near the same size in area as illustrated by the dotted lined portions XYZ in figure five. Use your top and bottom guide lines for bounds and govern the area with your eye.

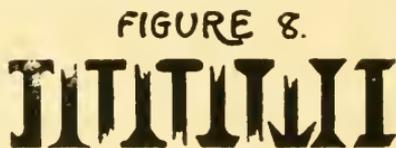
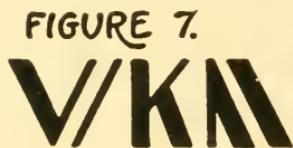
The blank space between LA is the largest natural blank space possible. In this case you can decrease the area by cutting the horizontal bar of the L a little shorter than its natural size or decrease this area by one of the three other methods shown in figure six. As a rule the round letters such as CGOQ should be spaced a little closer than normal. Full space letters as BDEHKHMNRUSXZ should be spaced the normal distance apart while open letters as AFJLPTVWY should be spaced very closely together. Train your eye so you can govern the area of the blank spaces between letters, as mechanical means cannot be successfully applied for this purpose.

The correct amount of space each letter should consume in the line can be governed by using BCDGKPRSTXZ as normal and add 1-10 to OQVY, add 1-5 to A, add 2-5 to MW and subtract 1-10 from EFN.

The normal form of block letters is square, but they can be condensed and elongated without affecting the style or appearance. Condensing or shortening the width of the letter should not exceed one space wide by three spaces high. Elongating or lengthening the width should not exceed two spaces wide by one space high. In condensing you can make letters LEFJNT a little narrower than other letters without affecting the appearance.

Block letters are divided into two families, named Gothic and Roman. The Gothic letters have the same thickness of bars or body while Roman letters have alternately thick and thin bars. An important rule in Roman letters is that all bars of the downward stroke or extending from the upper left hand to the lower right hand are heaviest while the opposite bars are thin as in figure seven.

In order to overcome optical illusions you can make the horizontal bars in Gothic letters about 1-10 less in thickness than the vertical bars, otherwise the horizontal bars will appear a little the thickest. Round letters as C G O Q should run a little over the guide lines, or they will have a smaller appearance than the rest of the line.



Care should be used in keeping the bars of each letter uniform, so your line will have an even and pleasing appearance.

Many different styles can be formed in both Gothic and Roman families, some by simply changing the little kerns or projections on the letter. Figure eight illustrates several different designs of kerns in practical use. You can make copies as near as possible of the complete alphabets in figures nine, ten and eleven, also copy the other illustrations in this book, as this practice will help you to get the correct shape of each letter memorized. Use a center guide line in drawing the small or lower case letters, as shown in figure nine. Make your copies about twice the size of the illustrations in this book. After you have learned the correct shape of letters you can make such modifications or fancy scrolls you desire. Do not use modifications that will greatly affect the easy reading.

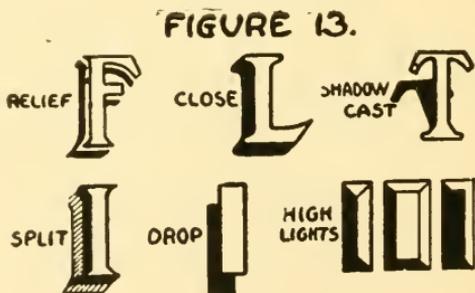


FIGURE 9 ROMAN (HAND LETTERED)

A B C D E F G H I
J K L M N O P Q
R S T U V W X Y
Z a b c d e f g h i j k l
m n o p q r s t u v w x
y z & 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 ? ;

A small brush can be used for outlining large letters when inking over your pencil layout or sketch, as illustrated in figure twelve. Large letters are sometimes used in newspaper headlines, also in posters, signs and showcards where they can be outlined with paint and small brush.

Shading and high-lights are important auxiliaries to lettering. Shadows as a rule should fall to the left and bottom of the letter at the angle of 45 degrees. Shading on round letters should have a true crescent shape, gradually tapering to the points. A bad tendency is to let the shading protrude beyond the edge of the letter. Figure thirteen shows several kinds of shading in general use.

FIGURE 10 GOTHIC

**ABCDEFGHIJK
LMNOPQRSTU
VWXYZ 12345
67890\$&.,;:-!?**

FIGURE 11 *ROMAN ITALIC*

***ABCDEFGHIJKLMNO
PQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuv
wxyz 1234567890.-:;?!?***

Script Lettering

Some of the most beautiful lettered designs are made in script. Although there is only one family of script there is more than one correct way of making certain letters. Figure fourteen illustrates the old and new ways of making script letters. You have the liberty to use either way. Script should be laid out in pencil before inking similar to block letters.



Several modifications or styles can be formed from script. Figure fifteen illustrates one of my own origin. My script letters are built after a square pattern indicated in dotted lines. These lines are the same distance apart each way and the vertical lines slant forward at the angle of sixty degrees. These lines have nothing to do with the spacing of the script, but are shown here simply to illustrate the proper space each letter and scroll should consume. A blank space is shown in the side, leaving some of the letters free of lines. You can layout your paper in pencil similar to the dotted line for practice, but for commercial work I would suggest only the horizontal guide lines and use your eye for correct spacing.

Uniform, harmonious and graceful curves add much to the appearance of script. Figures sixteen, seventeen and eighteen show some good script combinations. Note the unfinished portion in figure seventeen. This gives the method used in forming white letters on black back-ground. The letters are laid out in pencil, but when inking in you keep to the outer edge of the letter and fill in the back-ground with brush.

FIGURE 15 ~ CHAPPELL SCRIPT §

Aa Bb Cc
Dd Ee Ff Gg
Hh Ii Jj Kk
Ll Mm Nn
Oo Pp Qq Rr
Ss Tt Uu Vv
Ww Xx Yy Zz
3. 123456,78&!

FIGURE 16

Gentry
Shoe Co.

FIGURE 17

Brown's
STATE & ADAMS STS; ~ CHICAGO

FIGURE 18

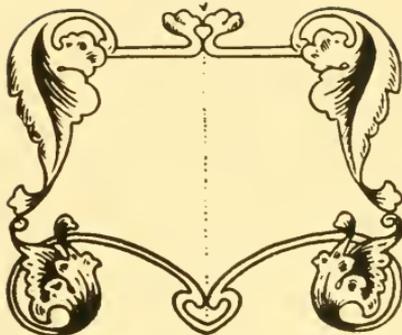
Charco
TRADE MARK

Old English

In making designs in Old English lettering you should make them as plain and simple as possible, as this style of lettering is not generally used and is very difficult for most people to read. Old English makes beautiful and tasty designs for refined society stationery. Copy the alphabet in figure nineteen, which will also be good to refer to for correct formation of letters. Old English cannot be successfully monogrammed and but few modifications are practical, but the letters can be decorated for initials as in figure twenty. Try to keep letters of this nature as uniform in appearance as possible.

FIGURE 19 SOCIETY OLD ENGLISH

A B C D E F G H I J
K L M N O P Q R S
T U V W X Y Z & \$;
a b c d e f g h i j k l m n
o p q r s t u v w x y z . 1 2 ?

FIGURE 20**FIGURE 21**

Combinations

Scroll designs and illustrations can be combined with lettering but you should make the design work secondary or auxiliary to your lettering. Don't try to crowd or make your lettering fit the design but make the design or illustration fit the lettering and not detract too much from the easy reading. Figure twenty-one is a symmetrical design. One side matches, or the reverse of the other side. In making a symmetrical design you should divide your space in the center and draw one-half of the design in pencil. Cover this with tracing cloth or transparent paper and trace in soft pencil, as in figure twenty-two. Mark center line and corners to aid in matching. Then reverse the tracing cloth on the undrawn side and go over it with hard pencil lines on the undrawn side of tracing cloth. This will transfer the soft lines to your drawing paper making you a complete lay out which you can ink in.

Figure twenty-three illustrates the marking of a drawing for reproduction. Indicate reducing size similar to the one above the drawing and when color tint cuts are desired you should indicate where the colors should be by the method shown, with light pencil, so that it will not conflict with the reproducing. A separate plate is required for each color printed, but one color can be printed over another making a combination color. Don't color your drawings for tint

FIGURE 22

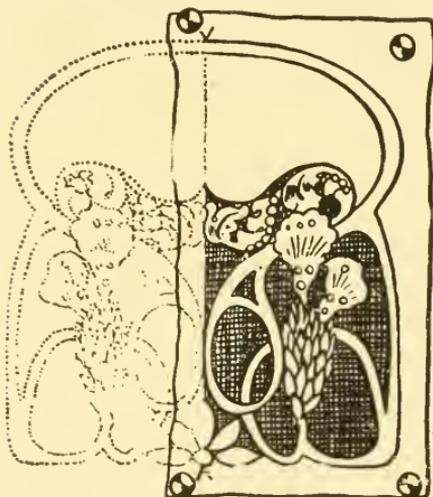
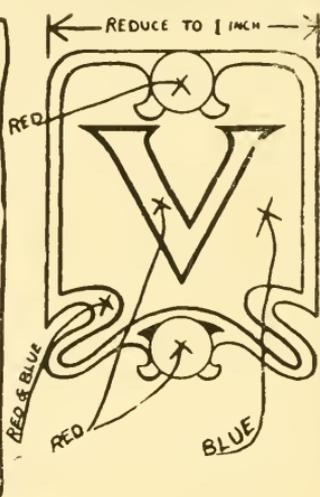
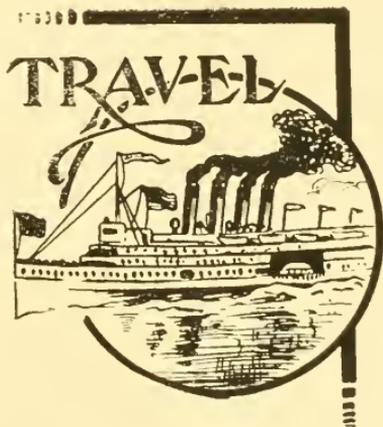
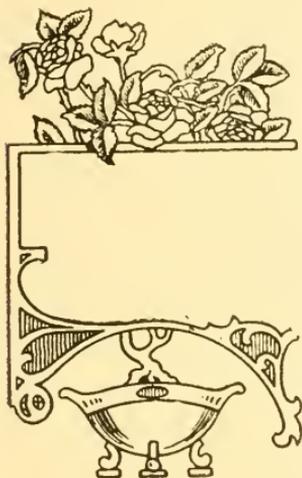


FIGURE 23



colors, because they cannot be successfully reproduced by photo engraving process. Drawings to be reproduced should be drawn with dense black upon clear white paper or bristol board. Line-drawings in black and white, similar to the illustrations in this book are reproduced by "zinc-etchings", while drawings in several tones such as wash, crayon and retouched photographs are reproduced by "half-tones". Photo-engravers and most printers will give you any information and prices on the reproduction of your drawings, you desire. You can make several designs for merchants and manufacturers in your city, such as signatures, trade-marks, labels, ad-designs and cover

designs. By getting estimates on zinc etchings from your nearest engraver, you can give your customer an estimate on drawing and reproductions.



In order to help you originate lettered designs and to illustrate the general nature of the customer's "copy", I have prepared the following six sample order lessons:

No. 1.—Make script signature design of "Millers Trunk Co; 428 Fourth Ave., Toledo, Ohio". Size of cuts to be 4 in. wide by 2 in. high.

No. 2.—Monogram in block letters "O E Co." Cut

No. 3.—Make magazine heading "THEATRE TALES size, 2x2 inches.

by Charles Frohman." Make design suggestive of Comic Opera, Cut size, 5 inches wide.

No. 4.—Make trade-mark design of "Kargol". Design must be 12 inches wide in heavy lettering.

No. 5.—Make catalog cover design "SPRING SHOWING of MILLINERY", Edmond & Parish, Exclusive Milliners, Chicago, U. S. A.

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No. 6.—Make drawing of pretty girl drinking from glass, labeled "GLEN SPRING WATER". Draw a landscape scene containing small brook in the back ground letter GLEN SPRING WATER across the top and "King of Table Drinks" across the bottom. Cut size, 2 columns wide by 6 inches high.

NOTE.—As a rule customers don't give all the instructions desired when ordering and you must use your own judgment and originality in making your drawing. You should get as much instructions and ideas from your customer as possible, so it will not be a hard problem to make the design satisfactory. It is advisable to submit the pencil lay-out or sketch to your customer, as any necessary changes can be easily made before inking.

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