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Page Three-three

Blatchford METAL

Backed by over 90 years of "know how" and
experience, Blatchford Metal is a name you
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Blatchford METAL

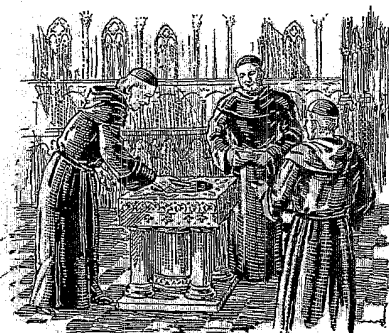


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DO YOU KNOW...

Why We Say a "Font" of Type?

Back in the early days of printing, most of the work produced was of a religious nature. A great deal of the printing was done by monks, since established printing houses were few and far between, and much of the equipment was made and kept in churches and monasteries. Space was at a premium in these ecclesiastical print shops, and the monks were constantly beset with a storage problem. Necessity finally nurtured invention, and they utilized rather unique receptacles for their equipment—one of the most efficient for holding type being the baptismal font.

Perhaps some of our more academic colleagues will insist that font comes from the French, meaning cast or flow. However, since printing is a very romantic art, its history being profusely colored with legend and fantasy, we prefer the "baptismal font" approach and feel you might too.

There may be two sides to the "font" question, but there is only one side to the question of top-quality type metal. Blatchford type metal is clean, free-flowing and low-drossing which means smoother operation, and more ems per hour. Stay on the right side of the type metal question by using Blatchford—it's the right answer.

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Inland Printer, July, 1947
Trade Compositor, June and November, 1947



DO YOU KNOW...

How the Word "Pica" Came into Use?

The original meaning of the word "pica" had nothing to do with printing. It stemmed from the Latin and signifies a species of birds now known as the magpie.

Although there is no conclusive evidence, there is an interesting theory as to why pica was adopted into the printing trade. When the ordinal, a set of ecclesiastical rules, was first printed in England, the Latin-speaking church dignitaries and monks were impressed by the sharply contrasting black and white appearance of the printed pages. This impression brought to mind the familiar black and white magpie common to England, and led the monks to apply the Latin name of the bird to the religious work. Somewhat later, pica was adopted as a type size, and it seems probable the ecclesiastical pica was printed with a type size unfamiliar to the trade.

The word received no new application until 1896 when the American Typographers Assn. chose the pica size "m" of MacCellar, Smith & Jordan as a 12 point standard.

Today very few of us would have occasion to use the word pica in its old religious sense. The word has changed. However, the demand for sharp, clean type has not changed through the years. Your prime assurance of crisp, clean work is good, clean type metal—Blatchford Metal.

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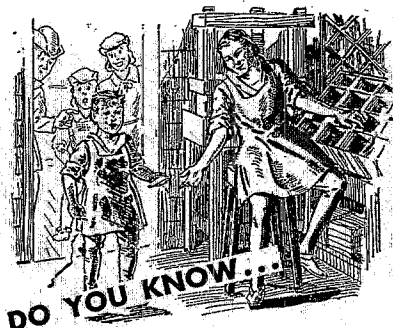
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How the Term "Printer's Devil" Originated?

Although there are several stories about the origin of the term "Printer's Devil", the following one has gained widespread acceptance, and is believed correct:

In the early 15th century, when printing was in its infancy, readers of books were accustomed to the uneven letters and spacing common to manuscripts of that day. Thus when John Fust, one of the first great printers, began to ply his trade in Paris, the superstitious townspeople accused him of practicing magic and being in league with the devil—since his work was so uniform and so precise.

Many historians feel that Fust added credence to this tale by hiring a small boy as a helper. Although hiring a boy, in itself, was innocent enough, the lad managed to get smeared with printer's ink constantly. The accusing finger was promptly pointed at the boy because of his appearance, and he became known as the "Printer's Devil."

Of course, today we know it isn't necessary to be in cahoots with the "Evil One" to produce uniform, precise products. For over 90 years, Blatchford has served the trade with type metal that is uniform and precise—uniform in selection of first-grade raw materials, precise in formulation and manufacture. It is the better metal.

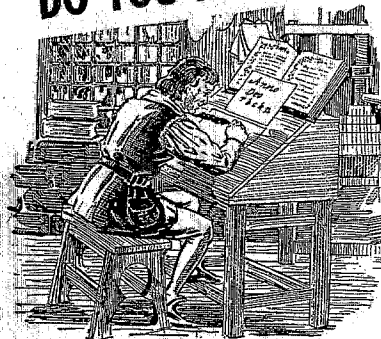
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Inland Printer, November, 1947
Trade Compositor, August, 1947 and January, 1948

DO YOU KNOW . . .



When and Where Italics Were First Used?

Aldus Manutius, a noted Venetian printer, is credited with being the originator of italics. In his day, books (both written and printed) were rather ponderous. Realizing the need for smaller editions, Manutius resolved to perfect a type face that was more compact, yet just as readable as conventional faces. As his model he used the close, precise, yet free-flowing handwriting of the Italian poet, Petrarch.

In 1501 a small octavo edition of Virgil was published in this new face. Although this edition had italics in lower case letters only, it was much in demand.

Seeing this demand, Manutius, a good business man as well as a master printer, obtained a letter of privilege from Pope Leo X. This letter granted Manutius the exclusive right to use the new type.

Since this new form was originated and first used in Italy, the name *italic*, meaning "from Italy" was given to it.

The fact that italics have been in constant demand by the printing industry for five centuries is conclusive proof of their worth. Time is indeed a true test, and we can say with pride that Blatchford Metal has passed this test with flying colors. For over 90 years Blatchford has been supplying superior type metal. Users say—"Darn good stuff, Blatchford." Truly a time-tested metal.

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DO YOU KNOW...



Why a Point Is 1/72 of an Inch?

Until the middle of the 18th century, very little was done to standardize type size. What was a St. Augustine for one printer may have been a Pica for another, the numerical designation of type sizes being unknown in those days.

However, in 1737, Pierre Simon Fournier, acutely aware of the need for standardization, developed a system which he proposed as a scale for fixing the sizes of common type faces. He chose an arbitrary measurement for his scale, divided it into 72 parts, and called the divisions "points". Lack of scientific approach and a number of variables (shrinkage of paper, etc.) prevented the scale from being mechanically accurate, but it was a step in the right direction.

After Fournier's death the system was developed further by the French printer, François Ambroise Didot. He devised a more universal unit of measurement, and also introduced the numerical designation of type size we use today.

Fournier criticized the printing conditions of his day, and being a man of initiative and action, did something about them. We at Blatchford are critical too—of our own product and we also do something about it. Constant experimentation and analysis, done by skilled technicians, assure you of a better type metal—Blatchford.

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