The Speedball Text Book

Modern Pen Lettering

by Ross F. George

Edition

Fifth Printing With Index

Short simplified methods with modern lettering pens—offering a comprehensive collection of the most practical alphabets, decorative borders, show-cut stunts & artistic designs for Teachers, Students, Commercial Artists, Engravers, Draftsmen & Card Writers
Introductory

The chief difficulty in lettering does not lie in drawing the characters but rather in producing clean, clear-cut elementary strokes with either pens or brushes, the latter being extremely hard to manipulate successfully owing to absence of the feel of firm contact with the marking surface. This results in a wavering degree of uniformity in the elementary strokes which requires subsequent trimup, patching, remodeling etc. usually disastrous to the appearance of the finished product and indicating lack of technique. The introduction of Gordon & George patent ‘SPEEDBALL’ Lettering and Drawing Pens has fulfilled the promise of an improved medium for the production of modern styles in hand lettering at high speed. These pens are now used in all branches of the art of applied lettercraft throughout the civilized world and are now available in four styles: square, round, oblong, oval, affording a most efficient working assortment of twenty-five pens. The examples in this book, which illustrate in a measure the scope of the Speedball, are the product of practical advertising men.

Also, there is offered in this book a simple but comprehensive system of instruction that has won the international praise of both teachers and craftsmen. It presents lettering for commercial purposes in a manner that appeals to the amateur and the experienced professional alike.
NOTE CAREFULLY

To successfully manipulate any pen, it is necessary that the operator be thoroughly familiar with both its potentials and its limitations.

In the production of letters by hand, study first the primacy construction of their elements. Then determine just what style of a pen will best produce these elementary strokes with the least amount of effort. Do not attempt to copy or reproduce any letter or alphabet with a pen or a brush that is not adapted to the production of its elements. Such efforts are generally misdirected and usually result in a failure or an unnecessary loss of time and effort. There is a Speedball pen designed for every different alphabet.

In selecting a pen for any given letter let it be of a style which will produce lines conforming to the characteristics of the alphabet. It should make the thinnest elements in a stroke without subsequent retouching, or patching up. The thicker or wider elements may then be produced by doubling or tripling the strokes if a heavier letter is desired. A very flexible, fine pointed pen is usually a poor medium in that it gives a varying-degree thickness of stroke and is hard to control on oval or circular elements because it digs into the surface of the paper.

Never use a T-square, ruler or compass in drawing the elements of any letter. These instruments should be used only for ruling or penciling guide lines, mechanical borders, etc. A letter that is ruled is simply a mechanical draft; it may resemble a type, but never hand lettering, and is almost impossible to arrange in an artistic manner. The freedom, grace and individual touch of hand lettercraft usually result from the rhythmic training of the hand, arm and fingers to act in subconscious union, using a continuity of movements much the same as those taught in penmanship, which never will be imitated with the use of mechanical appliances.

LETTERING INKS

Without the proper inks or colors, it is impossible to get the best results from any pen. For lettering purposes, thin, watery, transparent inks or fluids and thick, gummy, sticky masses never produce good results. But the standard brands of waterproof or India drawing and lettering inks are generally excellent for pen lettering.

When good lettering inks are not available, opaque colors will be found more practical for show card work than transparent colored inks. But show card colors prepared for brush use seldom work satisfactorily in pens without special treatment. To produce good results, a small quantity of the desired color should be put into a separate jar and thinned with a solution consisting of four parts water, one part alcohol and a few drops of glycerine. This mixture must be well stored and of a consistency that will permit it to flow freely from the pen. Do not prepare a large quantity of these show card colors as they work best when freshly mixed. If the colors evaporate and become too thick, thin with the solution mentioned, and if they still flow too slowly the feeder on the pen may be raised just a little.

Pen feeders clogged with ink should be cleared before using. When using white or heavy opaque colors, brush out the pens occasionally to keep the feeders from getting clogged. If they do become clogged, scrub them out in water with an old tooth brush to remove the hardened ink.

Owing to a constant demand for specially prepared lettering inks that can be used successfully with Speedball lettering pens, we have placed at the disposal of penmen, letterers, designers, etc., Speedball lettering inks. These are made in all the brilliant colors of the rainbow—red, orange, yellow, emerald, turquoise, green, blue, mauve, brown, Sho-card black, Tar-Black Waterproof and white. Speedball inks are sold by stationers and art supply dealers everywhere.

It is unnecessary to use a dropper, quill or stick to fill the Speedball. Simply dip it into the ink like any ordinary pen and shake or draw off the surplus by drawing the side of the pen across the edge of the bottle. The flat, bent-up section of the tip is the marking surface and should rest evenly on the surface, of the card when making a stroke. Styles A, B or D will function successfully when moved in any direction, up, down or sideways, while Style C, which is a more flexible type of lettering pen, designed particularly for the Roman, Text and Manuscript alphabets, will function best when it is handled in the normal lettering manner.

KEEP YOUR PENS CLEAN IF YOU WANT THEM TO DO GOOD WORK.
Classification of letter styles by division of groups

**GOTHIC** All letters having the elementary strokes of even width are classified as Gothic — before the adoption of this simplified segregation, text letters were confusingly classified as novice.

**Roman** All letters having elementary strokes “accented” or consisting of heavy and light lines, are classified as Roman.

**Italic** All slanting letters are classified as Italic’s. These can be further designated as Roman Italics – Gothic Italics – Text Italics.

**Text** This term includes all styles of Old English, German text, Bradley text or others of various trade names – Text styles are too illegible for commercial purposes.

“Serif” a term applied to one of the fine lines of a letter especially one of the lines crossing at the top or bottom.

\[\text{n} \quad \text{h} \quad \text{h} \quad \text{m} \quad \text{m} \quad \text{m} \quad \text{m} \quad \text{n} \quad \text{m}\]

The addition of a different style of Spurs does not alter the classification of any letter or alphabet tho it may change its general appearance and trade name. Note examples of Roman letters, with difference in spurs:

Roman - Roman
Roman - Roman
Roman - Roman
ROMAN: GOTHIC
Briefly—The art of lettering is most easily accomplished by assembly of the given principles, or elementary parts of each letter, each and every element must be produced with a single stroke of the lettering pen or brush.~ Remember, There are certain special pens and brushes which are best adapted to producing the elementary parts with a single stroke. Therefore, avoid a waste of time and effort in attempting letter styles with a tool not adapted to the production of the strokes without re-modeling.

Elementary Strokes—Roman letters.

Elementary Strokes—Gothic letters.

Elementary Strokes—Text letters.

Illustrating the various combinations of curves, angles and serifs in Text lettering.

Any of the above elements made on a slant from the vertical are termed Italics. Derived from the Italic styles of script lettering.
A Primary System of Line Ruling for Easy Letter Construction

Note - 5 lines and 4 spaces in music staff:

Most everyone is familiar with the arrangement of 5 lines and 4 spaces in the music staff. This arrangement is identical with the system of alignment used in ruling guide lines for lettering.

| Height of CAPITALS and all small letters which ascend above normal top line - No. 2 |
| Top Line - height of all normal small letters |
| Waist Line |
| Base Line - CAPITALS and all normal small letters |
| Drop Line - indicates depth of all small letters which descend below normal base line - No. 4 |

Ascenders - Small letters which ascend above normal height

Capital Letters

bd fh klt ABLfgj pqy g

Descenders - Small letters which descend below normal base line

ace imnors uvwxz &!

(normal small letters)

In technical terms - Capital letters are called "Upper Case" All small letters are called "Lower Case" (Printer's term)

This scheme of ruling was conceived by Wm. Hugh Gordon for beginners use, and is not recommended for general work.
ANYONE who can write can learn lettering, for no unusual talent is needed. Of course, some progress faster than others. Yet those who practice intelligently and conscientiously have little trouble mastering the fundamentals. The student will find this book a comprehensive and practical guide, whether he letters for a livelihood or just for the pleasure it affords. Carefully selected alphabets, layouts, studies and working examples are constructively shown, to save time and effort.

Modern merchandising is so dependent upon show cards to sell its wares that we seldom see displays without them. In supplying this demand for legible show cards or posters, the experienced craftsman knows that a man can't buy fifty pens, more work and do it better with a pen than he can with a brush. This explains why the bulk of display cards are now pen lettered. It is quite a trick to letter a mass of copy with a brush and he is paid no more for the tedious brush job than for one lettered with a pen. When the work appears uniform, easy to read, and is ready on time, the customer is not concerned with how it is made.

With this in mind, let us explain why the marking tips of the different pens used for constructing various alphabets are so shaped. The square-tipped (Style A) Speedball pen was developed at a time when display advertising was strongly influenced by the square finish German poster letters which the busy card writers were finding very difficult and unprofitably slow to reproduce with the old chisel-edged pens and brushes they had to work with at the time. These new Style A pens produced square alphabets single stroke fashion and were so easy to use that they won immediate favor among artists and letterers. When the modified American variations began to replace the stiff German styles, new speed production problems were created for the letterer. At this time the round-tipped (Style B) Speedball pen was developed. And this pen proved to be the best all-round lettering tool the artist had.

Soon after this heavy poster vogue in lettering, there came a swing back to the Roman and the more graceful Italic styles of Medieval times. The beautiful characters introduced by these early Italian scribes and the variations later developed for the press by the French and English designers challenged the utmost skill of the artist. The influence of the flexible, chiseled, noticeably pronounced in the modern Roman and Italic derivations of our present-day designers. This vogue called out the old round writing pens and created a demand for a longer, more flexible lettering tool that would duplicate the strokes designed with the flexible reed. The Style C Speedball pen answered this demand and is the most popular pen for this purpose.

Following this period of thick-and-thinner Roman letters came the vogue for thick-and-thicker poster styles that brought out many easier reading Roman and Text variations. These were designed with the Style B pen, building up the thicker elements with additional strokes. This "building up" took extra time for which the show card man received no reward. So the call for a pen that would produce this heavy Roman alphabet as easily and quickly as the Style C pen did the thick-and-thinner letters was answered with the Style D Speedball. This Style D pen has a marking point that resembles an elongated oval and is much easier to manipulate than the Style C, due to the absence of fine lateral lines.

All Speedballs are equipped with three reservoir ink retainers. The main reservoirs are designed to safely carry a large supply of ink and the auxiliary reservoir above the marking tip insures its even distribution over the entire marking surface. This auxiliary reservoir also acts as an automatic check valve to prevent ink blox, making the pens so easy to use that even the novice experiences no difficulty with their manipulation.

The simplest alphabet for a beginner is the Gothic, because all its elements are of uniform thickness. Leading up to this, a few exercises are offered on Page 6. Practice on any smooth card or paper, ruling three lines about half an inch apart for each line of lettering. At first, use a B-1 pen with black Speedball ink, which is recommended because of its special flowing qualities. When loading a pen dip it deep enough to fill both large reservoirs. Drain off surplus ink by drawing the side of an empty pen across the edge of the bottle. Hold the pen like a pencil, keeping its marking tip flat on the paper. Work on a slanting desk, holding the card with the left hand so the natural downward pull of the right arm will follow the vertical axis of the card. Sit erect and close to the desk.

Work with a full arm movement, maintaining an even pressure on the pen. Resting an instant at the finish of each stroke before lifting the pen ionizes sharper terminal. Take up the letter exercises in the order given, making complete lines of each. Start with the vertical line (downward), then the oblique strokes (left to right and right to left) and then try combinations in the order of H, I, F, E, N, M, V, A, W, X, T, Y and Z. When you can make these fairly uniform go on to the circular exercises. Start with a few lines of half circles to the left, then to the right, carrying each stroke well past center. Now combine these, completing the circle or letter O without the overlaps showing. The circular exercises starting left, then right, will be found very helpful in developing a free arm swing. Follow these with the other circular letters G, D, B, R, Q and until you can write the entire alphabet shown on Page 7. Practice different word combinations and sentences. Then learn the numerals and follow with the "lower case," or small letters.

Study the action of your pen. If it produces ragged work, find out why. Are you holding it so that the marking tip does not glide flat over the paper? Or are you nicking it up before the stroke's completion? This is a common error at first. Its result is a broken stroke, producing ragged terminals and lateral strokes. Perhaps the surplus ink was not drained off or the pens are so clogged with hardened ink that the liquid cannot flow. Working over strokes usually chokes the tip with clogged ink. You cannot do clean work with dirty pens, so keep them clean by scrubbing occasionally with a wet toothbrush. If the feeder gets sprung away from contact, slip a small knife blade under the neck where it joins the pen and pry it up a little while holding the tip in contact with the nib. This will set it back into position again.

Work with an even stroke and do not be too great a hurry. "Learn to walk before you try to run." Save time by studying the form and construction of each letter before you start. With a pencil draw out the strokes in their consecutive order and retrace them with a pen. Note where the elements start and where they stop, then strove to complete them in a single stroke. Numbered with your pen properly it will not be necessary to retrace letters. When you can handle the Gothic alphabet with a large pen, practice it with each of the smaller pens, ruling paper guide lines proportionately closer.

"Plug Gothic," illustrates on Pages 7 and 9, show how different alphabets are created simply by adding or altering serif. Other examples are offered throughout the book. While such alternations change the appearance and trade name, they do not affect the general classification of the alphabet.
Gothic

Slant position of hand when making italic letters with either the Style C or Style D.

Three points of contact.

Roman

Vertical position of hand in making Roman letters for both styles C or D.

Three points of contact.

SHOWING HOW TO HOLD THE SPEEDBALL PEN

"Grip pen lightly between two first fingers and thumb. "Like you Hold Your Pencil."

Dip it deep enough to load both feeders and drain off surplus ink on edge of bottle.

Work with a smooth arm movement keeping the marking tip flat on the paper.

Do not contract fingers when making strokes. Use any free-flowing ink.

FIRST TRY THESE ELEMENTARY PRACTICE EXERCISES WITH STYLE B PEN

IIIIIIIIIII EEEEEEEEEEEE HHHHHHHHHH EEEE

NMNM VAVAVA WXWX KYZYK

CCOOOOOOOOOOOOO QQQQ $$SS8
ELEMENTARY PRINCIPLES OF LETTER CONSTRUCTION

Arrows indicate direction of strokes and numbers the order in which they are made: Note - When joining circular elements OVERLAP strokes.

abcdefgijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

These letters were made with the style "B" round point Speedball pens. Broken strokes show construction.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZOPQRSTUVWXYZ

WXYZ&WSSSS8$123456789¢

Gothic Alphabet with PLUG finish added changes its name to 'Plug Gothic' but constructive elements do not change.

abcdefgijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Any of the basic alphabets can be thus changed in looks and name by adding or changing the Style of Finish.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZOPQRSTUVWXYZ

WXYZ&WSSSS8$123456789¢
Showing by Comparative Examples How Lettering is Related to Writing

Note striking similarity of ordinary writing to Italic and to Roman Lettering.

\[ a-b-b\cdot c-c-d-d-e-e-f-f-g-g-h-h-i-i-j-j \]
\[ a\cdot b\cdot c\cdot d\cdot e\cdot f\cdot g\cdot h\cdot i\cdot j\cdot k\cdot l\cdot m\cdot n\cdot o\cdot p \]
\[ a\cdot b\cdot c\cdot d\cdot e\cdot f\cdot g\cdot h\cdot i\cdot j\cdot k\cdot l\cdot m\cdot n\cdot o\cdot p \]

Also the similarity of Vertical Round Writing and the Roman Lettering.

Round-writing - joined by connecting strokes - abcedfgijklm

Round writing unjoined and the loops left off "m"

Round writing thus becomes Vertical Roman

Evolution of Letter Styles

From common basic principles - single-stroked - with a Speedball.

\[ a\cdot b\cdot c\cdot d\cdot e\cdot f\cdot g\cdot h\cdot i\cdot j\cdot k\cdot l\cdot m\cdot n\cdot o\cdot p\cdot q\cdot r\cdot s\cdot t\cdot u\cdot v\cdot w\cdot x\cdot y\cdot z \]
\[ a\cdot b\cdot c\cdot d\cdot e\cdot f\cdot g\cdot h\cdot i\cdot j\cdot k\cdot l\cdot m\cdot n\cdot o\cdot p\cdot q\cdot r\cdot s\cdot t\cdot u\cdot v\cdot w\cdot x\cdot y\cdot z \]
\[ a\cdot b\cdot c\cdot d\cdot e\cdot f\cdot g\cdot h\cdot i\cdot j\cdot k\cdot l\cdot m\cdot n\cdot o\cdot p\cdot q\cdot r\cdot s\cdot t\cdot u\cdot v\cdot w\cdot x\cdot y\cdot z \]
\[ a\cdot b\cdot c\cdot d\cdot e\cdot f\cdot g\cdot h\cdot i\cdot j\cdot k\cdot l\cdot m\cdot n\cdot o\cdot p\cdot q\cdot r\cdot s\cdot t\cdot u\cdot v\cdot w\cdot x\cdot y\cdot z \]
\[ a\cdot b\cdot c\cdot d\cdot e\cdot f\cdot g\cdot h\cdot i\cdot j\cdot k\cdot l\cdot m\cdot n\cdot o\cdot p\cdot q\cdot r\cdot s\cdot t\cdot u\cdot v\cdot w\cdot x\cdot y\cdot z \]

\[ a\cdot b\cdot c\cdot d\cdot e\cdot f\cdot g\cdot h\cdot i\cdot j\cdot k\cdot l\cdot m\cdot n\cdot o\cdot p\cdot q\cdot r\cdot s\cdot t\cdot u\cdot v\cdot w\cdot x\cdot y\cdot z \]

\[ a\cdot b\cdot c\cdot d\cdot e\cdot f\cdot g\cdot h\cdot i\cdot j\cdot k\cdot l\cdot m\cdot n\cdot o\cdot p\cdot q\cdot r\cdot s\cdot t\cdot u\cdot v\cdot w\cdot x\cdot y\cdot z \]

\[ a\cdot b\cdot c\cdot d\cdot e\cdot f\cdot g\cdot h\cdot i\cdot j\cdot k\cdot l\cdot m\cdot n\cdot o\cdot p\cdot q\cdot r\cdot s\cdot t\cdot u\cdot v\cdot w\cdot x\cdot y\cdot z \]

The most strikingly characteristic letter styles are those of the single-stroke variety.
Gothic Italics and Derivatives for B&H Speedballs

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

With the Plug Serif added it becomes 'Plug-Gothic' Italics

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

Style 'A' Speedball gives us the 'Text Gothic' Italics

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

Roman and Text Italic alphabets for Styles C and D Speedball Pens are found on page 17.
CORRECT LETTER SPACING
IS NOT A MATHEMATICAL PROBLEM AND CAN NEVER BE
SATISFACTORY MEASURED WITH THE MECHANICAL RULE;
LETTERS SHOULD BE FITTED TOGETHER SO THEY READ
CLEARLY AND APPEAR PLEASINGLY UNIFORM
THE FOLLOWING DIAGRAM OFFERS A
MOST ELEMENTARY WORKING GUIDE

"NOTE HOW SPACES ARE OPTICALLY EQUALIZED"
WHEN LETTERS ARE MEASURED OR SPACED WITH THE YARD-STICK
IE EACH LETTER MADE TO OCCUPY AN EQUAL AREA OR THE SPACES
BETWEEN THE SAME WIDTH, THEY APPEAR SPOTTY AND ILLEGIBLE

MINNETWATA
Note how legibility improves when letters and spaces are "optically" equalized?
MINNETWATA

More space has been allowed for the M-N-W-A to equalize their appearance.
The following examples illustrate very clearly the advantage
Optical spacing has over Mechanical spacing with circular letters

POODLE-DOG
All letters occupy the same area, and all spaces are measured equal width.
This causes the letters to appear more as individual characters rather than as words.
The following illustrates how they should be spaced to insure better reading qualities.

DOOMING-VS-DOOMING
The area between various letter combinations should be equalized to insure maximum legibility and prevent ugly gaps.
LETTER SPACING

Good spacing is more important than good lettering. Many beginners who can make a fair alphabet have too much trouble with letter spacing. If an effort is made to equalize the space between the letters while learning their construction, this can be avoided. A page of lettering properly done has an even tone over all. Keep this in mind and study your finished work with half-closed eyes to find the gaps or dark spots in it.

Correct spacing does not mean using a ruler to make the areas that the letters occupy, or the spaces between them, equal. Letters spaced in such mechanical fashion seldom appear uniform and the effect produced is detrimental to legibility. The experienced letterer achieves correct spacing intuitively. Such work is “optically equalized.” But fortunately for the beginner, whose sense of equalization may not be fully developed, it is based upon simple principles that afford something tangible to work with and that anyone can learn in a few minutes. These rules of good spacing are:

1. Different letters and dividing areas seldom occupy like spaces.
2. Words read better when the spaces between the letters are less than half the space occupied by the letters themselves.
4. Ugly gaps between irregular shaped letters can be avoided by fitting them closer together according to their shape.
5. Circular and irregular shaped letters should cut into the space or spaces between them and the letters adjoined to their curved or irregular sides, and the amount thus taken from the “dividing” areas should be about equal to the unused space at the top and bottom of the block that squares the letter’s apportioned area.
6. Letters can also be divided into groups called Narrow, B-E-F-J-J-L-P-S-T-Y and .; Normal, C-D-G-H-K-)Q-R-U-V-X-Z and &; and Wide, A-M-N and W.
7. Compressing a wide letter into the same space as that occupied by a narrow or a normal letter causes it to appear blacker than the rest of the letters. And stretching a narrow letter into the space of a wide one makes it appear lighter than the rest. These faults cause lettering to appear spotty and hard to read.

The chart on Page 10 illustrates these laws of letter spacing. The full space as it appears between two straight letters is shown by the stippled block marked “A.” Block “B” illustrates the dividing area between two circular letters. Note how the letters cut into it. Block “C” shows how the area appears between a circular and a straight letter. Block “D” shows the area between an irregular and a straight letter. Note that the space (marked X) at the top and bottom of a circular letter approximately equals what the letter cuts out of the dividing area (also marked with an X). Possibly this is better illustrated in the smaller diagram at the top. The irregular letters must be fitted a bit closer together to compensate for their shape.

Combinations shown below the chart illustrate how the principles work when applied to various words. The first example, “Minnetonka,” shows the mechanical spacing of straight letters. Each letter occupies the same area and the dividing areas are likewise the same. By comparing this line with the second, which is the same word arranged according to the principles given above, you will notice that the letters M, N, W and A require more space to keep them from appearing blacker than the rest, and that in the first line the spaces between the letters (marked X) are too great in area due to the irregular shapes of the letters themselves. In other words, the faults in the first line were remedied in the second line simply by setting the letters closer together and expanding the letters that should be wider (M-N-W and A).

The third and fourth lines, “Poodle Dog,” illustrate the difference between the mechanical and the optical spacing of circular letters. In the third line the letters all are of uniform width and the spaces between them also are uniform. The result is rather irritating and difficult to read, the letters appearing to be more or less unrelated. Note the ugly gaps caused by the combination in the first example, caused by the mechanical spacing of the circular letters, destroys the unity of the word. This fault is corrected in the second example by spacing these circular letters closer together. When good lettering appears uneven, spotty or hard to read you will always find the spacing at fault.
MODERN Single Stroke ROMAN
A rapid legible alphabet for Artists and Sho-card Writers.

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

A rapid single stroke showcard alphabet that can be mastered with a little careful practice. Note that a flexible manipulation of the pen is required to produce the sharp or clean cut serifs and the finished elements in a single stroke.
The elementary principles of “modern” Roman lettering

A B C D E F G H J I K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

(dotted lines indicate the direction (and order) of strokes)
THE ROMAN ALPHABET

Roman is by far our most beautiful alphabet. It radiates a dignified atmosphere of reliability, elegance and refinement desirable in many classes of advertising. It is especially adapted to conservative publicity and the advertising of quality merchandise. Roman characters furnish the most stable foundation for individualistic conceptions or type innovations in either upright or Italic styles.

The Roman alphabet is an evolution of ancient Egyptian writings. Its development has been traced back some five or six thousand years through the writings of the Greeks, Phoenicians and Persians. The inscription on the base of the Trajan Column in Rome (circa 114 A.D.) records its best early development. Roman lower case came as a later development, about the fifteenth or sixteenth century, and has been subjected to improvement ever since.

The holding and manipulation of the flat reed pen used by the early Italian scribes accounts for the varying order of the thick and thin strokes as they appear in the different letters. For example, the two vertical strokes in the letter N are thin, while in the letter H they are thick and in the letter M they are thin and thick, etc. This irregular order made the Roman capitals very tricky and difficult to produce with speed and accounted in no small measure for the origination of the French half-uncial. This new speed writing appeared in the fifth or sixth century in response to a demand for a faster, more legible style of writing to be used in the revision of a vast number of church books. It was a cross between a crude anticipation of our present-day Roman lower case and the unfinished Roman capitals. It no doubt influenced the development of the Roman lower case and Italic styles that appeared later.

As Roman letters became standardized and were adapted to stone cutting, their most noticeable modification was a slight spur, or serif added to the terminals, increasing both beauty and legibility. A study of present day styles discloses how most modernized alphabets are created simply by changing the design of the serif.

For descriptive copy or for words of special emphasis, Italics can be employed effectively at a big saving in time and effort. Italic letters are simply slanted vertical letters. In Roman Italics, the thick and thin elements follow more closely the natural stroke of the flat pen and writing hand. Different shaped pens and oblique holding account for most of the accepted variations in style and finish.

It is interesting to see how cleverly the old scribes took advantage of the flexibility of the reed pen in designing their improved alphabets. They wasted no strokes and did little patching up, and their example can be followed profitably today. Letterers must choose the tool best suited to the production of each different style of letter if they want to be successful. No practical craftsman would try to imitate the letters created with flexible, chisel-edged pens using stiff, blunt end tools, any more than a jeweler would try to set diamonds with a crow-bar. Choose the right tool for the job. It is poor business to work under unnecessary mechanical handicaps. Bold letters are best made with pens having flat, bent-up marking tips, while thick and thin letters are made with flexible chisel-edged pens, etc. The pen best suited to the job will, in most cases, make the various elements in a single stroke.

In learning the “single stroke” Roman, analyzed on Pages 12 and 13, study the individual letters carefully before using the pen. Note where strokes are started and terminated and their order of construction. Use a No. 1 Style C pen, making a page of each letter. Next make several pages of the full alphabets, both lower and upper cases, combining a smooth arm movement with a flexible manipulation of the pen. Letters should be one inch high at first, ruling three guide lines for each line of copy. Keep the serifs uniform and equalize the space between the letters as you work.

Next practice words and group them into geometric blocks as they would appear on a show card. Round out the circular letters and never unnecessarily crowd a word. Where holder letters are desired a Style D Speedball will produce heavier elements with the same strokes. When you can juggle these letters with a large pen, try them proportionately smaller with the other sizes. Make a few plain show cards with this alphabet, using the block system of layout shown on Page 27 in arranging your copy on the card.

Suitable pictures to illustrate the show card may be clipped from magazines. Adding a touch of color takes away the “stock” on effect. For pasting, rubber cement is preferred because it does not curl the clippings or warp the card, and can be easily rubbed off.
Letters are outlined with *5 style BerD* Speedball Pen, then filled-in.

Original lettered on a 9 x 14 card. This alphabet was fashioned from the early Roman letters of the 2nd century found on the Trajan columns. It offers a substantial base upon which new letter innovations may be designed. The characters J, U, W, & I did not appear in the early Roman alphabet.
Double-Stroke Poster Roman
Letters Built-up with #4 Style B Speedball (Round Point) Pen
Note: A close imitation of double-stroke lettering is produced by the single-stroke method using Style D Speedball (oval point) Pens.

abcdefg ABCDEFG
hijklmn GHJKLM
opqrstuvwxyz NOPQRSTUVWXYZ

All Obliques - drawn from left to right are thick
LAVXWNMKY //

All Obliques - drawn from right to left are thin
/AVXWMKY  Sape Z //

Note: the size pen best suited to the job will complete the thin elements in a single stroke.
Style "D" of the Speedball family

Offers the closest imitation of small brush work
at twice the speed of proficient brush letterers,

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

BOLD ROMAN CAPITALS WITH STYLE "D"

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

WX·$12345: Bold Roman Lower-case
with Style "D" Speedball

:6789¢ & YZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

The Style C pen is also well adapted to the construction of this alphabet, lending a little lighter appearance to the finished letter.
BALANCING THE LAYOUT

"Layout" is the card writer's word for the arrangement of "copy." It is a very important subject for even good lettering, correctly spaced, is ineffective if poorly arranged. Copy containing only a few words, and perhaps an illustration, is not hard to lay out. But copy consisting of many phrases, sentences or even paragraphs must be carefully divided into appropriate blocks before any attempt is made to arrange it on the card.

One of the quickest ways to learn how to balance layout is to think of all words, illustrations, border ornaments and color masses as though they were children's building blocks. Group the word blocks into larger phrase blocks—though sometimes a single word is a block in itself—because of its importance and then balance all pictures, spots of color or decorative masses against these phrase blocks according to their size or power of attraction. It is easy to see how this scheme minimizes layout problems because, instead of a lot of individual words, there are only a few masses or groups to fit into a given space. By keeping the blocks simple in shape it is not difficult to arrange them in a pleasing and effective manner.

When there is considerable copy to go on a card it should not all be done in the same size lettering. This would make the poster look like a page out of a book. The difference in the size of the lettering naturally depends upon the relative importance of the various words or phrase blocks. Less important blocks are often lettered with the Italic alphabet corresponding to the style of letter used for the rest of the copy. But it is not considered good taste to use Gothic and Roman, Roman and Text or Gothic and Text on the same card.

The two Boston Pencil Sharpener cards above illustrate the difference between a good and a bad arrangement with the same blocks of copy used for both layouts. A comparison of these emphasizes the superiority of the "optically balanced" arrangement (see Page 23). Diagrams and other suggestions for solving layout problems will be found on the pages following.
A PANEL OF LETTERING MECHANICALLY BALANCED UPON TRUE CENTER WITHIN A MECHANICALLY SPACED BORDER always appears BOTTOM HEAVY because no allowance has been made for the downward pull of gravitation.

A PANEL OF COPY IS MORE PLEASING AND EFFECTIVE when balanced upon OPTICAL CENTER and surrounded by LIBERAL MARGINS.

The following rule should give you splendid results: make the side margins four-sevenths as wide at bottom and the top five-sevenths as wide.

A Bottom Heavy Layout

Pleasingly Balanced Layout

A Bad Layout - Poor arrangement of blocks disturbing the eye.

A Better Layout - Groups of blocks are balanced upon optical center.

EQUAL BLOCKS BALANCED AT EQUAL DISTANCE FROM OPTICAL CENTER.

UNEQUAL BLOCKS ARE BALANCED BY VALUE the difference in values of the masses is off-center area.

UNEQUAL Masses BALANCED BY THEIR DISTANCE FROM CENTER.

UNEQUAL Masses BALANCED BY THEIR DIFFERENT ATTRACTION VALUES.

The arrangement and balance of unrelated masses and the apportioning of harmonious margins.
A few of the most common errors in the Harmony of unrelated shapes are corrected above. These diagrams, which are suggestive of many similar problems the letterer must deal with every day, will serve as working examples and form a basis upon which comparisons may be made.
Using the "scale" to illustrate how layouts are balanced.

The smaller examples at the top illustrate how the balance of a show card may be checked up with the aid of a pin. When the distribution of various masses is correct the poster will seem to hang straight. The two larger examples show how unrelated masses are balanced.
OPTICAL CENTER LAYOUT

Strange as it may seem, layouts which are perfectly balanced upon the true center of a card, with equal margins all around, generally appear to be bottom heavy or spaced too low. This downward pull may be just another of the many tricks our eyes are continually playing upon our minds. But whatever the cause, every letterer with a good sense of balance makes an instinctive effort to counteract this effect by placing the copy higher on the card. And many professional letterers have found from experience that the most pleasing and effective layouts are balanced on a point that is about five per cent above the actual center of a well-proportioned panel. As this point is usually measured by the eye rather than by any mechanical means, we call it "optical center."

In addition to arranging the copy around such an optical center, the good letterer increases the effect of balance by allowing a wider margin at the bottom than at the top. The old Greek formula for relative proportions applied to the area in the margins of a panel was something like this—sides 5, top 7, bottom 11. Modern card writers find it more practical to use a relative scale of 4 for the side areas, 5 for the top and 7 for the bottom. That is, the bottom margin is about 30 per cent wider than the top. This serves as a safe working guide which, of course, may be varied to fit different conditions. For instance, in order to have the working examples in this book as large as possible, the margins have been sacrificed for these illustrations.

For those who find arranging a layout rather difficult, examples found on pages 20, 22, 23, 25 and 27 illustrate how the "scale system" may be used to assist in the balancing of two or more unrelated masses, using the optical center as the pivot point for the scale bar. Where a block of copy is balanced against an illustration or color mass, note how the center of attraction in each is used as their balance point in determining where they will most effectively fit upon the card with relation to each other and to optical center. (See Page 22.) If the attraction power of the different masses is equal, they are balanced at like distances from the optical center or pivot point of the scale. Should one have greater attraction power than another, this power being created by size, shape or color, it is balanced proportionately nearer to the pivot point of the bar than the other.

The smaller examples on Page 22 also suggest another good method of determining when the poster is balanced. Pin it up on the wall and with half-closed eyes study the arrangement of the various blocks or masses. When it seems to hang with an equal division of the values on either side, you may be pretty sure that the layout is all right.

Many of the difficulties with layout encountered by beginners are caused by trying to get too much copy on a card. The purpose of a show card or poster is to attract attention or to make an announcement. The details can be told by word of mouth or by a circular or a newspaper. The copy on the card should be limited, if possible, to the main points and the most essential information. If the letterer will learn to sort out these important features and to reduce the number of words to the minimum required to make the message of the poster clear and effective, the task of "layout" will be greatly simplified. If the letterer is given too much copy for a good card and has no authority to alter it, he must learn to choose the chief points for the main and subordinate headings and subdue the rest of the copy so as not to detract from these.
Balancing the Elements of a Poster by the Scale layout

Note: This diagram illustrates the principles of composition. The elements are arranged to create a balanced and visually appealing layout.
The finest of lettering loses its effectiveness when improperly spaced, arranged or aligned. Mediocre or even poor lettering is preferable if tastily arranged in a well-balanced mass, of good geometrical proportions, to form a part of the whole design. Lettering in mass or page form, or groups of masses must conform in area to the space in which it appears. Note appended diagrams.

**Annual January Clearance**

```
New $25.00

Centered Layout - A 2 or 3 line heading - a square or panel of sales talk copied in the middle of the card and a wide margin with a fine border line optically spaced. A vertical guide line down through the center is found helpful in balancing the card. The most effective border margins are widest at the base - top next and the two sides less and alike.
```

**Semi-Annual Clearance**

```
$18.50

Inset Layout - Allowing liberal margins, start heading on upper left marginal line. Start each succeeding line of the heading directly under the first letter regardless of finishing point. Treat sales copy the same way. Inspecting the starting point well to the right of the heading. Have price directly under this allowing same space between as you have allowed for margins.
```

**June Pre-Inventory Sale**

```
Optical Border Line

Optical Border Line - the optical border indicated by the dotted line in above diagram is about 5% higher than the mechanical border indicated by the solid line. Copy spaced out on a card with optical margins is always more pleasing and effective than copy laid out with equal margins. The width of the margin depends upon the judgment of the artist.
```

**No. 1**

```
Optical Center

Actual Center.

Mechanical Border Line
```

**No. 2**

```
Regular Price

壹 ONE HALF OFF "D" UR.
```

The arrangement of reading matter on a page or card is called "layout." These diagrams illustrate some of the most simple forms, used on show-cards.
A "fold-up" system of layout that teaches how to balance any card.

Merry Xmas

FOR SYMMETRIC DESIGNS

COMPLEMENTARY COLOR CHART.
Harmonious and striking color schemes are made by matching complementsaries and split color tints.

Mechanical spacing of uniform letters and margins of equal width make a poster monotonous.

Milton Sills MEN OF STEEL

The effective use of contrast powerful head-lines with the rest of the copy arranged in subordinate groups balanced on optical center.

The first figure suggests how half of any symmetrical design may be drawn in soft pencil or charcoal and the other half completed by folding the paper and rubbing on back.

The movie poster below illustrates the quickest method of determining size proportion. By extending diagonal lines through the drawing, any point may be readily located.
Price Tickets made with ONE STROKE of the Speedball Pens

Ladies
Dalmacaan $45.00

Winter Weight $2.00

Your Choice

The Overcoat $45.00

The Speedball "refers to the "Speed" of the pen

In this age of Speed, the modern show-card writer must, of necessity, be able to turn out large quantities of work in a limited time. Speedball pens will enable the ordinary workman to produce high-grade work at top speed because they automatically control the flow of ink and complete the stroke without retouching.
One Thousand Suggestions for Wedding Gifts

Futuristic Ginghams for Modernistic Maidens

French Styles $4.50

Shirts

Art Studio

Suit to Order $85.00

Modernized Styles

Kings Cap Hats

Superior in Wearing Qualities

Pleasing in Appearance

Stone the Tailor

Our First Clearance Sale

A few suggestive layouts that offer a versatile touch of individuality as working examples.
Beginner's Speedball Alphabet / made with Style "B" Round Point Speedball

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Construction illustrated:

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

$12.50 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 90%
Broken strokes show construction of "Beginner's Alphabet." Numbered arrows indicate the order and direction of elements. Made with Style B Speedball.
Poster Gothic with Style “A” Speedball—Letter “Q” shows jeky outlining of first alphabet, for last alphabet the pen is turned 45°.
Letters of the Gothic family are especially suited to power advertising and bold announcements or special sales.
"BLOCK"

Best lettered with the Style C Speedball Pen and retouched

ABC CDEFGHI
JKL MNOQP
RSTUV, WXY
Z123456789$&

"Letters are adapted to single stroke construction with Style A Speedball"
Santa Stencils must be cut to register with each other.

Cut each pattern on separate stencil with extra wide margins.

Showing how to cut stencils for show card use.

The use of oiled stencil paper is recommended because it is easy to cut and does not warp when wet with color.

"SPURRED GOTHIC" WITH STYLE "B" SPEEDBALL

ABCDEF,GHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

mnors/ $123456789/ uvwxz

Using Style B Speedball pen, size 2; spurs added with same pen turned over on its back.
MODERN SHOW CARDS

The idea of what constitutes a GOOD SHOW CARD varies according to locality and individual taste. Each community has its own ideals which are based largely upon the ability of its most accomplished craftsmen whose efforts are emulated by others. The work of prominent poster artists and advertising men has a great influence also.

The main object of a display card or advertisement is to sell something. It should be sufficiently attractive to arrest attention, while its appearance should be worthy of the merchandise it is advertising. Its arrangement must be simple and of a nature that can be read at a glance. Especially does this apply to the catch lines and headings. Perfect lettering does not always mean a good card. With rare exceptions, the best of lettering loses its effectiveness if indiscriminately spaced and aligned. Mediocre, or even poor lettering is to be preferred when dexterously arranged. Unity and general effect should be the aim rather than perfection of detail.

If decorations or illustrations are used, they should be relative to the subject. A bunch of forget-me-nots on the corner of a display card would not ordinarily boost the sale of truck tires or pork chops. Heavy stereotyped designs, massive cut-outs, colonial pillars, stucco decorations, marbelized arches and a stiff, carved out appearance in lettering are suggestive of tomb-stones. They look as though they were made to last forever and subconsciously suggest age, or last season’s merchandise instead of freshness. Mechanically, this class of work may be pleasing to look upon, but it does not excite action and sell goods. It preserves them. Good work has the appearance of life, freedom, grace, speed and individuality in its technique. This can be acquired only by intelligent, persistent practice with the proper tools and materials.

When you hear the expression "Just Like Print" applied to "Hand Lettering," you may safely conclude that it is too good to be of much commercial value. The judging of lettering by its resemblance to type would kill individuality, and lettering would soon cease to exist as an applied art. All reading characters are adapted from the same basic principles. But though there are many hundreds of different types of alphabets used in the printer’s art, no "set-up" job can be compared with the handwork of the skilled letterer for style, beauty, graceful arrangement and general effectiveness.

The modern letterer does not attempt to produce replicas of type faces. Type alphabets are seldom designed to meet the requirements of hand lettering and the methods employed in their origination make them very difficult to copy. As a curiosity such perfection might have a fictitious value, but it possesses comparatively little selling power.

The appearance of an alphabet is often changed but never its basic elements. Altering the letter results in meaningless hieroglyphics and curlicues which are here today and tomorrow decorate the waste basket. All the so-called "modernistic" alphabets that are not built upon a good foundation will be very short lived.

In the selection of a type of letter to be reproduced by hand there is several considerations to bear in mind; first, the media available for its successful reproduction, second, the nature of the surface to be worked upon and third, the amount of time available, based principally upon the recompense. Generally, it is better to devote a little time to making a rough pencil sketch of the arrangement before starting to letter. Legibility should be the primary consideration and the style of letter selected should reflect the spirit of the subject. The copy should be arranged in some geometric shape or artistic manner to form a part of the whole design. The entire mass should conform in area to the space in which it goes and if illustrations are used they should face the lettering, in order to direct attention to the copy.

For all kinds of pen lettering, a good quality of litho card board will be found productive of the best results. Its specially coated, smooth surface permits the pen to be drawn in any direction and insures uniform and clean-cut strokes. With ordinary care the ink will not spread as it often does on the more porous surfaces such as are used for brush work.

When lettering or drawing for newspaper or magazine reproduction, the artist should know something about the printer’s rule, which is briefly this: One inch equals 72 points or 6 picas or 6 ems. 12 points equal one pica. In the standard measurement two inches equal one column or 12 picas or 12 ems. Four and one-sixteenth inches equal two columns or 24½ picas or 24½ ems. Six and one-eighth inches equal three columns or 37½ picas or 37½ ems. There are 14 agate lines to the inch, so when 12-point type is used, "72" is divided by "12" to find the number of lines to the inch; if 6-point type is specified, 72 is divided by 6, etc. Height is generally figured in inches and width is figured in columns. Standard newspaper columns are two inches wide with ½ pica between, others are 13 ems with ½ em between, magazine columns vary. The size of a 24 sheet poster panel is 11 x 25 feet. The DeLuxe painted bulletin varies. Sketches are drawn one inch to the foot.
Characteristic "Italics"
of a very slight degree in slant

A B C D E F G H I J K
L M N O P Q R S T U
V W X 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Y Z

Lettered with "Style D" Speedball

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

"Derived from Italian Manuscript Writings of the 16th Century"

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r r
s t u v w u v w x y y x z z z e

? ? Jazzed Up a Bit & and

A B C D E F G H I J K L M
N O P Q R S T U 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

These alphabets are adapted to either Style "C or D" Speedballs
For Preparing Hand-Lettered Advertising and Display Headings etc.

"Personality Script,"
Lettered with D. J. Speedball Pen

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

Showing the letters outlined in one stroke complete, no patching up, or trimming; every mark, dot or stroke you make with this pen is of uniform thickness, going in any direction, up, down or sideways, oval or circle. Easily made without ruler.

Letters of this character are sketched with a pencil, then inked with a pen the width of the narrowest element.
The Commercial Artist

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefg hijkmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

Crafty Lettering

Unique, condensed squatty type letter: Very effective. Artistic, if properly arranged in mass form. Badly matter. Particular attention is called to narrow spacing between the lines. The absence of inside oval effects in circular or oval elements, and the geometrical formation of the entire production.

Individual Conceptions

Individual Conceptions

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

ijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

1234567890

wwxxyyzz$%
VANITIE ROMAN!
with the Style B Speedball Pens

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

$1234567890YZ

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

These letters are first sketched with a pencil, then inked in, using the two sizes of Style B pens best suited to the size and strength of the letter desired.
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
NPQRSTU VWXY
ZNRJ SHOWING FREE-HAND STAB

size larger Speedball will complete the heavy strokes

w fe
abcdefghijklm

opqrstuvwxyz

Original lettered with size 4 Style B Speedball on a 10 x 14 card. Border is spattered and design then painted with white and outlined with a small Style "B" pen.

This alphabet is also well adapted to single stroke construction with the oval pointed Style "D" Speedball pens.
HOW DRAWINGS FOR
COLOR REPRODUCTION
ARE MADE

The original pen and ink drawings used for
making the three-color poster cover appearing on
this book is reproduced here to illustrate how such
drawings must be prepared for engravers' color
plates. By comparing it with the finished cover you
will note that each mass color has been outlined.
These outlines give the engraver the necessary guide
lines or boundaries to paint up to when separating,
blanking in or spotting out the different colors that
must appear on the individual plates which are all
printed from the same photographic negative.

Making a good color sketch for the engraver
to follow is the first step. Usually this sketch is
about three times larger than the finished cuts are to be. Parts of the color sketch can be changed, worked over or patched up as many times as is necessary until it is
satisfactory. The second step is to make a tracing of it, defining all the various patches of color with a clean line. The third step is to smudge the back of this tracing
and then transfer it on to the printing paper or card. The fourth step is to retrace these outlines with black waterproof ink, using a fine pointed pen.

In copy where one or more colors overlay each other, the artist is not generally required to outline the letters. Much time is saved by lettering the copy solid with
pens that produce its elements in the fewest possible strokes. This is illustrated in the heading “Speedball Text Book” where the blue and green overlay each other and
both overlay the center of the orange, which serves as the outline. A Style A pen was used to get the broken effect and the square finishes on this heading which was
built up double stroke fashion. Then a fine line was drawn around the letters to indicate the boundaries of the orange outline. The words “Modern Pen Lettering” were
made with a Style C pen, single stroke, and the rest of the copy was made with the Style D pen, single stroke construction.
ROYCROFT DISPLAY

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz & n m the.  
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

Jensen Bold Condensed

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

The Roycroft alphabet was outlined with a quivering stroke, using a No. 4 Style B Speedball, and the Jensen Bold was built up with a No. 3 Style "A" pen. The monograms were inked with a No. 5 Style B—heavy masses were spattered with white ink.
Modern interpretation of heavy Roman made with the Style D Speedball pen. The white line inset, which may be varied in style, can be added with pen or brush.
Ragged and Rugged:

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

Showing Simple Outline Method:

Original lettered on a 10 x 14 card with a No. 2 Style “B” Speedball pen. The wavered effect is produced with a quivering stroke.
new Western Letters
easy to make with a "Speedball" pen
most effective if a few letters are "off set" a bit

This alphabet only offers a suggestion of how a careless treatment of any heavy face alphabet lends individuality to hand lettered advertising. The original of this plate was lettered on a card 11 x 17 inches, using the Styles "A" and "D" SpeedBall pens.
The Richness & Refinement

which these fabrics radiate, proclaim you all together the better dressed man.

$30. to $50.

Original lettered on a card 10 x 17 with Style ‘B’ and ‘C’ Speedball pens. The background effect is produced with cutouts of the Griffin and border, held down with strings and shaded with an air brush.

“Alcatraz”
The Black & White Feature
Hat for Spring 1927

original 9 x 14. Picture is a combination blending of air brush work and opaque show-card colors applied with a stiff brush. Lettered with a Style ‘D’ Speedball pen.
ARCHITECTS & DRAFTSMEN
Modern conceptions now most popular
Lettered with 5 Speedball Pen

ABCDEF
GHILJK
KMNOPQRST
UVWX, YZ & M?
5¢$123456789
-e-v-x-y-z-q-
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

STUNT ROMAN
Lettered with a Style C (size 5) Speedball Pen

abcd
efg
hijln
mopqrsstu

ABCDEF
GHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

for Specialty Posters
Where legibility is not paramount

QRUVWXYZ?&

wwvz\abefnhrstuyk
Decorative borders and corner pieces can be made freehand with the Speedball pens much easier and faster than by any other method or with any other tool. Any desired design should be sketched in with a pencil and then re-traced with bold uniform strokes using the size and style of pen best adapted to the design. For squares or any checker effects use the "Style-A", square-pointed pen, and for dots, circles, or wavy lines the round-pointed "Style-B" pen will be found the best. Use the flexible "Style-C" of D'pen for accented strokes.
A beautifully engrossed Masonic resolution. The illumination is both elaborate and dignified.

Resolution engrossed upon real sheepskin. The simplicity of the illumination is pleasingly effective.
THE USE OF TEXT LETTERS FOR ENGROSSING AND SHOW CARD WRITING

Engrossing is one of the highest paid branches of the lettering art. The demand for this type of work is comparatively limited, consequently the field is not overrun with good men. For such work, Text alphabets are generally used with elaborate border designs and ornamental initials.

Originally, Text letters were known as Gothic. But since the printers’ classification of type styles became the universal standard, much confusion has been eliminated by listing all such letters in the Text family. Every letterer, whether show card writer, artist or penman, should include a good legible Text in his stock in trade. The construction of practically all our Text alphabets is similar, but the best one to learn first is the Old English shown on Pages 66 and 67. The flexible Style C pen has been designed for this type of lettering. Another rapid single stroke Old English style is presented in two forms on Page 69.

In the days before the printing press, books, documents, manuscripts, etc., were lettered by hand. We are told that many of the old monks, with sincere religious devotion, spent the best part of a lifetime producing a single volume. Since most of the religious works were lettered in Text, these alphabets have become definitely associated with a feeling of reverence and stately dignity. The spirit of Christmas seems to have been woven right into the Text alphabets so beautifully that it is hard to find a substitute that will qualify for Yuletide messages. Posters, show cards, signs and display advertising so lettered tend to radiate something of this atmosphere and the artist can with propriety use Text alphabets at this time, for headings, at least.

However, any style of lettering that is hard to read is poorly suited to display advertising, including show cards and posters. Text letters are slow readers. The extreme fine lines and ornamental “doo-dads” do not carry at a distance and tend to confuse at a glance. This may be overcome by eliminating some of the fine lines and flourishes. Where bolder styles are desired for display purposes and newspaper work, the Style D Speedball is used. Build improving legibility, this pen greatly increases the letterer’s speed. The comparative examples shown on Page 69 and the Gordon Text on Page 70 illustrate this.

Learn the Old English with the Style C pen before tackling the modified Text with the Style D pen, because it develops a finer technic and a clearer mental picture of the basic characters. Practice these letters with C-1 pen, ruling three guide lines and making the letters about one inch high. Do not overload the pen and work slowly until you know how the strokes are put together. The fine lines can be added with the corner of the large pen as the strokes are made or with a No. 101 Imperial pen afterward. When you can make the alphabets with the large pen, try them proportionately smaller with the other sizes.

The manipulation of a brush is much the same as that of a Style C Speedball. If you desire to make larger letters practice with a No. 12 round ferrule show card brush. Beginners will find the manipulation of a brush more difficult than the pen because of the absence of the “feel” of contact that tends to steady the hand. It is also hard to load a brush just right and to work the tip out to a clean edge on the palette. For this reason the use of a brush is not recommended until after the pen has been mastered. For ordinary show cards the pen will be found plenty large enough, considerably faster and productive of greater uniformity.

The holly design on the top of the Christmas card on Page 56 illustrates how any symmetrical design can be quickly drawn. One-half of this wreath was sketched on a paper with charcoal. The paper was then folded in the middle and rubbed on the back, transferring this sketch and thus completing the other half. The paper was laid face down on the card and the completed design transferred to the card by again rubbing the back of the sketch. The design was then inked, using the size and style pen best suited to the purpose. Colored Speedball inks add much to the attractiveness of such show cards.

```
abedefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
abedefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
```

The capitals of this “lower case” Engrossing Text will be found on Page 67.
**Roman Numerals**

MCMXXVII = 1927

I II III IV V VI VII

VIII IX X XI XII XIII

XIV XV XVI XVII XVIII

XIX XX XXV XXX XXXV

XL XLV L LV LX LXX

LXXV LXXX XC C CXXV

CL CCC CCL CCC CD D

DC DCC DCCC CM MM

A finer character is obtained using a Style "C" Speedball.

**Uncial Gothic**

ABCD EFGH

IJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

Outlined with a "B" Speedball Pen

This alphabet is used for ornamental initials in engrossments.

56
Resolutions
Testimonials
Memorials
Diplomas
Certificates
Engrossed
and Illuminated in the style on vellum or hand
made papers for framing.

Book Plates, Book
and Catalogue Covers,
and all kinds of Designing,
Typewriting,
Designing, Engrossing, Illuminating.

Whereas, We the passengers on
SS Northwestern Voyage 182
have enjoyed an exceedingly enjoyable
and pleasant time and

Whereas,
Alaska Steamship Company
have exerted themselves in extending every courtesy and
desire to show appreciation to all
those who have so helped us enjoy the voyage and
especially to Commander Wm. Jensen.

Resolved,
That this appreciation
be suitably expressed and a
copy thereof be presented to Commander Jensen,
that he may have a lasting remembrance of his
friends and guests on his voyage.

September 16th 1900
Committee

A standard example of layout used for the average resolution, lettered with the
Style "U" Speedball and Hunt's Imperial No. 101 used in an oblique penholder.
Artistic Diploma Filling

George W. Brown  Anna Marie Hannah
William Jennings McIntyre

Western Wallace Watch Works

George H. Walker  James F. Bennington
Margaret W. Durkant

Anna Marie Hall  Elmer Ray Deming

Samples of diploma filling, lettered with a flexible Engraving pen and Style "C" Speedball pen.
Round Hand Script Alphabet

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

NOPQRSTUVWXYZ

1234567890

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz


Engrosser’s alphabet lettered with a flexible Engraving pen, using an oblique holder.
Principles and letters-Roundhand Script

Strokes numbered in constructive order and grouped according to their use.
Small letters-Roundhand Script

wwwmynceoarissmida
on union wine mine
move vine came ever
owner annum winner
tower runner reason
sense sincere scissors
announce maximum

Letters are grouped into collective word combinations. Practice with a smooth even stroke.
Letters and words - Roundhand Script

Wtlddd dppqq qq

taunt ditto pepper quiet

hhh bbb bbb

Rule five guide lines with hard pencil for each line of copy.
Letters and words – Roundhand Script

Dotted diagonal lines illustrate method of maintaining any desired degree of slant.
Capitals - Roundhand Script

A A A A N N M M M M
T T T T F F J J J J J
P P P P B B B B B R R R
H H H K K K K K K L L

Wipe your pens occasionally to keep the writing tip clean. A clean pen produces sharper strokes.
Capitals - Roundhand Script

G L V W W W W W W W W
G G G G G G G G G G G G G
H H H H H H H H H H H H H
I I I I I I I I I I I I I
J J J J J J J J J J J J J
K K K K K K K K K K K K K
L L L L L L L L L L L L L
M M M M M M M M M M M M M
N N N N N N N N N N N N N
O O O O O O O O O O O O O
P P P P P P P P P P P P P
Q Q Q Q Q Q Q Q Q Q Q Q Q
R R R R R R R R R R R R R
S S S S S S S S S S S S S
T T T T T T T T T T T T T
U U U U U U U U U U U U U
V V V V V V V V V V V V V
W W W W W W W W W W W W W
X X X X X X X X X X X X X
Y Y Y Y Y Y Y Y Y Y Y Y Y
Z Z Z Z Z Z Z Z Z Z Z Z Z

Do not try to work too fast—use a free, full-arm movement and do not lean on your pen.
Old English

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz;

Resolutions Testimonials Memorials

Engrossed

Original lettered on a 9 x 14 card with a No. 2 style "C" Speedball and retouched with a Hunt's "Imperial" flexible writing pen No. 101.
Showing construction of Old English Capitals by strokes

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

OPQRSTUVWXYZ

The Old English alphabet lettered with Style "C" Speedball and retouched with fine pen. The Engravers Text alphabet was lettered with No 4 Style "C" Speedball. The lower case for this Engravers Text Alphabet will be found on page 55.
Splendid examples of engraving and illuminating by L. M. Kelchner. Particular attention is called to the decoration, which is harmoniously finished in colors.
A striking comparison showing the results obtained by simply using different style Speedballs.
Opportunities lettering offers as a vocation are tempting when compared with other crafts. Skilled letterers find pleasant, profitable, year-round work in sign and show card shops, art studios, lithographing plants, advertising agencies and large department stores. Salesmen and window trimmers frequently have opportunities for advancement with substantial salary increase when they can letter satisfactory price tickets and display cards. Constant contact with sales and advertising managers reveals openings in fields of merchandising well worthy of consideration. Those endowed with creative ability find in commercial lettering a fascinating chance for self-expression and personal development. If you have ideas and can put them over, you need not worry about making a success in the advertising world. Many universities offer attractive courses in the science of advertising, in which a knowledge of show card writing should prove a decided asset.

Versatility is a big asset in lettering. The handicap of those who can write only one style is that their work all looks alike. It is a good policy to have your pet alphabet one that can be used on the average run of display cards. But the letterer who does not learn at least the four basic alphabets fails to get his share of the fun his job affords and cannot command as attractive an income as the craftsman who has a wide variety of alphabets up his sleeve.

The part lettering plays in creating the desired atmosphere for a sales message is a phase of show card writing that should be better understood, and the ability to handle lettering in this manner is an asset to any card writer or artist. Different styles of lettering have become associated with various attitudes and with different types of articles or with special occasions. (A suggestive classification is offered on Page 44.) In choosing a style for any given subject, the letterer is wise in selecting the alphabet that is in harmony with the message. Adding a new twist to an old alphabet often injects novelty into the job and when this bit of novelty fits in with the spirit of the message it increases considerably the success of the appeal and enhances the value of the poster proportionately.

The style of lettering and manner of layout cannot be treated with indifference. For one thing, avoid incongruous combinations and cheap bizarre effects for these either detract from the article advertised or else create an unfavorable mental reaction. The sense of fitness that would keep you from putting loggers' equipment and dainty evening gowns or sledge hammers and diamond necklaces together in the same window should lead you to choose appropriate lettering for various display cards. Messages that concern articles representing strength or power are best voiced in letters that harmonize, such as heavy Gothic or block styles; while fancy, delicate things are more fittingly described in light Roman or ornamental alphabets, etc. The professional letterer always finds that it pays to use brains, as well as muscle, on every job he does.
A group of illustrated display cards drawn and lettered with the Speedball pen. Size of the original cards is 9 x 14 inches.
MOTION PICTURE Slide and Title LETTERING

Keeping pace with the astonishing growth of the motion picture industry, the slide studio has grown from the efforts of local photographers to write, "shoot," and color their own slides to the present day studios employing a varied staff of artists, letterers, colorists, etc. Many of the studios are also equipped for motion picture photography and can thus photograph advertising cards either on a lantern slide plate or on motion picture film as desired.

Slides may be placed in two general classes—advertising slides, emblazoning the merits of some commodity, and theatrical announcements of coming attractions, etc. Slides are generally made by photographing a lettered card or drawing on to a sensitized glass plate 3½ x 4 inches. When this plate is developed it is called the negative, from which as many positives can be made by direct contact printing on to similar glass plates as slides are desired. These plates are stained or colored, if desired, and the emulsion slide covered with a piece of clear glass to afford protection against handling, the two pieces of glass being fastened together with binding tape made for this purpose.

The standard card used for lettering and art work is Title board or 6-ply black railroad, 11 x 14 inches, or chip board coated with drop black. The drop black is mixed to a stiff paste in gum arabic, mucilage or calcimine glue and thinned to a flowing consistency with water. The glue mixture is handled in warm water. If a waterproof surface is desired, the blank cards can be coated with drop black mixed in shellac and thinned with alcohol. Care must be exercised to get a smooth flat surface.

For single slide orders, the copy is lettered on a white card with black ink. In this case the negative which is the reverse of the original is used for the slide. With a little experience the grey tones for ornamental stunts or illustrations can be handled about as well in the reverse as they are on the black surfaces.

The accurate alignment of letters is of great importance because a slide is so greatly enlarged on the screen. Chalk lines are treacherous as they often leave marks when erased. It is much safer to use a red pencil for marking on black cards and a blue pencil on white ones. Red lines copy as black and blue registers as white on the ordinary photographic plate. If chalk is used, sharpen it to a chisel edge to get thin lines and use a soft chamois to rub them off.

Lettering for slides or titles is usually of the one stroke variety made with either pen or brush, and must be opaque. Hair lines are to be avoided to insure clear photographic results.

In laying out a card, remember that people in the gallery desire to read as well as those in the front seats, and the size of subordinate lettering should be planned accordingly. Space out the lettering enough to offset its foreshortening when viewed from either side of the screen and leave liberal margins on all cards. For example, on an 11 x 14 card make the top and side margins about 1½ inches and the bottom 1¾. A study of the leading film titles will further demonstrate the limitations and possibilities of screen lettering. The most effective layouts seldom contain more than twenty words and look better if limited to about fifteen.

On theatrical announcements, most of the pictorial element consists of "stills" (photographs) supplied by the motion picture producers, or illustrations clipped from the press book. These are pasted on the lettered card and touched up with a little art work as desired. The art work that is of a suggestive nature—silhouettes of figures and trees; scrolls, and ornamental vases, etc., treated in soft tones on interesting backgrounds, and high-lighted in grey and whites—is very effective. The use of an airbrush is handy in working up backgrounds and silhouette effects and many interesting blendings, mottled greys and cloud effects may be made with a sponge dipped in thin color and pounced onto the card over cutout solution, around panels, etc.

Where it is desirable to save the background for future use, the copy is lettered on a separate black card and a double exposure is made (the two being photographed on the same plate). Or a card is cut into some pleasing shape and laid onto the background.

Fancy wallpaper samples often make beautiful backgrounds and borders. Considerable care should be exercised when choosing colored material because the photographic value of color is very deceiving. For example, orange, yellow and vermilion look brilliant on black. Yet they have about the same reproduction value as black and scarcely copy at all, while blues have pretty much the same value as white. In using colored cutouts or advertising pictures clipped from magazines, the red, yellow and orange can be painted over with grey to make them copy. Lettering on advertising slides is usually bolder to allow coloring. Slides are colored by staining with dyes or by re-developing with a toning solution which does not affect the whites. Most of the song slides are colored with the "toner."

Working conditions vary greatly in different studios. The smaller studios require versatility and speed, as the compensation is usually by piecework and one man handles both art and lettering. In the larger studios, specialists in either lettering or art work are employed as a high standard of uniformity is demanded, and the artist has time to inject a little individuality into his work.

The moving picture industry is only in its infancy, and it will not be long before every city of reasonable size will have its own motion picture laboratory. With the development of the "talkies," lettering will be limited to the more elaborate title cards and introduction, leaving sub-titles to the spoken word. Yet there will still be a field for the title letterer as it will be some time before the "talkies" can be profitably employed for commercial and industrial pictures and for home movies.
A representative group of movie slides and art titles that may be used as working examples.
ABCDEF

+ With and without the serif or ornamental trimming +

ABCD

EFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

STU

ABCDEF

GHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

STU

The original of this plate was lettered on a card 14 x 22 inches with the Style "B" Speedball pen.
MOVIE TITLES

made with the STYLE-C Speedball Pen,
Simplified Single Stroke Roman Construction in White Ink

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

uvw $1234567890$xyz

This Alphabet beautifully radiates the Feminine Appeal in Daintiness, Gracefulness and Refinement.”

The original of this plate was lettered on a smooth hard surfaced black card, size 9 x 14, with Numbers 4 and 5 Speedballs.
Eccentric Title
made with a Style C Speedball Pen—held at 45° angle

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

Note—The Three Line System of Professional Layout

Size of original: 10 x 14 inches, lettered in white ink on black hard surface show card board with Style ‘C’ Speedball pen.
An Eccentric Single Stroke

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

RSTUVWXYZ&

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

Size of original drawing, 10 x 14 inches, lettered with white ink on black show card board with Style "C" Speedball. "The Romitatic Pen."
ART TITLE ROMAN

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

PQRSTUVWXYZ

Designed for Style "C" AND Style "D" Speedball

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

1234567890 ?!

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

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

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

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
A beautiful selection of movie slides, art titles, posters and resolutions that should prove helpful in arranging similar copy.
SPEEDBALL LETTERING INKS
FOR PEN AND BRUSH WORK

CLEAN, BRILLIANT COLORS GROUNDED
INTO RICH FREE FLOWING PEN INKS.
THAT COVER BEAUTIFULLY IN ONE STROKE.

ALL THE COLORS OF THE RAINBOW.
ALL THE SKILL OF ANY ARTIST.

SPECIALY PREPARED FOR PEN LETTERING.

WE ARE EXCEPTIONALLY PROUD OF OUR
NEW WATERPROOF BLACK LETTERING INK.
IN THIS SMOOTH FLOWING INK WE HAVE
SUCCESSFULLY OVERCOME THE FLOODING
AND GRAYING-OUT FAULTS WHICH HAVE
ALWAYS MADE WATERPROOF INDIA INKS
SO HARD TO HANDLE IN A LETTERING PEN.

HUNT PEN CO....CAMDEN, N.J.

SOLD IN PINTS AT 25¢, QUARTS AT 40¢.