HOW TO RENDER

ROMAN
Letter
Forms

TOMMY THOMPSON

How to Render

ROMAN

Letter
Forms

The author of the popular, "The Script Letter," presents another important book. It is a pattern for good results for every designer and student of lettering.

In explaining the transposition of the design and spirit of stone-cut classic Roman capitals to typography, this book gives the student a secure background from which he may develop his own, individual style of work.

Family groups of alphabets are broken down to the basic strokes which compose them, and the single letters are re-constructed in easy, "do it yourself" stages. The mutual relationships of all good letter design is tested and proved by many pages of examples in the artist's own hand.

The author has based this book on a method developed in teaching others as a hobby-balance to his prolific production of lettering and designing in the advertising and magazine fields.

The letterer is shown how to eliminate tedious hours of copying various styles by clearing up the mystery of what makes good letter design in all styles. After a short study of this organized assemblage of simple elements, he will know how to render, functionally and artistically, all styles with proper weight, proportion and spacing.

The beginner will acquire from this book a new understanding of letter design which will enable him constructively to criticize and improve his own work.

$2⁵⁰

ART DAVIS

HOW TO RENDER

ROMAN LETTER FORMS

TO
HAZEL

How to Render

ROMAN

LETTER
FORMS

TOMMY THOMPSON

A PATTERN FOR
UNDERSTANDING AND DRAWING
ROMAN LETTERS AND OTHER STYLES
OF LETTERING AND TYPE FACES
RELATED TO THEM

AMERICAN STUDIO BOOKS

NEW YORK AND LONDON

CONTENTS

ABCDE
FGHIJK
LMNOP
QRSTU
VWXYZ

LETTERS CAN be perfect only in their particular mission. Their forms have been changed endlessly for centuries but only basic good forms have survived the test of time. They are most beautiful when simple, for they are useful merely in their humble tasks and not as individuals.

Letters are changeable human notations, units which when well designed for use in words and sentence patterns record and convey men's thoughts to others. These phonetic symbols should be easily distinguished from each other with no confusion to the eye of the reader.

Caslon type is herein used as the model from which to study as it remains the type style used to print the greatest body of literature in the English language. It is based upon the best in letter design over a span of two thousand years. Gem-like, its pure structure is set in each of the twenty-six letters of our alphabet.

The origins of the capital letters are the classic letters of the ancient Greek and Roman stone inscriptions. The changes in weights of serifs and thicks and thins, also the formation of small letters (lower case letters) represent the improvements cast in this type alphabet to aid in its readability when converted to the printed pages we take so much for granted today.
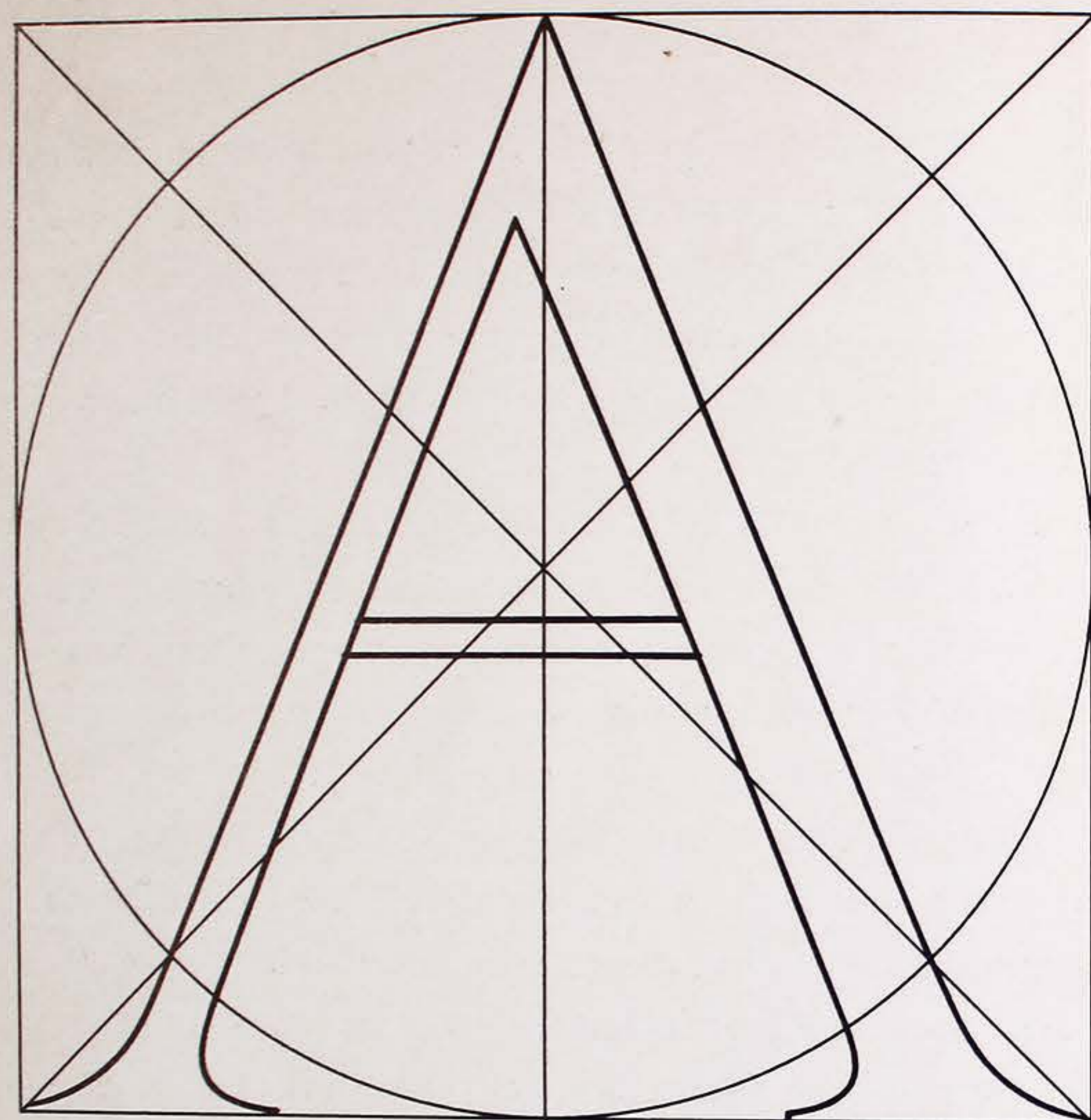
THIS DIAGRAMMED letter is shown principally as a kind of instruction to avoid in the beginning. However, this model does show some things of importance that may be used as imaginary guides; the square, the circle within it and its division into halves. The angles from the top center point will be useful in forming the A. The circle is a guide for the curved forms of the O. The outer lines of the square are the width of the M. The cross in the center will aid in the balancing of the S.

Props of this kind are best dispensed with as soon as the few principal strokes are understood. Rule on your layout pad only the horizontal lines that will establish uniform heights of the letters throughout the lines of words. You may profitably train yourself to retain these other guides in your mind and project them, so to speak, on the space in which you work.

A M
C O S
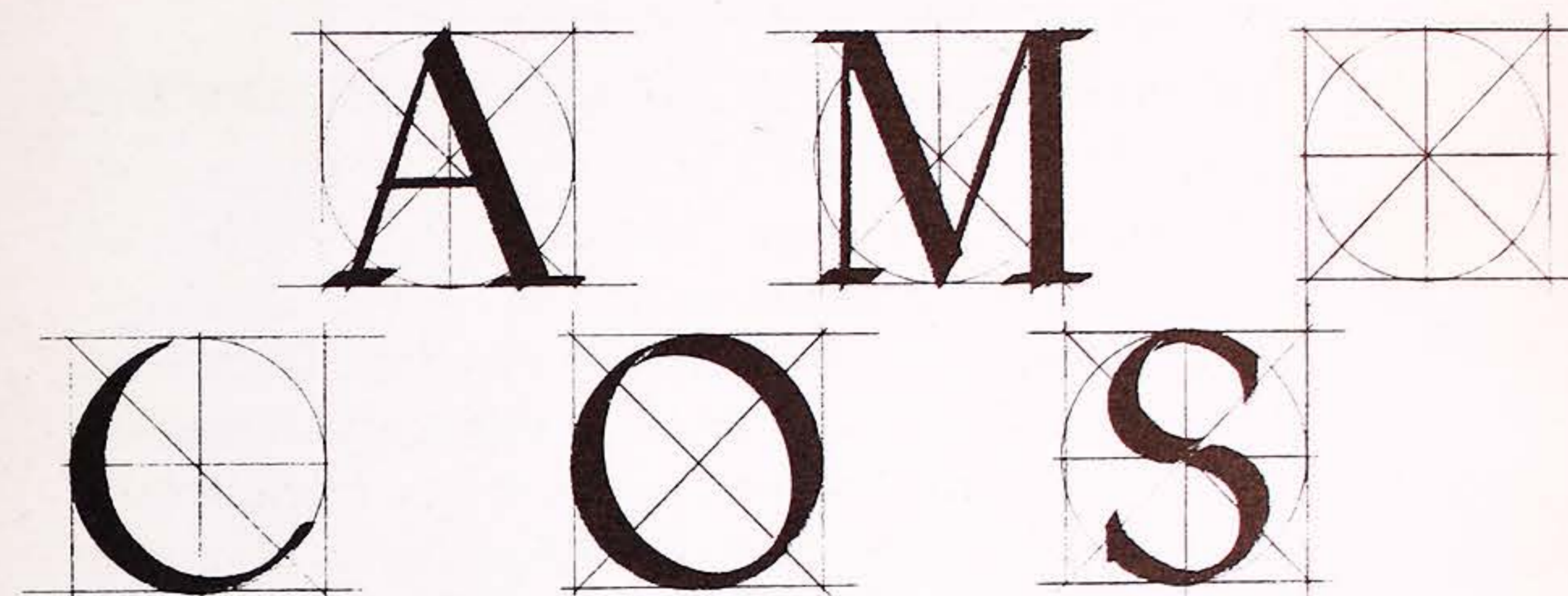
The common error committed by the beginner is the assumption that it is necessary to learn to draw accurately and individually the twenty-six capitals of any given alphabet and the accompanying twenty-six small letters, to say nothing of the fifty-two italic letters in each style of type or lettering. Nothing could be more bewildering or discouraging when the student is made to realize that these many variations of forms from which he begins to copy were executed by a master of his craft.

Make your beginning enjoyable and simple by seizing first a conception of the elementary strokes that compose all letters, then proceed with a full realization of the normal functioning of the proper tools with which they are formed.

THE CHARACTERISTICS

of the Roman Letters are that they are composed of thick and thin strokes, straight and curved. These primary strokes, of which there are only seven, are used singly and in various combinations to form all the letters of the alphabet, both capitals and small letters.

IF THE THIN STROKES ARE REMOVED

it is found that most of the letters may be distinguished by the thick strokes alone. Base your studies at first on these thick or foundation strokes.

If a soft lead pencil is sharpened as flat as a chisel is sharpened, and the hand draws it obliquely to the left from the top to the bottom of a given space, the resulting line will be thin. If the pencil is drawn obliquely down to the right, the resulting line will be thick.

This natural relation between thick and thin strokes and their relation in turn to the structure of the Roman letters may be demonstrated further by holding the pencil in a natural writing position (the flat edge against the paper) and drawing a circle with the pencil, not shifting or turning the pencil while doing so. You will find that you have drawn a letter O with a pleasing division between thicks and thins.
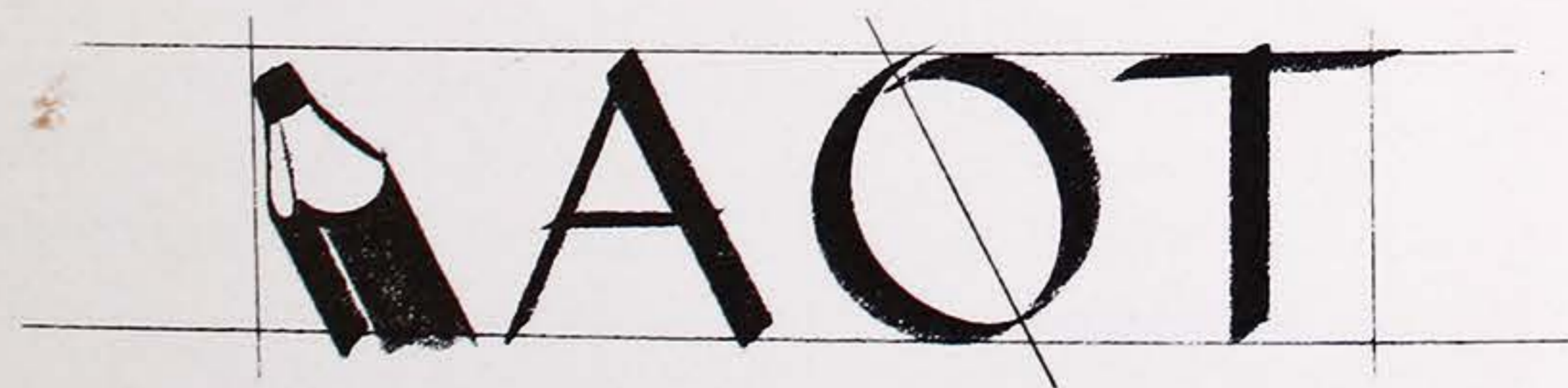
If an imaginary line is drawn through the thins of this letter, it will be found to be on the same angle that the forearm is in relation to the bottom of the paper. This is the natural position of the curved forms to the square of the straight lines in classic Roman letters.

Next draw a straight thick line from the top of your ruled height space and a horizontal thin line above it, still using the flat edge of your pencil. You have now simply formed all the principal strokes with which (and with few variations) all the letters are constructed.

Employing only these elementary strokes contained in the capital letters A I O S, it is possible to assemble all the letters of a complete alphabet.

AIOST
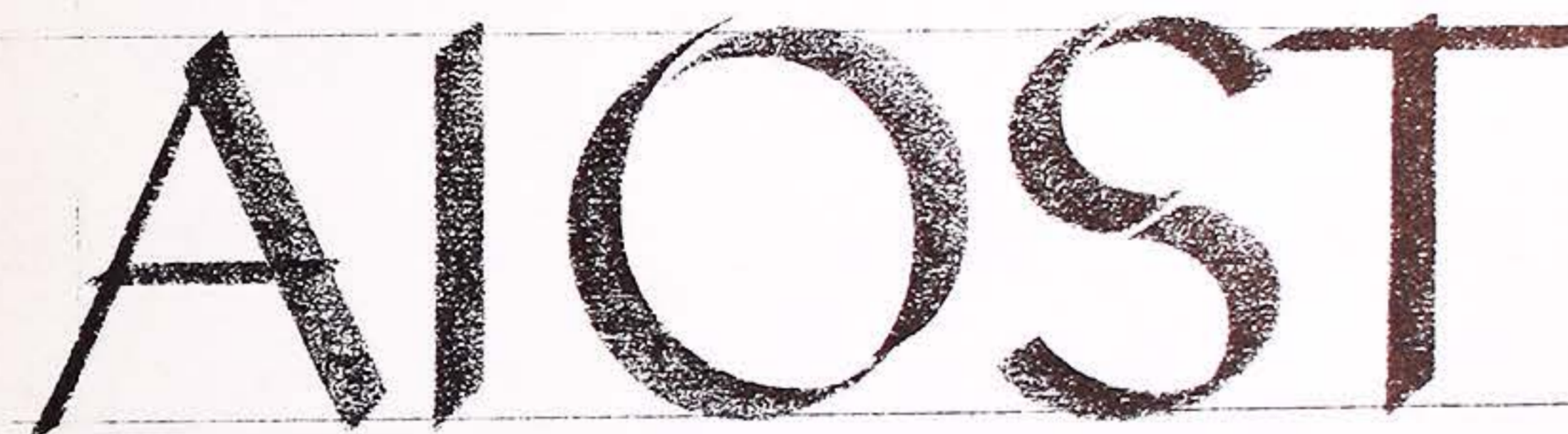
THESE ARE THE TOOLS
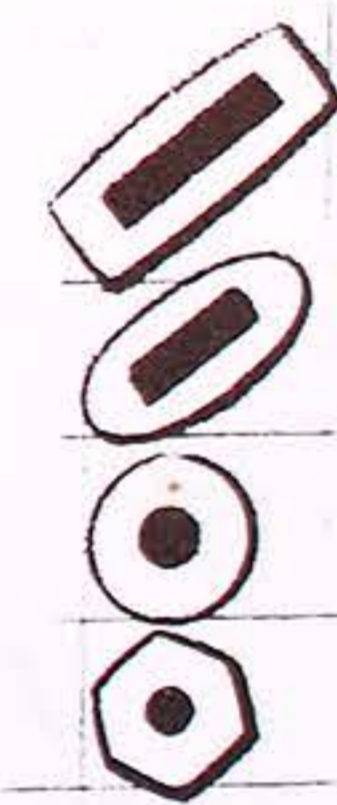
General's Sketching Pencil – 533 – 6B

Hardmuth Sketching Pencil – 355 – 6B

Eagle Draughting Pencil – 314 – 6B

Venus Drawing Pencils – 3B – HB

These are the basic strokes to practice . . .

///// \\\\\ KV

///// \\\\\ MXT

OOCO OCO

o o BSS

12

Then group the simple strokes into letters.

AWVY

EFLHN

CDPG

BUURI

13
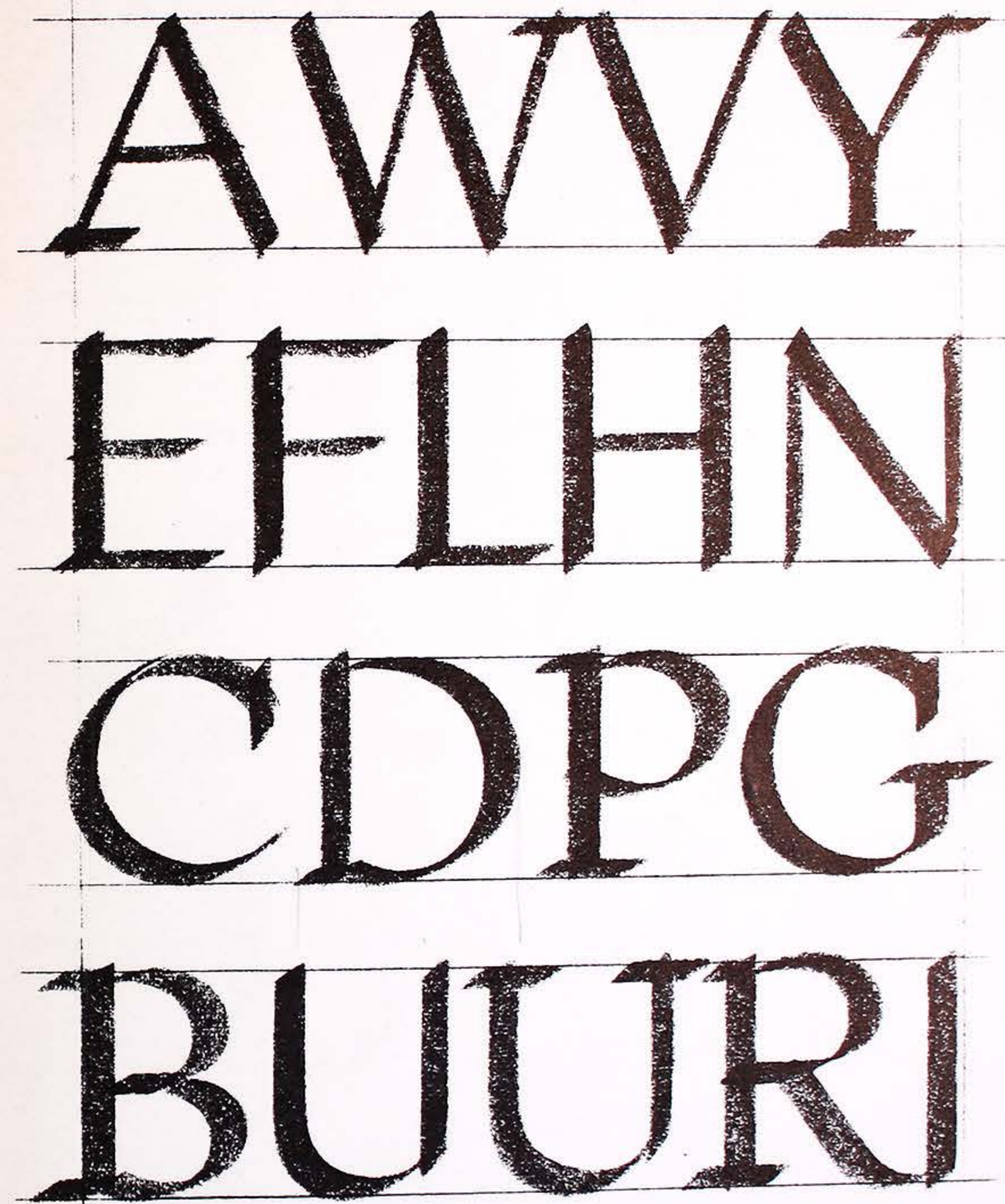
AWVK
EFMN
COGS
BPRD

These are Caslon printing type Roman Capitals.

14

AWVK
EFMN
COGS
BPRD

Render with directness, using basic strokes . . .

15

Finally, space dissimilar letters into words.

WORD
FORM
SIMPL
DESIG

16

THE FLAT or pencil edge may de deftly used to express a technique or finish to your renderings. It will be noticed that on the opposite page the first two lines, WORD and FORM are made with the basic strokes only, while the lower lines, SIMPL and DESIG have been more completely finished by the addition of little wedged shapes to the ends of the strokes. These are known as serifs and are used to square the letters on the line. The short vertical strokes finish and balance round letters such as the S, G and C, and square letters such as the E, F and T.

This is done exactly as the ancient stone mason worked when he chipped off and squared the ends of his strokes and gave to his letters a footing and a balance to the lines on which they rested.

These marks are made with a distinct stroke. Turn the pencil to draw its widest plane against the paper and use it edgewise to approximate the thin horizontal and vertical lines.

THE TOOL
6B

CONTROLS
LAYOUT PENCIL

WEIGHT
3B

17

NOTE: Keep your pencil sharp and keen-edged at all times. If you allow the point to become rounded and dull in use, indecisive and blurred forms will result. Correct the pencil edge constantly, point down, against a sand paper block. Sharpen frequently.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

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

Non-ranging numerals are those extending above and below the body area and should always be used with old face type. The ascending characters are the 6 and 8. The 1, 2 and 0 fill the middle of the body, while the 3, 4, 5, 7 and 9 are descending figures. Their great degree of individual legibility has been needlessly sacrificed in the design of modern faces. Caslon's early specimens of Arabic numerals mark a high point in the history of their design. In the smaller sizes, the cipher appears as a thin circle, a precise notation of nothingness. The direct rendering of these forms requires only that the flat tool be held consistently in its natural position, as it is held in rendering the X.

NATOS

THESE ELEMENTS OF THE CAPITAL LETTERS

JUST AS "The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog," contains all the letters of the alphabet, so the few basic strokes construct all the letters both large and small.

The complete font of Caslon type printed on the opposite page was selected from cases containing a large collection of Caslon, old and new, good and less good, for Caslon is never a bad type. This group was chosen and proved on soft papers with different pressures to find its best weight.

These are fine models for copy, comparison and criticism. Do not worship them, study them for what they are and return to them often as a check against your own interpretations, which you will in time develop both in your renderings and, perhaps, finished lettering or type design as well. With better understanding, you will see possibilities of improvement.

This basic scale of strokes represents your interval of practice in form that will enable you to compose as a master. Make your straight lines true and your curves free. This is the necessary foundation on which you may build well.

ALSO COMPOSE THE LOWER CASE LETTERS

lovest

Lower case letters, formed as they are today, are the result of a long-time practice of writing the capitals by the fastest means possible. All small letters are simplified versions of their capital or formal forms. Professional scribes, with much work to perform, sought new methods of producing letters with fewer strokes and less lifting of the quill.

A became ⍺ and ɑ. An E developed into ℮ and finally ℮, etc. As letters became, in their evolutions, too similar for ready identity, as for instance, T and L and I, the l was lifted above the line for identity, just as the y was brought below the line to remove it from the likeness of the v. The p and other letters were changed and dropped and lifted from letters of similar construction in the same manner.

A beginning accent in the form of a colored or larger letter was placed at the beginning of a page or chapter and eventually these were further embellished with various decorations.

When the first printers produced their earliest specimens, they held over the custom of illuminating the initials by hand to further promote a fraud. For printing was not developed as its own craft but as a deception. As a mark of identification for the illuminators, a tiny

letter was set and printed in the area left vacant for the large hand-drawn and colored initial.

The forms of the classic, almost forgotten capitals were rediscovered in the Renaissance of Art in Italy and were introduced in titles and as initial letters, while the more familiar, less formal small letters were retained in the text.

For a long time, the custom of the use of the little identifying letter at the beginning of the chapter was carried on so that we often see in old pages the little black letter showing through the over-printed large colored initial.

Our custom of capitalizing words and sentences to give them importance did not begin in the early days of printing. In ancient times, an X was placed at the point where one was meant to start reading. The typographic fleurons, pointing hands, etc., that we see so decoratively and usefully employed today in our finest forms of printing are a reflection of this quaint custom.

The name, Lower Case, grew out of the printers' custom of keeping the small letters in a separate case, usually one beneath the case containing the capitals.

Abbreviations were popular with the ancient scribe. Recurring words fell into abbreviations and many were cast into type. Our ampersand is one of the few surviving. It is in reality a monogram of the Latin Et. &

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

liovs
ftna
nuhm

oceo

dpqb

gssgg

vywx

fatigu

solve

24

25

ocedpq
lmunihr
vywzxk
agslijftra

The first line above shows letters related by their roundness.
The second line shows letters related by their squareness.
The third line shows letters distinctive by their angularity.
Slighter similarities of letters are demonstrated beneath.

this forms
them into
patterns
of words

Your remembrance of the strokes composing the single letters
will simplify the process of grouping the letters into words.
The thousands of letter combinations in English words present no difficulty when you are able to render the letters freely.

THE ENDLESS possible arrangements and compositions of letter forms must soon become apparent with a mastery of the basic strokes of this one alphabet. Study the arrangements of type and lettering with which you daily come in contact. Decide what is good and what is bad and what makes each so. A design or arrangement may be exciting or pleasing but fail completely in its first requisite — that it be legible. Constantly seek simplification and readability in your own work. Use backgrounds and margins to dramatize and support the ultimate message. Remove every element that has no purpose in

That is A thing you'll do

IN MANY Hundreds
of Combinations
and sizes of LETTERS.

The cleanness of your work will depend on the sharpness of the chisel-point of your pencil. Employ a harder lead as you decrease the size of the rendering.

your design. Beautiful letter forms require little decoration. Make the forms so balanced and relative that they may stand together in their contentment.

AIOST

THE EYE REMAINS the only machine that can test the design of letters for it is the only organ that can read them. Letter characters are designed to work together to form our printed words. The designs of the word patterns, separated by spaces, form the messages.

Space is allowed between the words to aid in their readability. An imaginary circle is a good unit of space to be allowed between words.

The above letters are Caslon type. The essential strokes of these letters are shown below. The flat pencil strokes show the essence and identity of the letters. They do not, however, have within them the character and delicacy of design so necessary to make them distinguished and legible as the type characters in which an optical subtlety has been considered and drawn.

AIOST
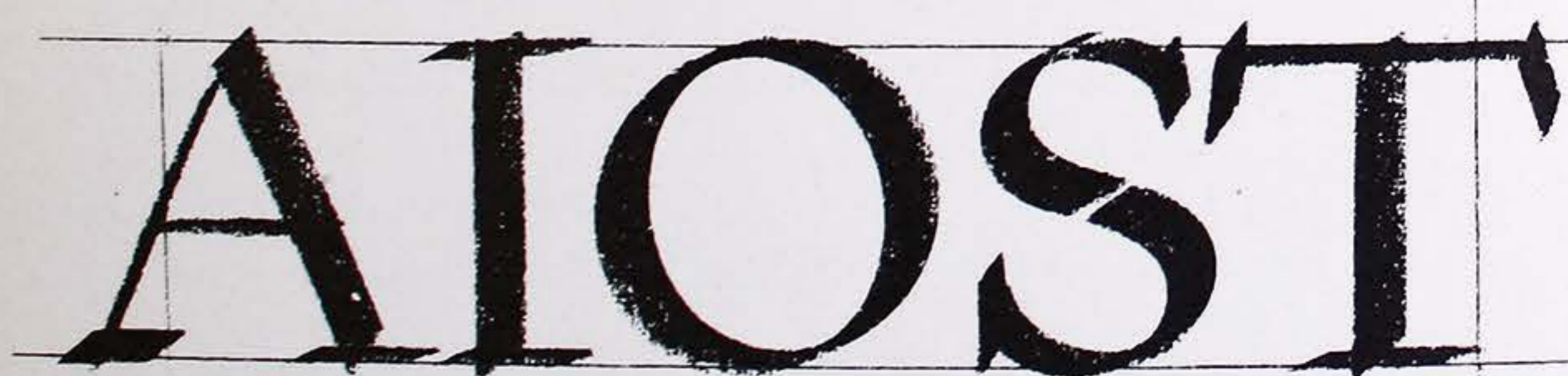
First learn the similarity in form of certain groups of letters, then observe how, by constructing them with a slight dissimilarity, you may improve their readability as they work together in words.

AWVYXZKMN
EFITHLOCGSQ
BPR·UJ
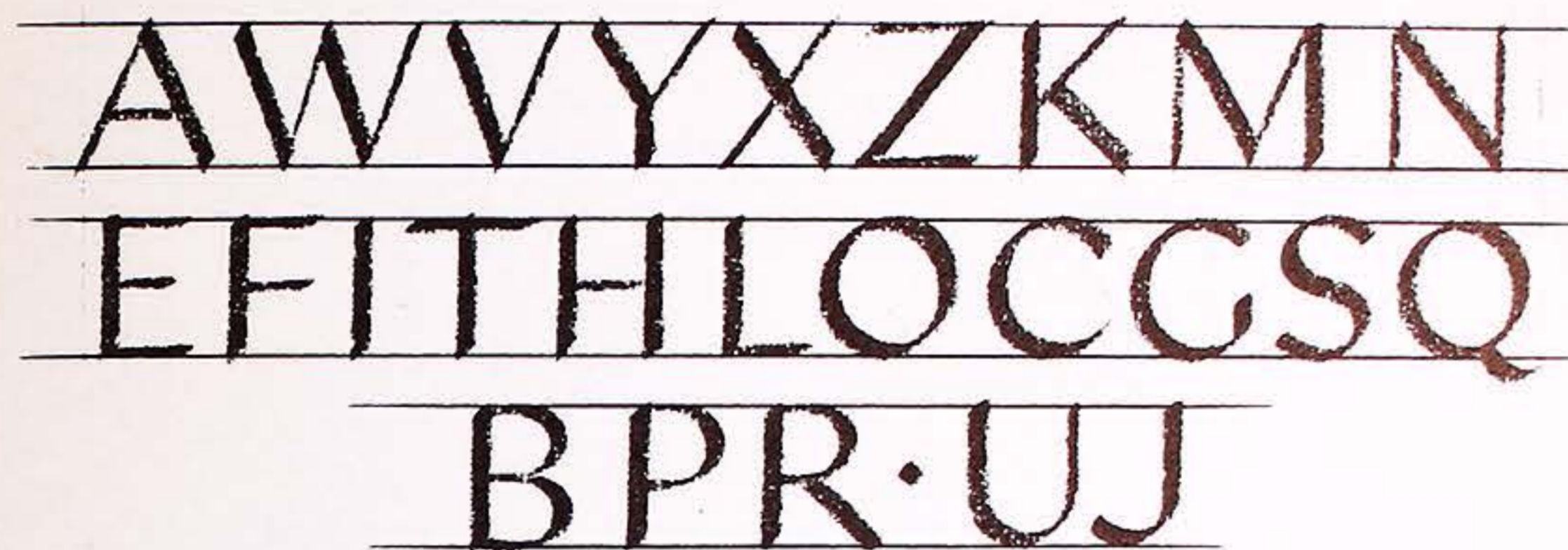
In letters of similar composition, a slight variation is allowed in the strokes to distinguish one from the other more completely as, for instance, the double-u. This is not simply two V's joined together, but the V forms are narrowed or overlapped to form the W as a new character.

VVW

The small m is not formed by merely adding another stroke to the n, but the whole character is somewhat condensed to distinguish it from the n.

nmm

More subtle differences to aid letter distinction have been developed through the centuries between form related characters such as the C and G, the E and F, the B, P and R.

CG EF BPR

In the small letters, the c and e, the n and u, etc.

ce nu

The i is dotted to remove it from confusion with the monotonous vertical strokes of the n, m and u. Remove the dots from the word minimum and as you may see the word is read with difficulty.

minimum

Below, in the first word, essence, the strokes used to compose the letters are all basic and will therefore seem to run together. In the next rendering, an attempt has been made to distinguish each letter from its immediate neighbors without impairing its essential structure. The better readability resulting justifies this care.

essence essence

32

CAPITAL LETTERS

THE FORMS of our present-day capital letters were greatly influenced by a fifteenth century Renaissance revival of the forms of inscriptional stone-cut letters, typified by those executed about the first century A.D. in Rome and her provinces. Two thousand years ago these forms reached an acme of perfection in the architectural medium in which they were developed and most frequently used.

The early Italian printers, forsaking the Gothic-Gutenberg tradition, incorporated in their Classic Roman type letters the best qualities of the ancient stone-cut letters as well as those of the most legible pen-written work of the scholar-scribes of their own day.

This is known as a WIDOW. It is a flaw in typesetting—a single word carelessly left over to support all the white space in the line. This should never be allowed to remain in the page design. With care, it may be 'taken up' in the lines above.

Little permanent change has been accepted in the basic structure of the capitals since. Slight differences in weights and serif details have come about in the functional transition from stone to parchment and type to paper, etc. Our best printed, drawn, or written letters always show a blending of the best from the past with conditions and materials of the present.

These letters have been drawn, written, carved, painted, etched and engraved in (and on) every flat surfaced medium found or made by man. By his regener-

33

ative artistic integrity and, in spite of the hideousness of his mistakes, they have retained their beauty as well as their functional practice.

Printing has ever been an imitation or forgery of the artist's handwork. Little has ever been accomplished in typography when the hand-drawn letter quality has been disregarded. Many styles of types have been developed and cast and used for long periods of time but, in the end, discarded because they were lacking in the true essentials of beauty and form, adaptiveness and conformity with the proven and accepted good forms already in use.

Above all, they were discarded because they were lacking in the first essential pertaining to all letters: they weren't distinctly and immediately legible to the reader. Consider this fact when judging your own work.

To be readable and pleasing, a book page today must have the same beautiful inherent good proportions of size of letter in relation to length of line, depth of line, margin, background, and so forth, that was necessary to legibility in the first century.

Caslon type represents a perfect study in survivals. The conceptions and spirit of good typography were first imported to England from the Dutch type foundries. They then evolved, under the skillful hands and keen eyes of William Caslon and his followers in the

earlier part of the nineteenth century, into a style most legible, then as now, in the letter combinations of English words.

The Caslon style of letter has suffered greatly in and out of the Caslon foundry. No perfect and complete family of Caslon type has ever been assembled because it was never cast. Different sizes were cut at different times by different punch cutters in the successive generations of four William Caslons and their competitors. The best job was always done with the best talent, materials and tools at hand for the printing surfaces in popular use at the time.

These castings and recastings, good and bad, are today often misused in the sense that they are sometimes printed on coated or smooth paper which was a surface not known at the time this style and weight of letter was originally developed. The first Caslons made fine allowances in their types for a good deal of ink-spread when the type was pressed to the soft rag paper then in common use. Often this paper was printed damp and softened to assure an even, strong impression. The impression of the type was therefore stronger in weight than the face of the metal type from which it was printed. As the desired result in weight was known in the eye of the designer, he, with foresight, lightened or worked within his letter forms, as he engraved the

punches from which his type was moulded. Therefore, the student would do well to use as his models the older Caslon impressions. For study of letter forms, no more easily acquired models can be found than good examples of Caslon type.

On examination of some of the best examples of printing in these types, covering a period of over three hundred years, certain artistic desires are evident. They are: good individual letter form, proportion and relation in the whole alphabet, pace and page color. These make for legibility and dignity in the final presentation to the reader.

The type used in the production of this book is Caslon Old Face, Caslon 471 and Caslon Italics. Its design is based on the types cast by William Caslon and Son, at their foundry in London during the eighteenth century.

If the beginner learns the principals of form, proportion, balance and relations contained in the Caslon alphabet, he may confidently and quickly analyze and master the principals and characteristics of any alphabet; this is so because Caslon so completely follows the rule of hand and tool and eye.
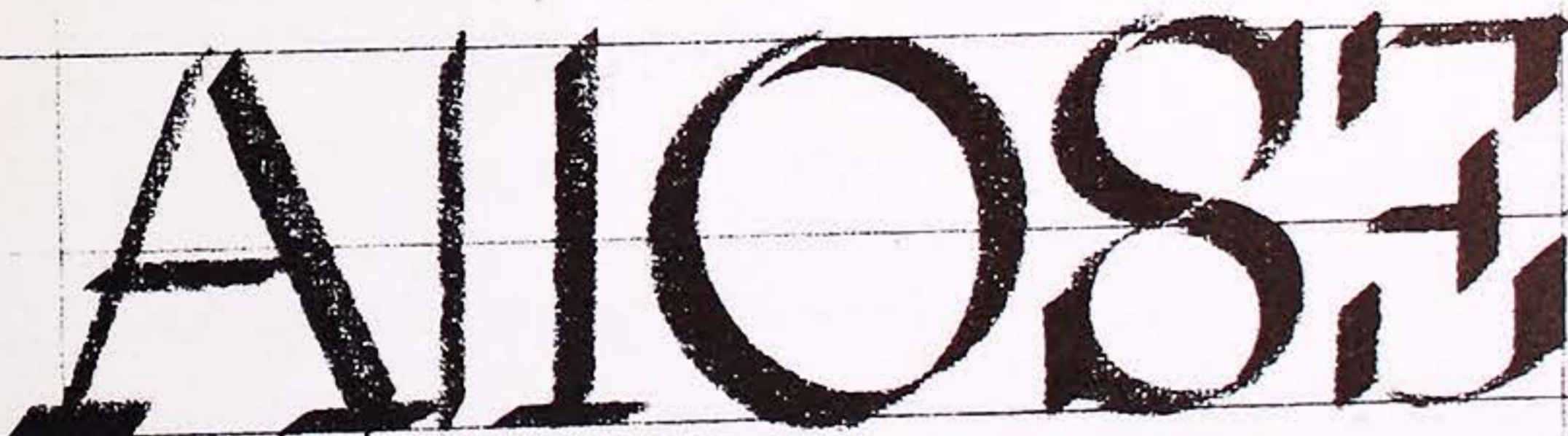
OTIVENACR

THE CAPITAL LETTERS above show a rule of eye that must be applied to make letters of different forms appear of the same size. Round forms must be drawn slightly above and below the extremes of the square letters. That is, they must come outside the lines to appear to be on the lines, top and bottom.

The points of the angular letters A, V and W must also jut outside the line slightly. The amount of extending in each case must be just sufficient to visually align all the forms at reading distance.

Below is a summing up of the basic strokes employed in the construction of the capital letters and, beneath these, are the characteristic letters of the several combinations of basic strokes.

THE FOLLOWING examples of Caslon Roman type are enlarged from 72 point impressions. These are shown for more careful study but should not be copied this size, in this weight. The renderings can be made in a more ideal weight in proportion to height, this being 1:9.

Weights should not be reduced in equal ratio to heights photographically or otherwise, for what is a good balance in one size is not necessarily good in another. Often, in modern typecasting, this principle is disregarded and one proportion of letter is drawn and cast in all sizes, whereas weight in reduction of size should be increased.

The ratio of weight to height in letters of the Trajan† column is 1:10, while the limit of the bi-concavity is 1:11*.

The ratio of weight to height in old Caslon 72 point impressions is 1:6, ⅓. In 36 point it is 1:6, ½.

THIS PATTERN is offered as an aid in determining the proper weight of the lower case to that of the capitals in book types.
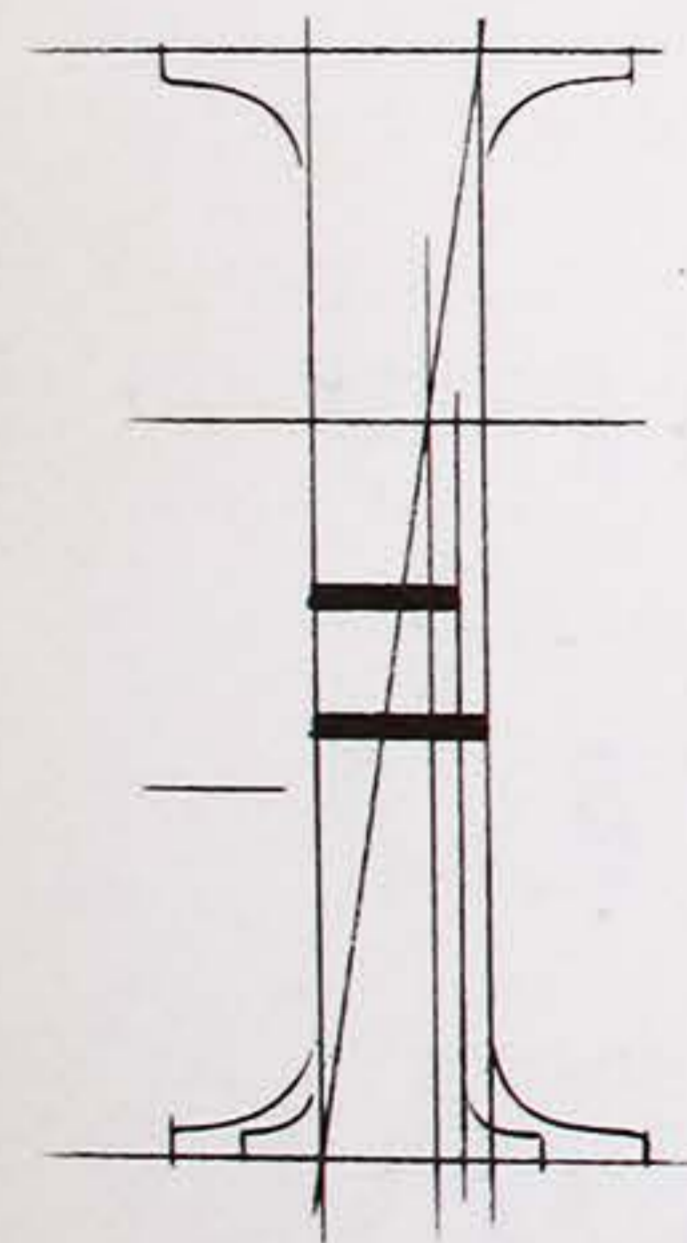
1. RULE SCALE LINE TO CORNERS
2. RULE HEIGHT LINE OF LOWER CASE 2/3 ABOVE BASE LINE
3. RULE VERTICAL WHERE THESE TWO LINES CROSS
4. DIVIDE AREA TO RIGHT OF THIS LINE IN HALF
5. RULE VERTICAL AT THIS DIVISION

Distance to left edge from this line will establish weight of lower case letter against full width of form which is weight of capital letter.

*This is an optical allowance made in the vertical heavy stroke where it is edged completely against white. It is to be considered only in finished work. (†See page 6.)
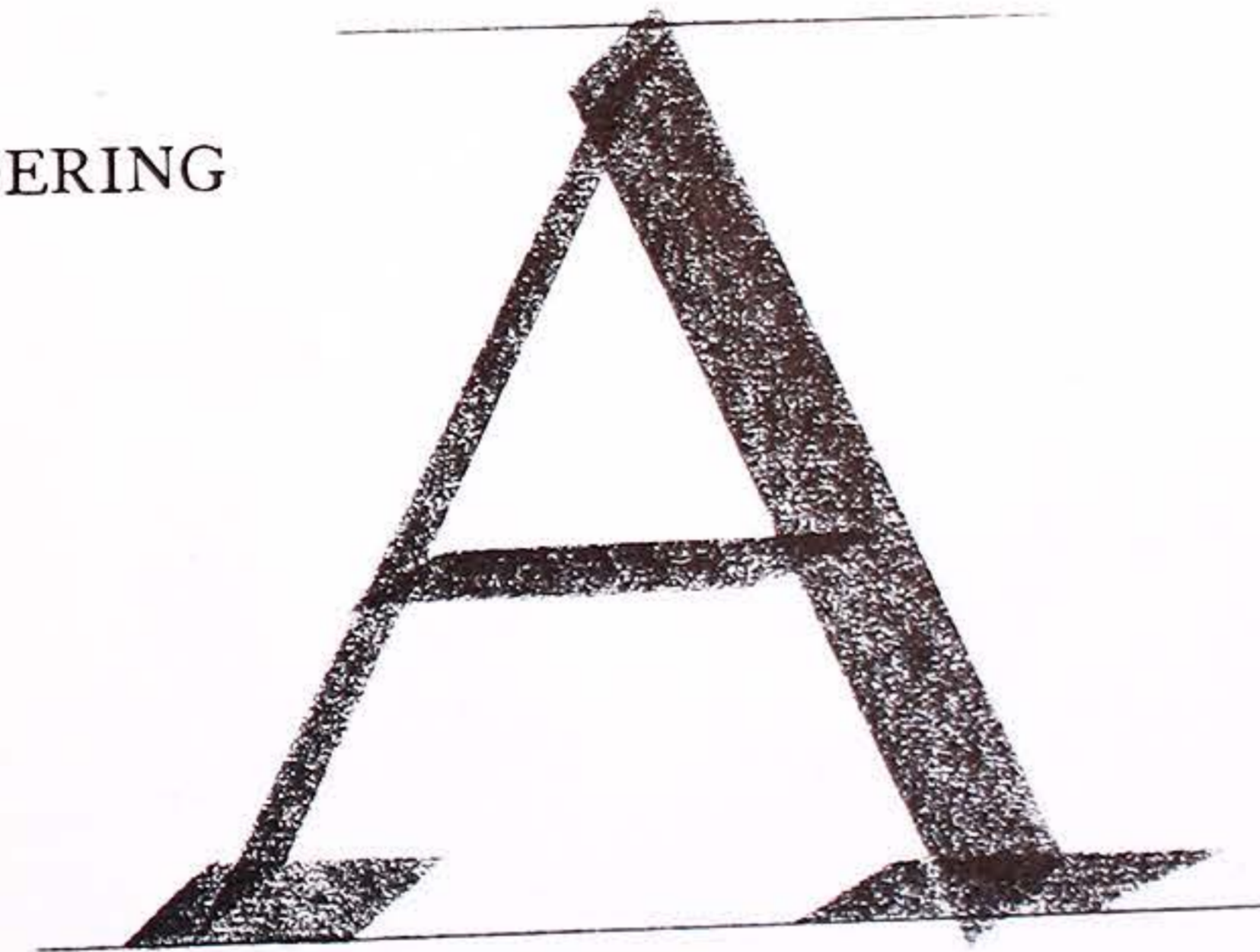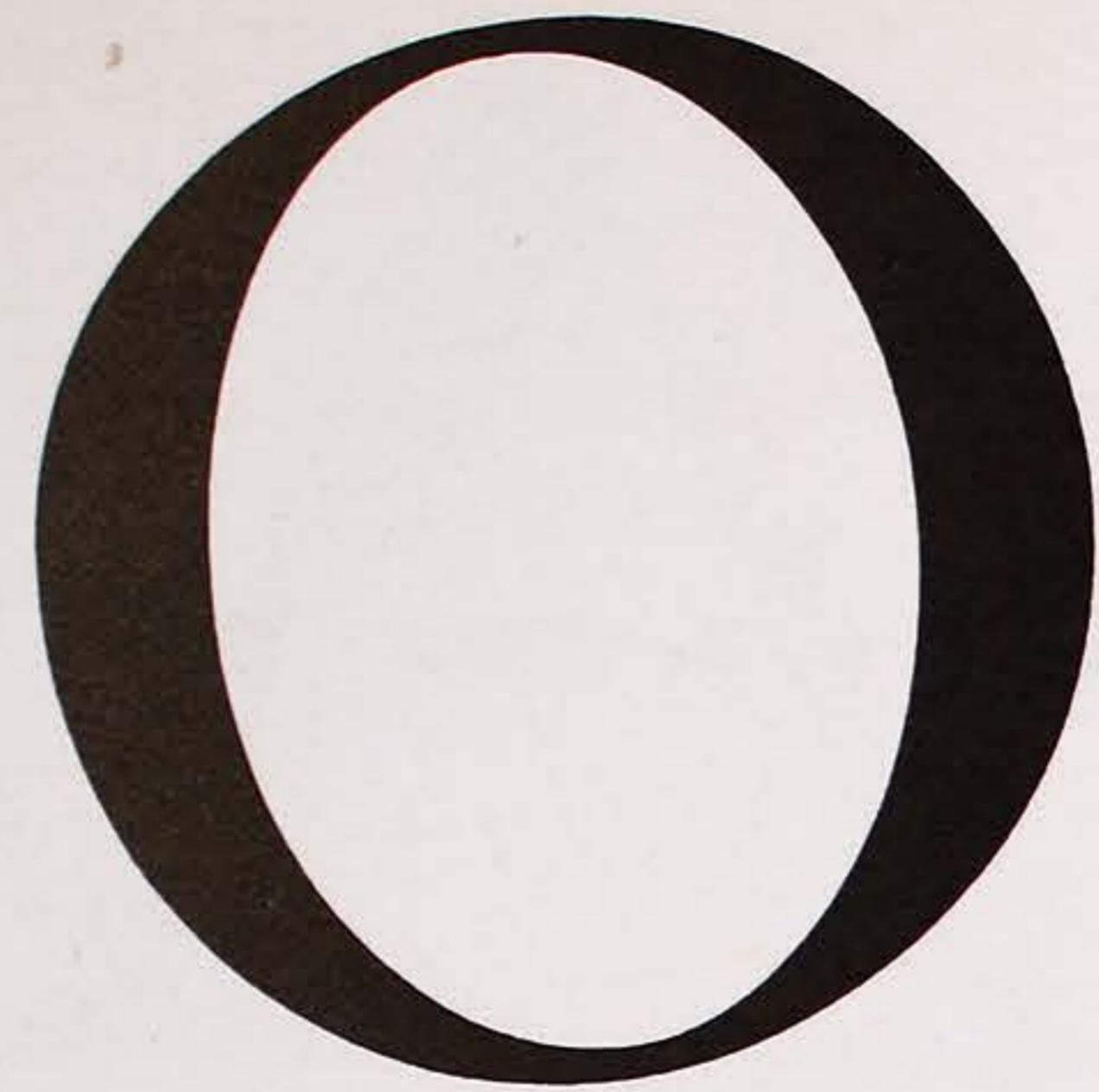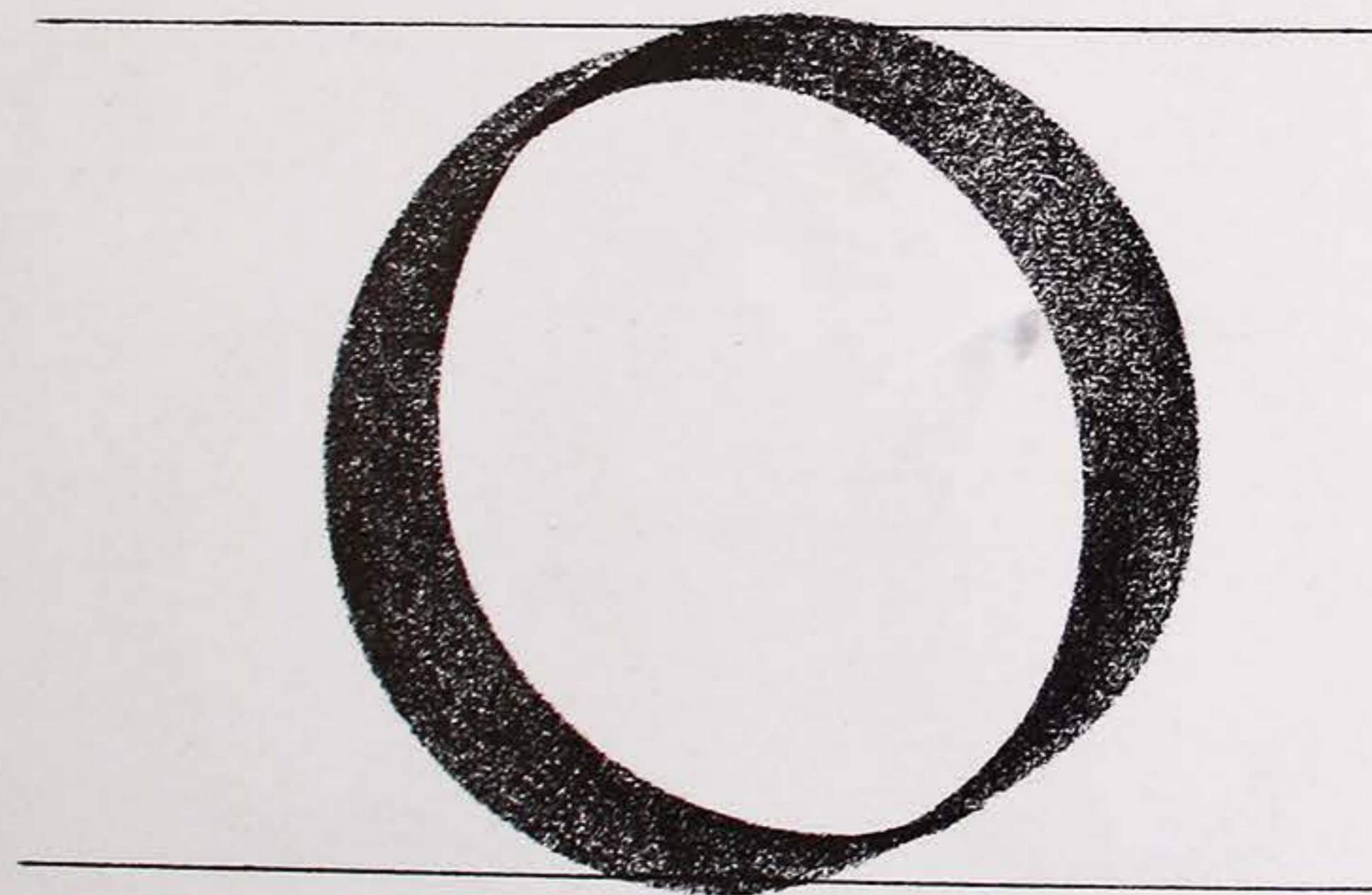
38
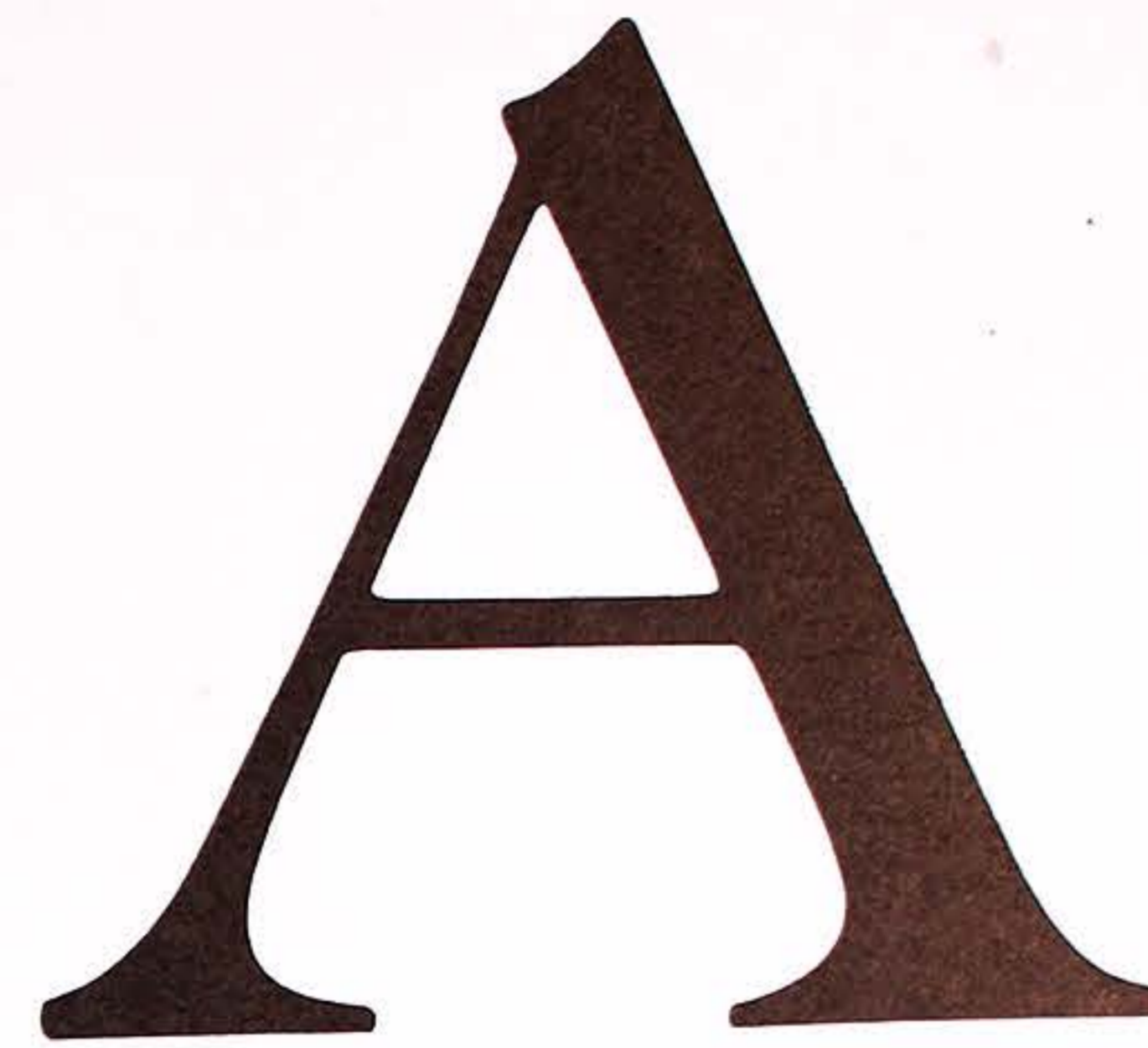
TYPE

BASIC STROKES

RENDERING
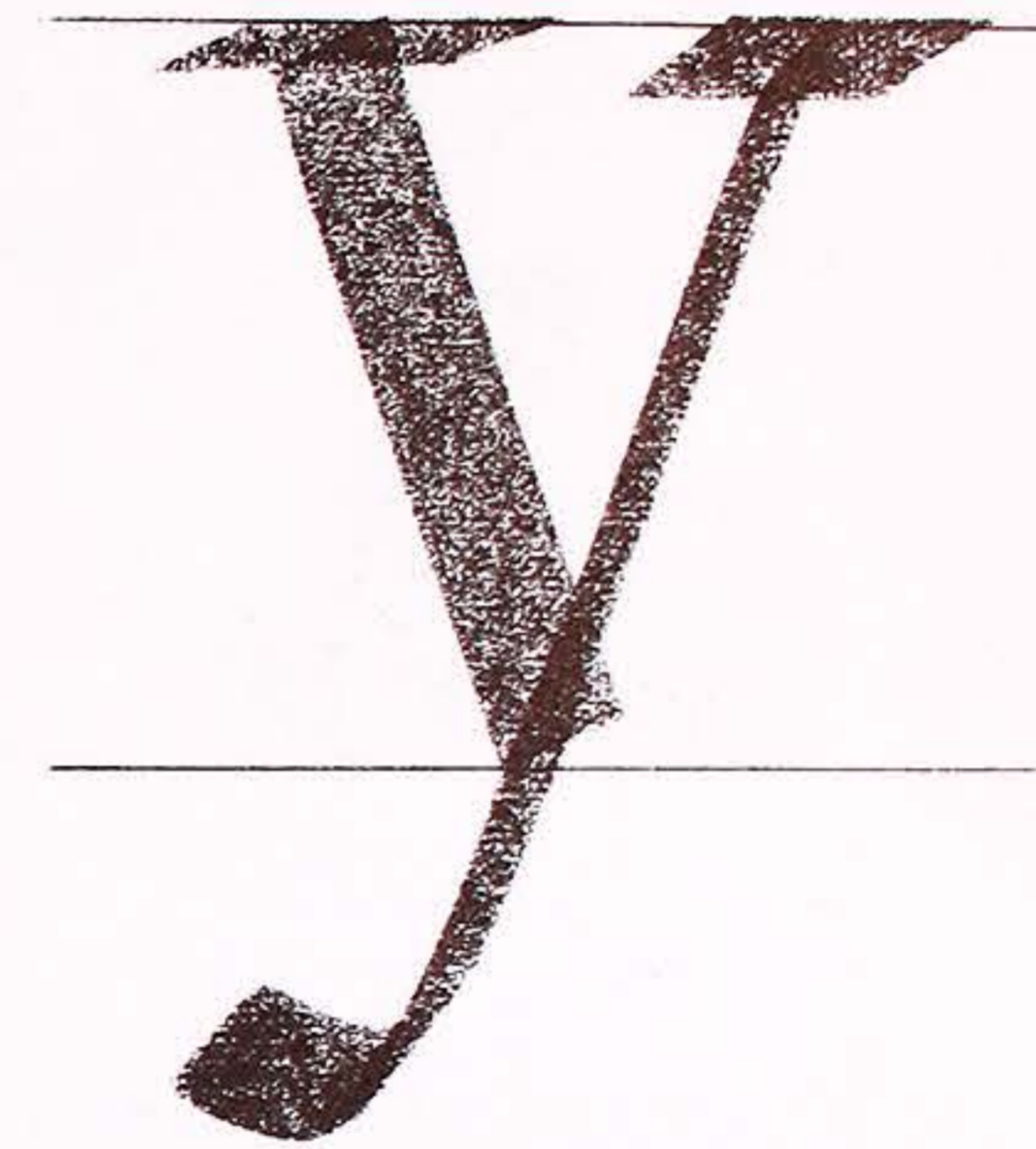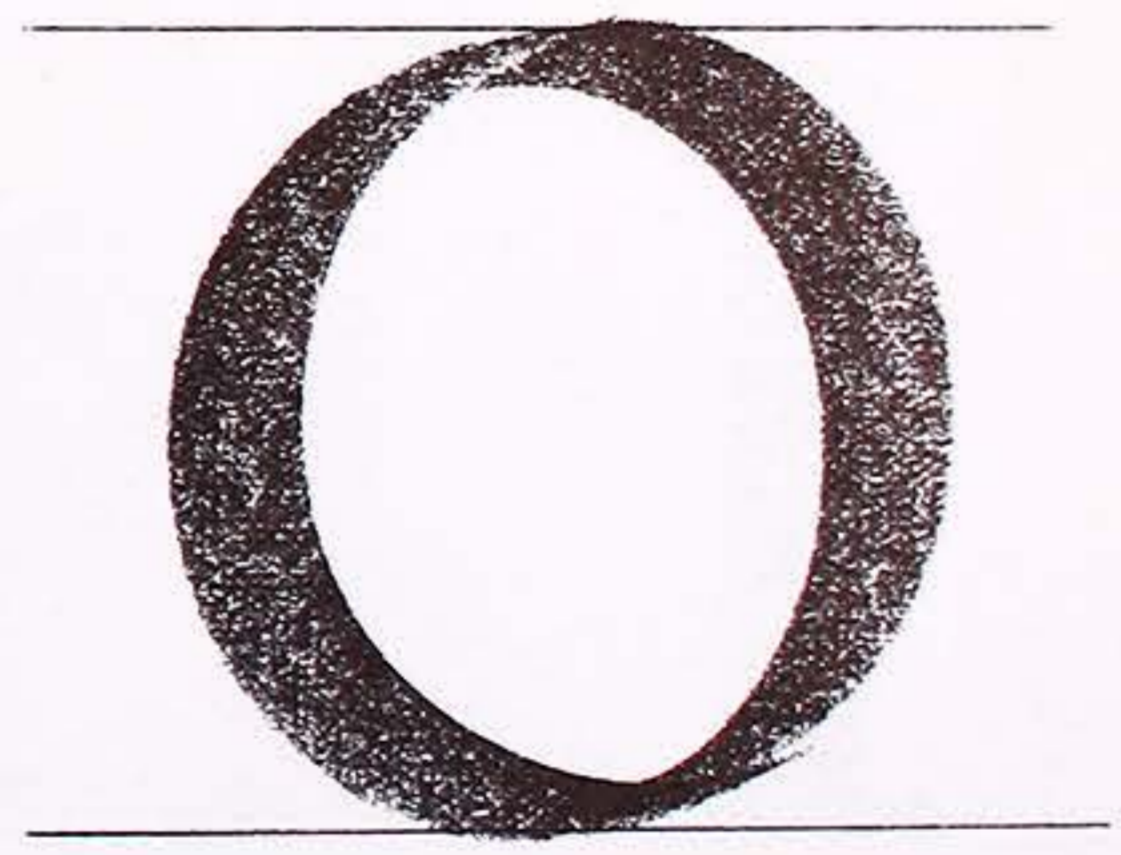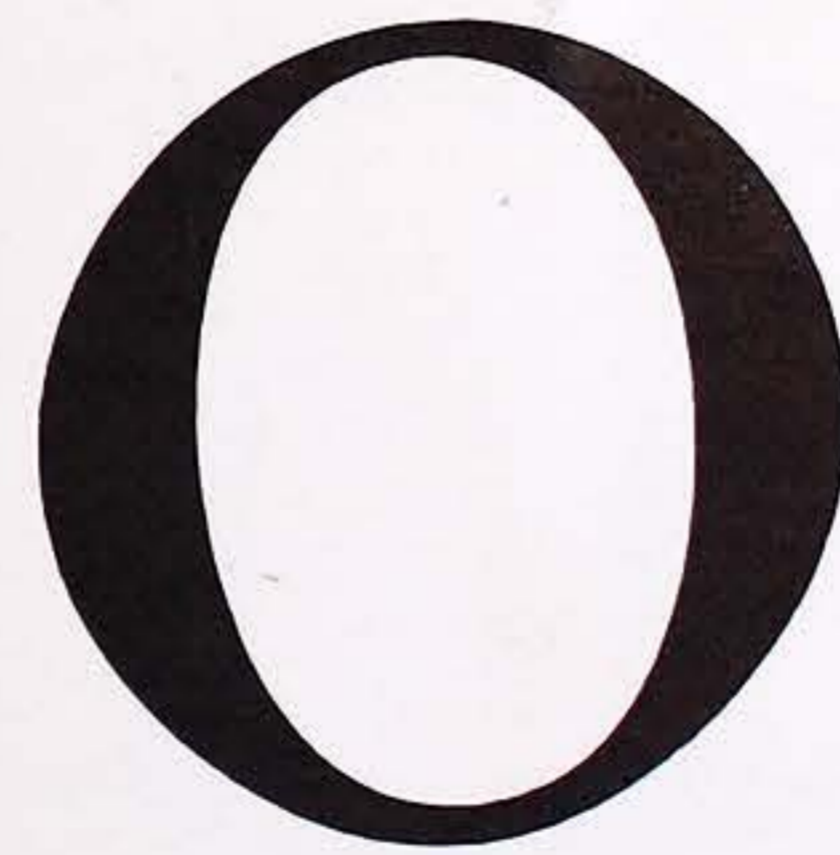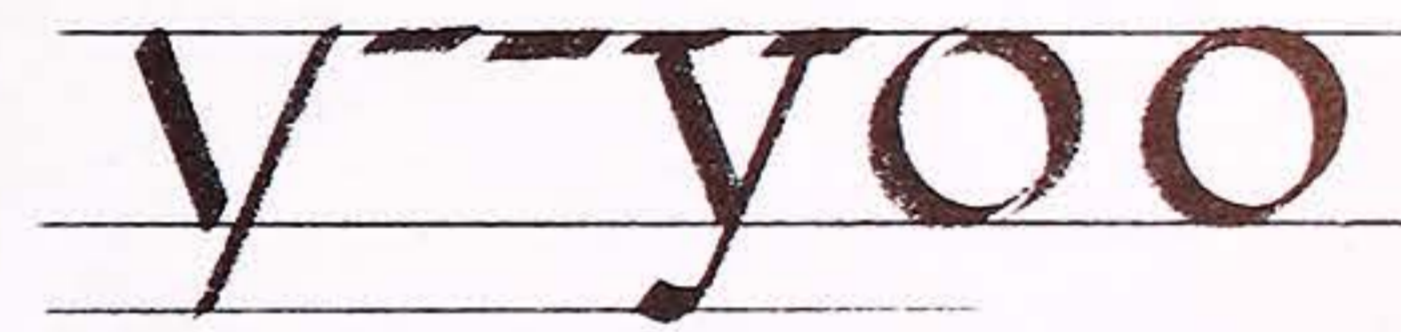
39

O

o o

O

y y y

y y o o

O O

TYPE   RENDERING

a a

BASIC STROKES   ааarın

nn

42

TYPE

R

BASIC STROKES   R R

RENDERING

R

43

B

ß-B

B

p p

p p p

d d

d d

g   g

C   C

S

S

TYPE

D

RENDERING DᴣꓤD

D

48

TYPE   RENDERING

e   e   e

BASIC STROKES oeꙄꙅꙅ

s   s

49

r

r

rrᵣᵒf

f

f

E

E

E

TYPE

M

BASIC STROKES

RENDERING

M M M

M

M

O O

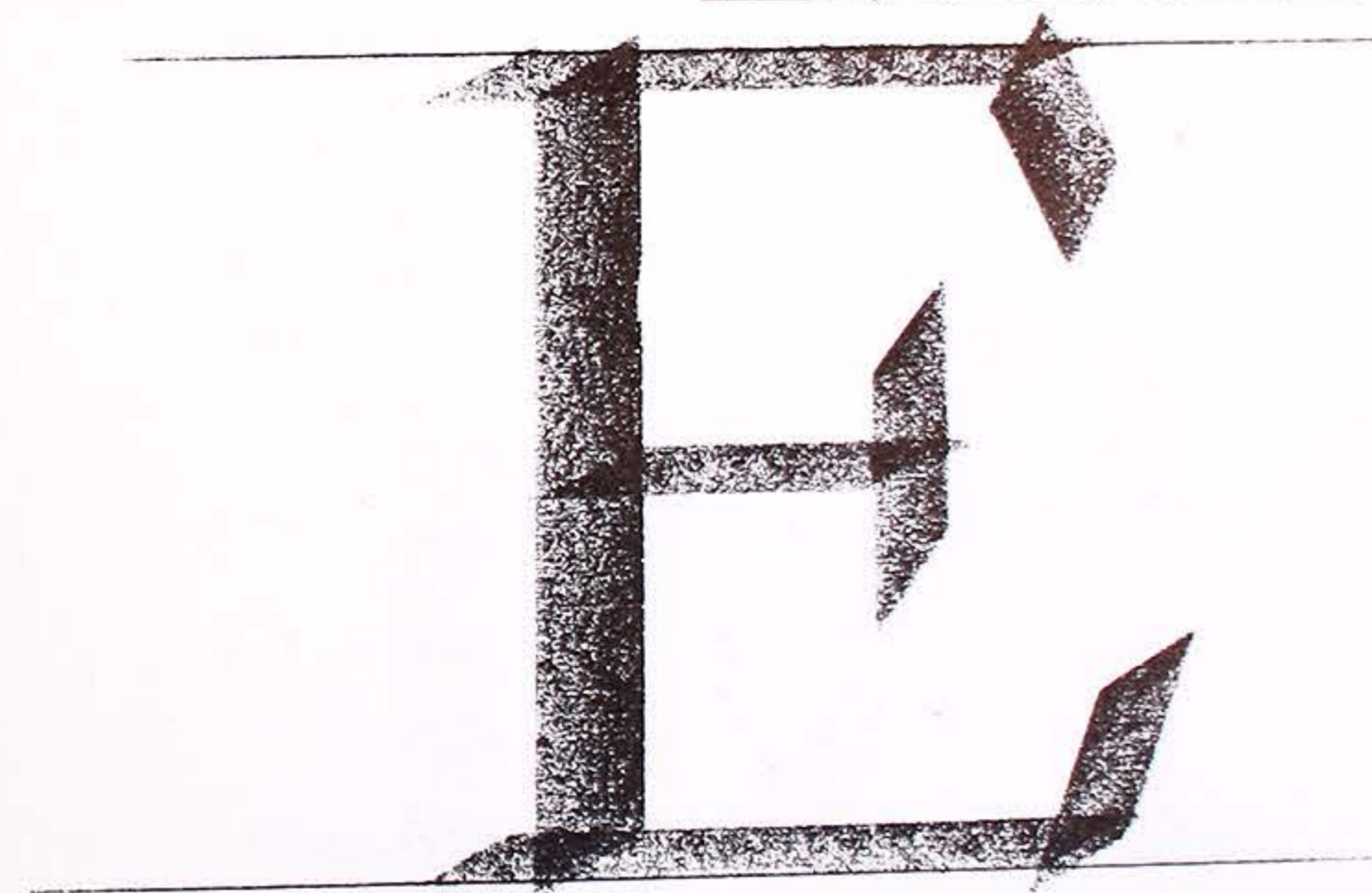CASLON
(OLD STYLE)

BODONI
(MODERN)
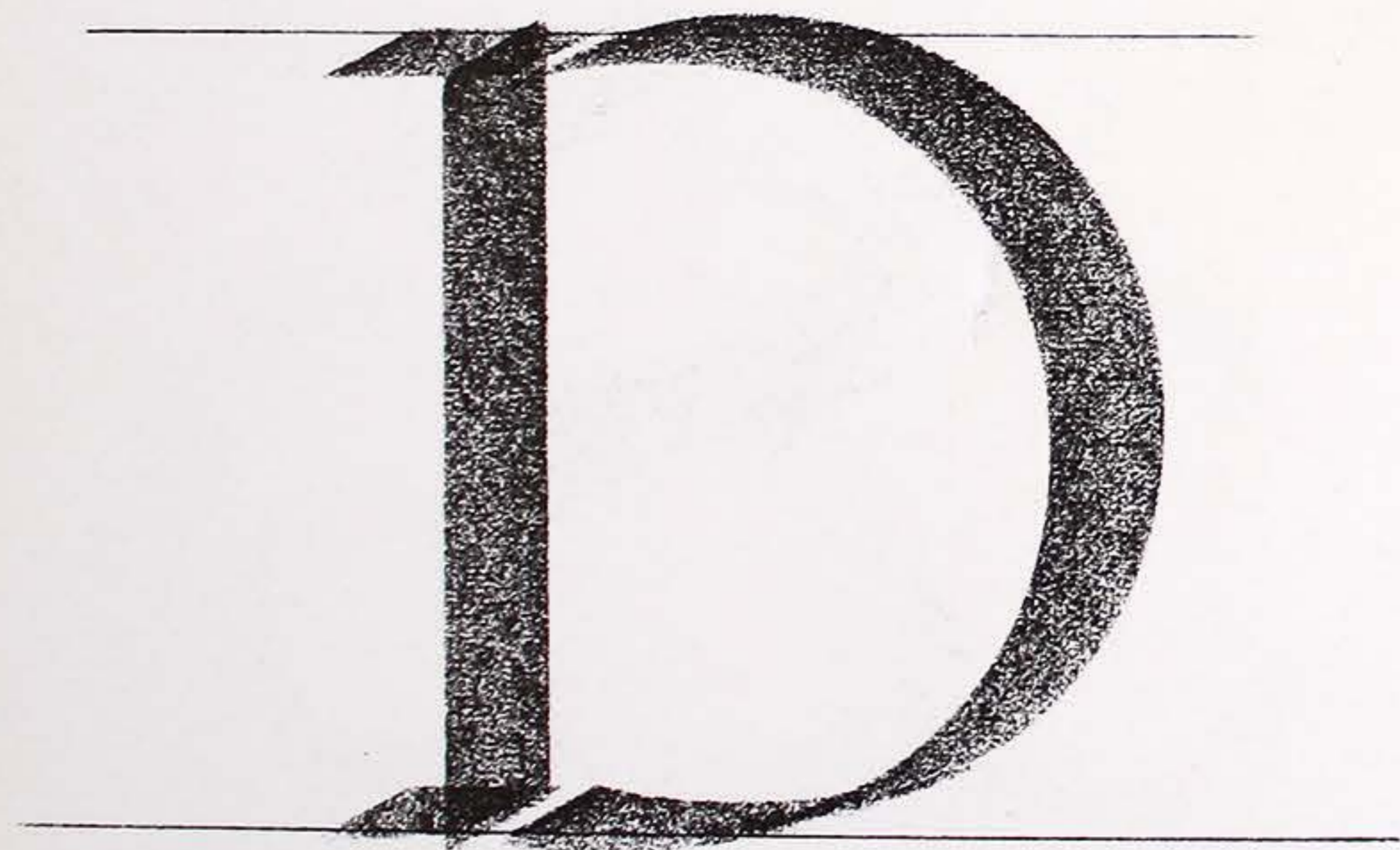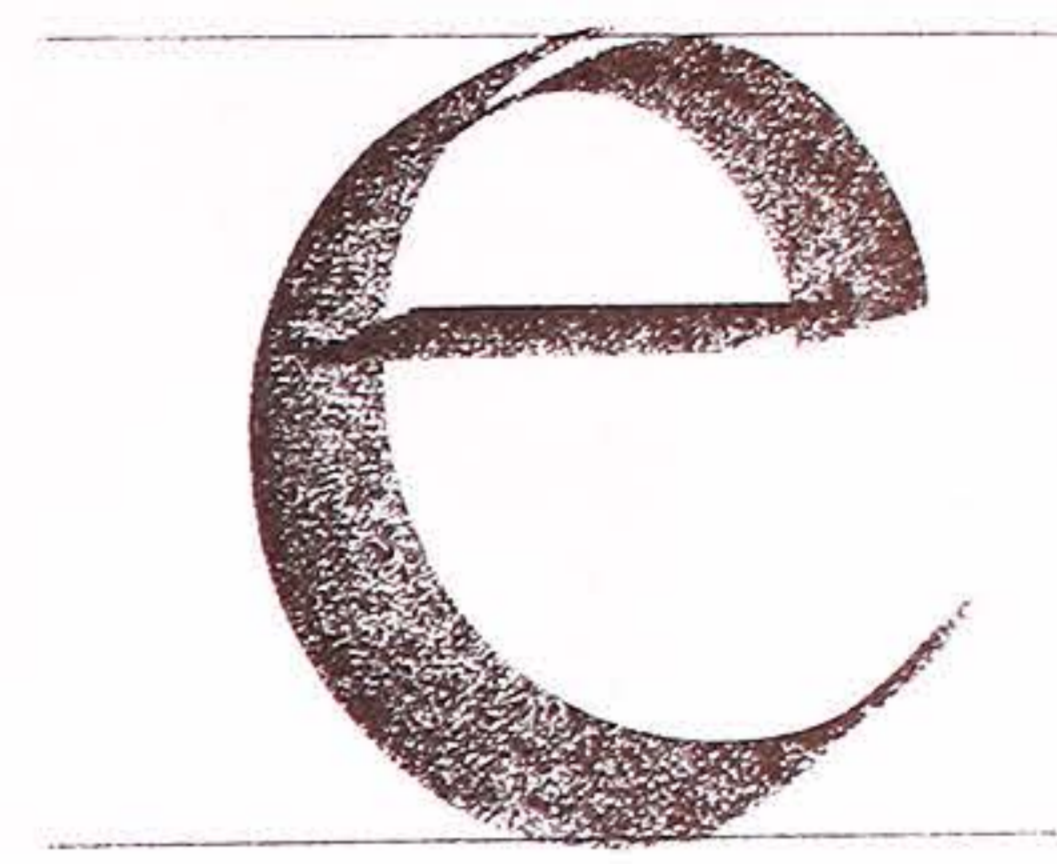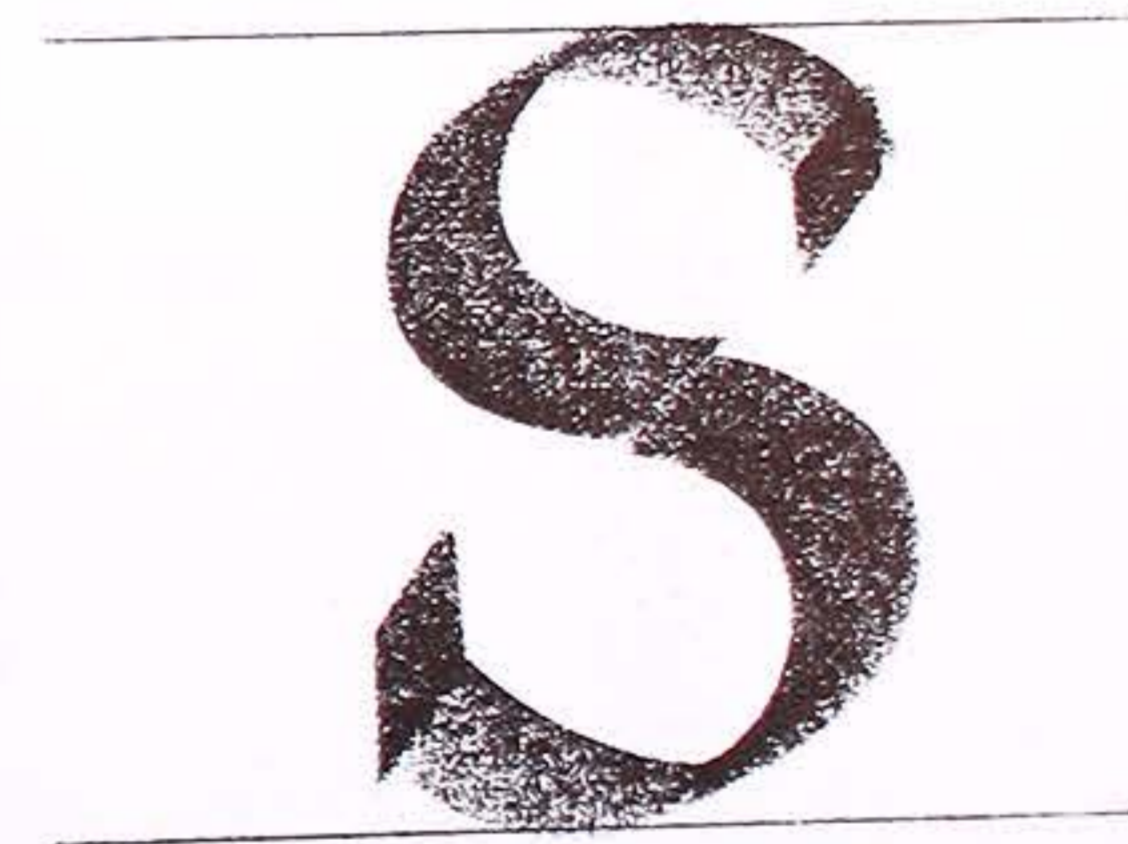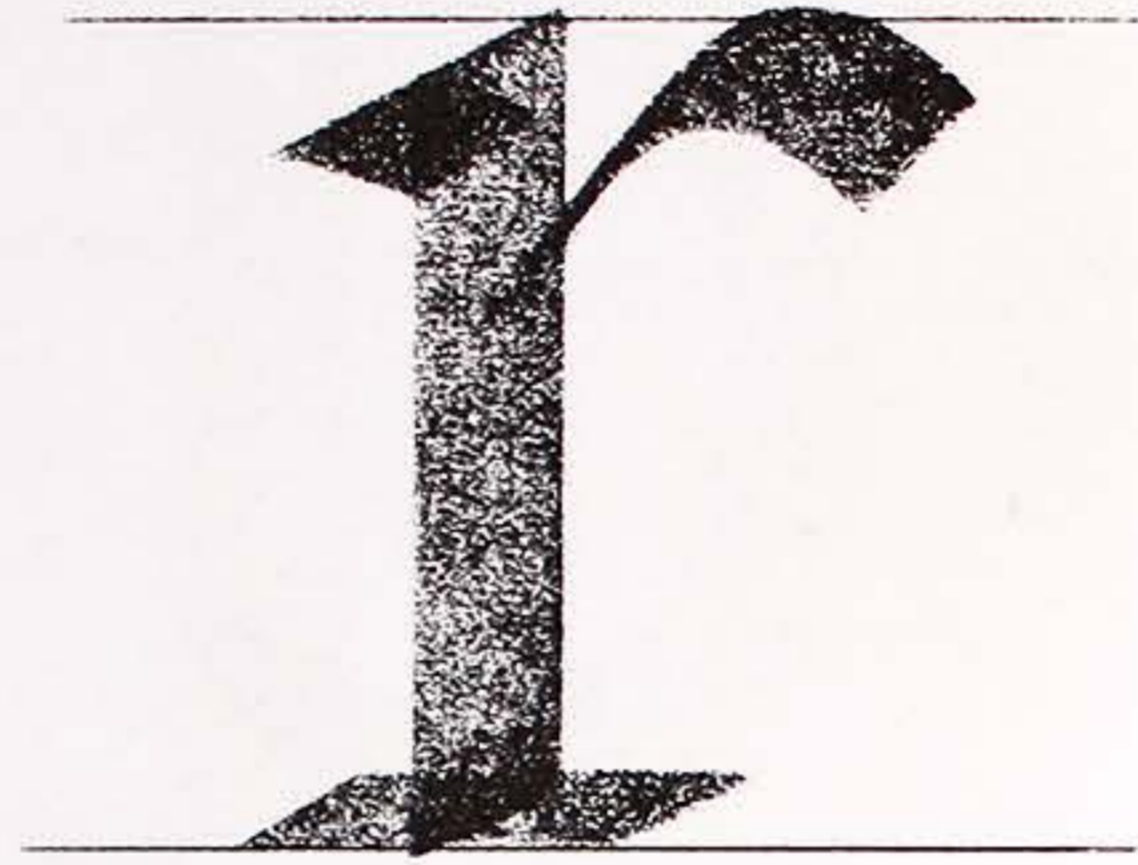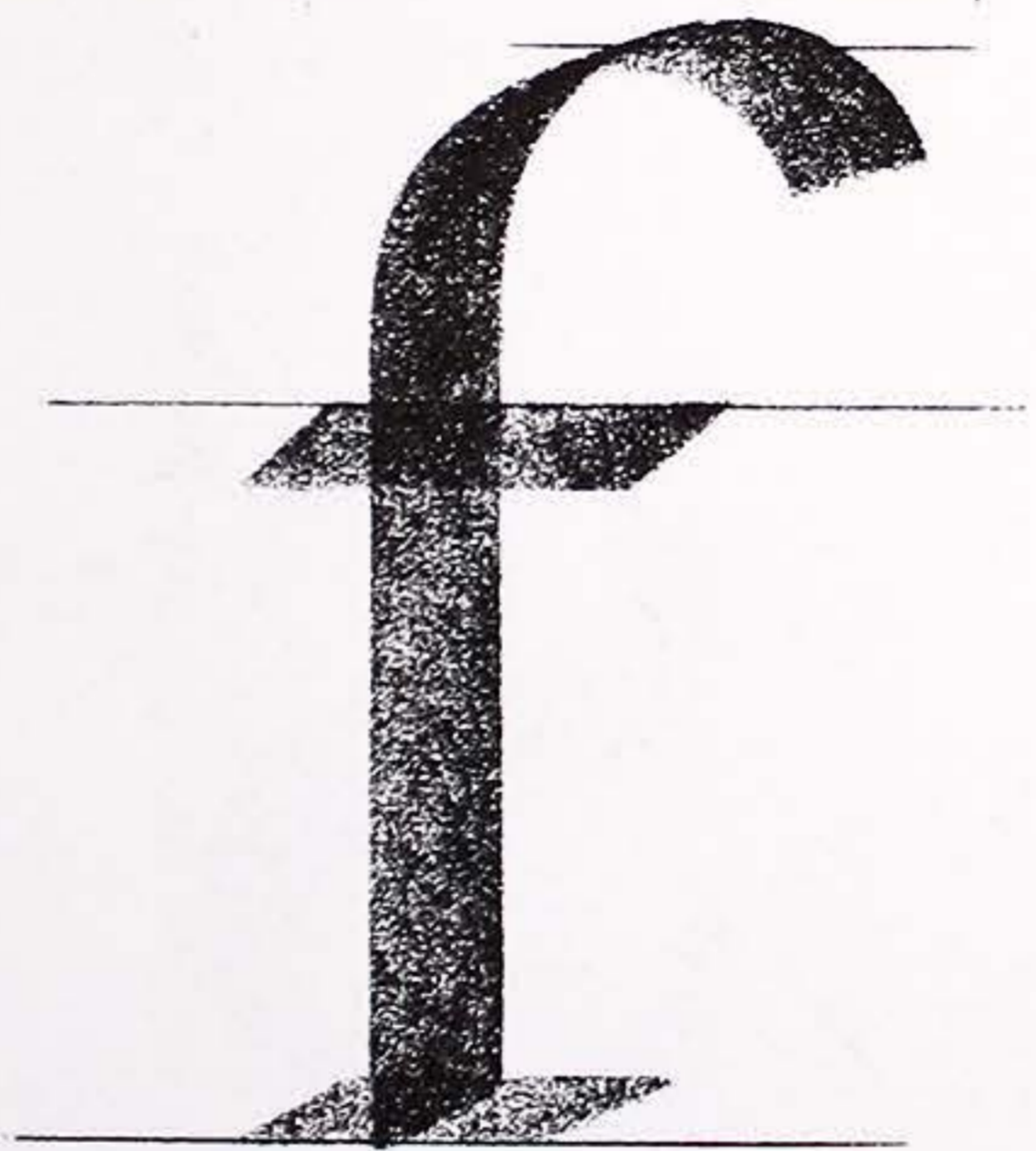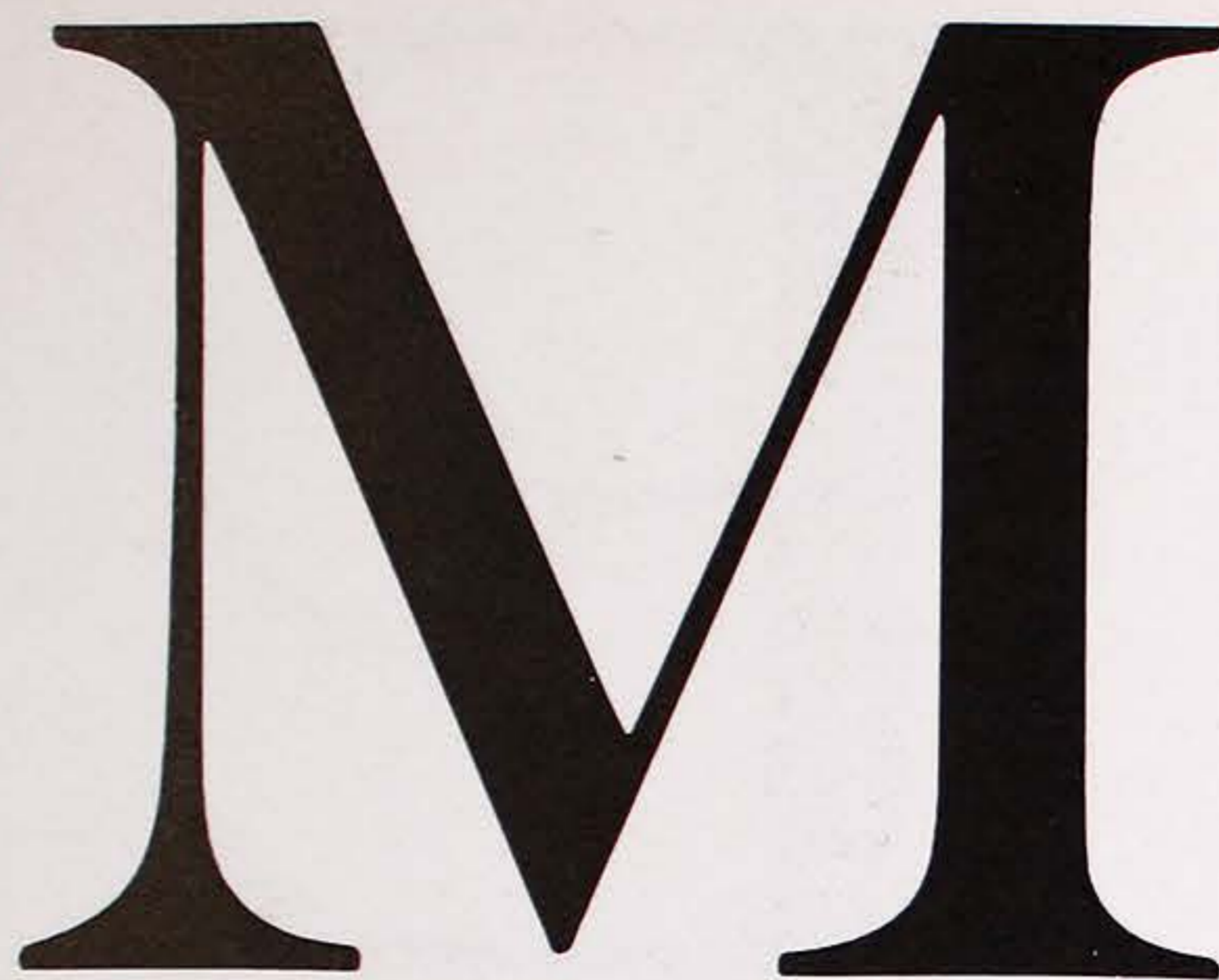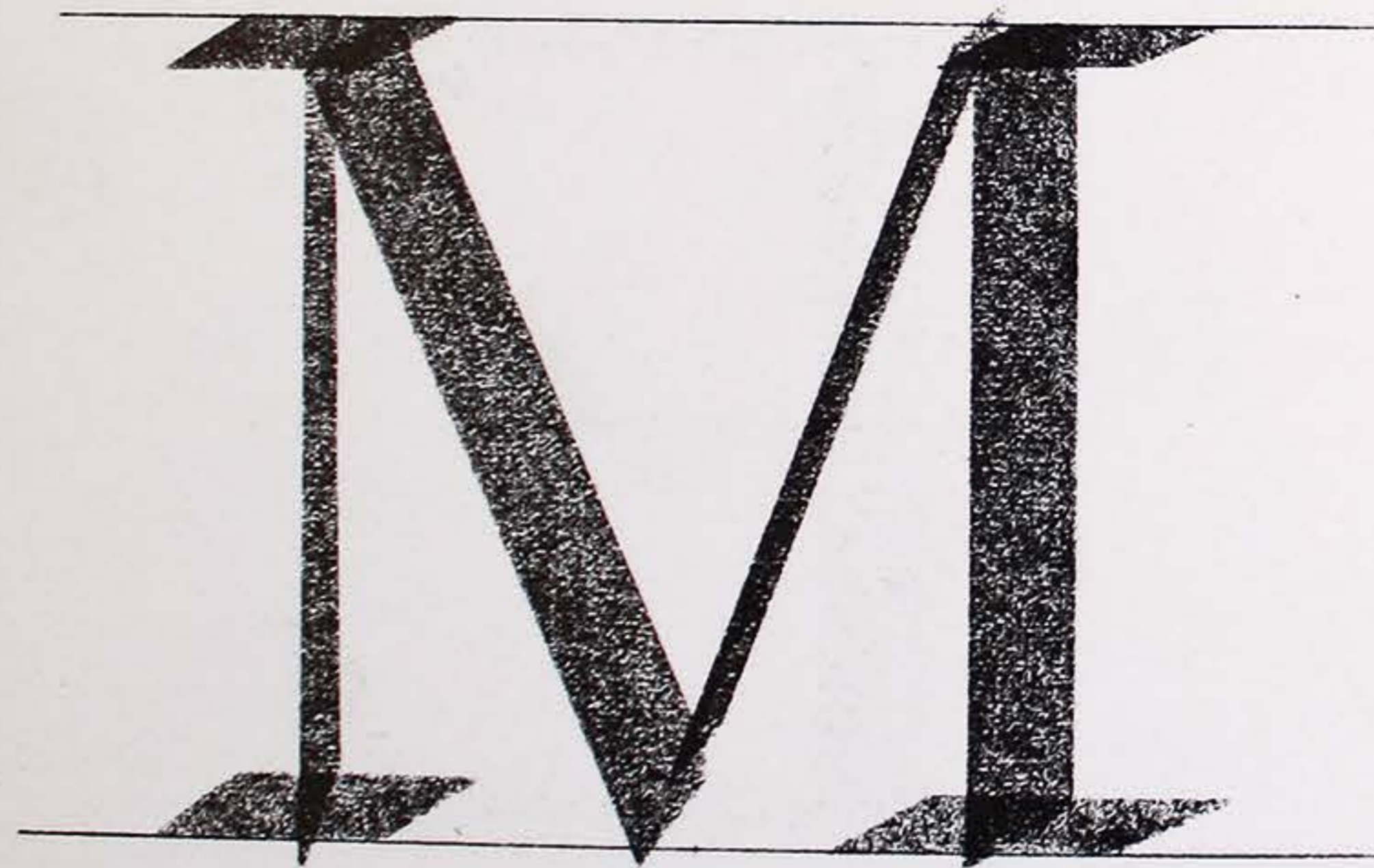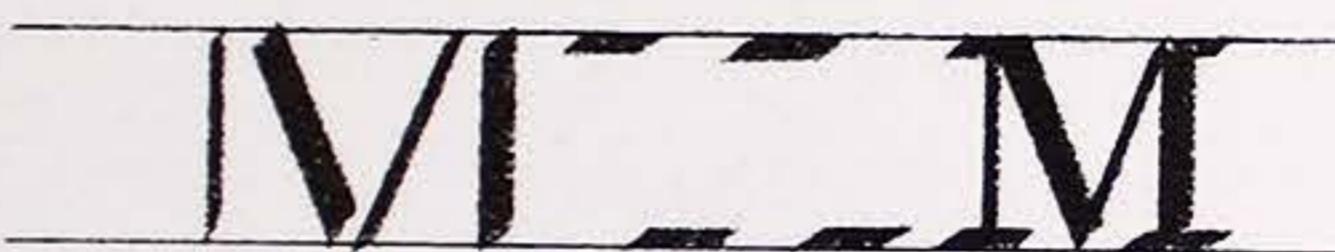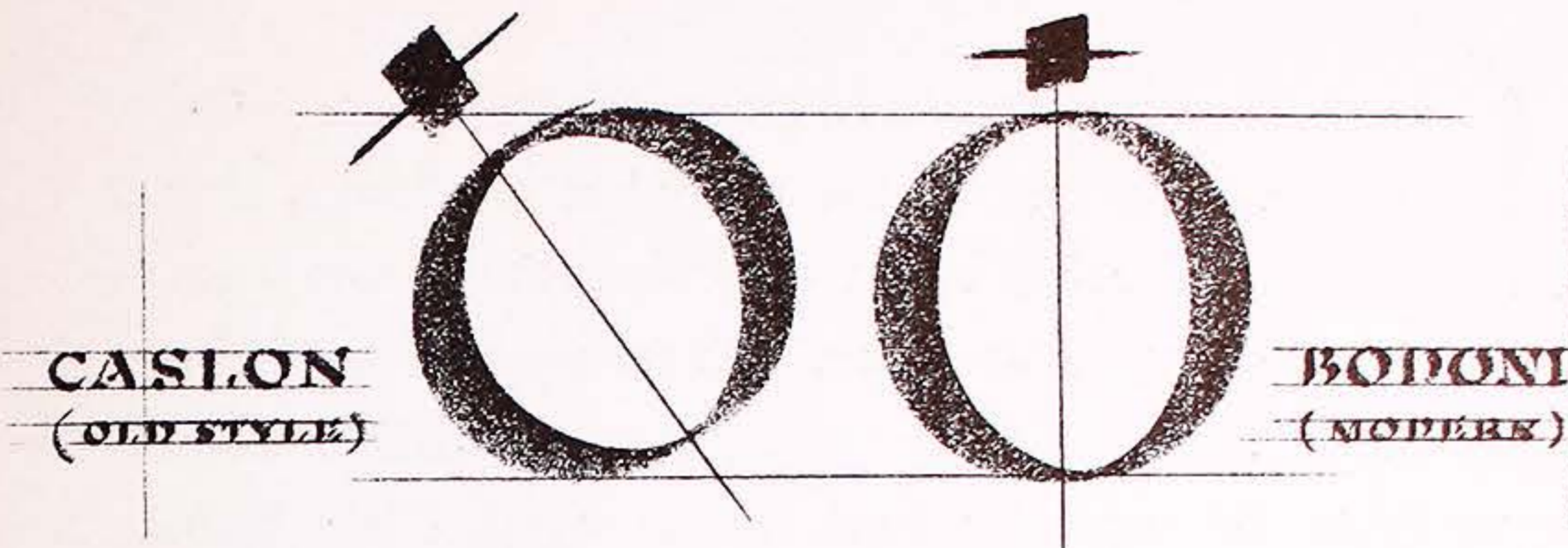
THE NOTABLE difference between a classic type and a modern type is demonstrated above. The difference is mostly the result of the tool being held in the different positions necessary to render them. The proportions of the letters in their relation to each other in each alphabet are generally the same. A knowledge of the basic formula of one will make the rendering of all book types easily mastered.

As you will already have observed, the letter z differs from the other letters in the fact that the thick oblique stroke is reversed. The z was introduced into the Latin alphabet from that of the Greek, to translate certain Greek words. As the ancient Greeks wrote from right to left in the oriental manner the z is in fact a reversed letter to the other letters in our alphabet. To render it properly with the flat tool, the stroke must be made opposite to the thick stroke in the letter x.

The pencil must also be turned unnaturally to form the capital U which is a variant of the letter V. When thought of as such, it becomes easier to render. A half circle base is substituted for the angle of the V. To change the angular strokes to vertical strokes, merely turn the thick stroke at the base.

Z Z U U
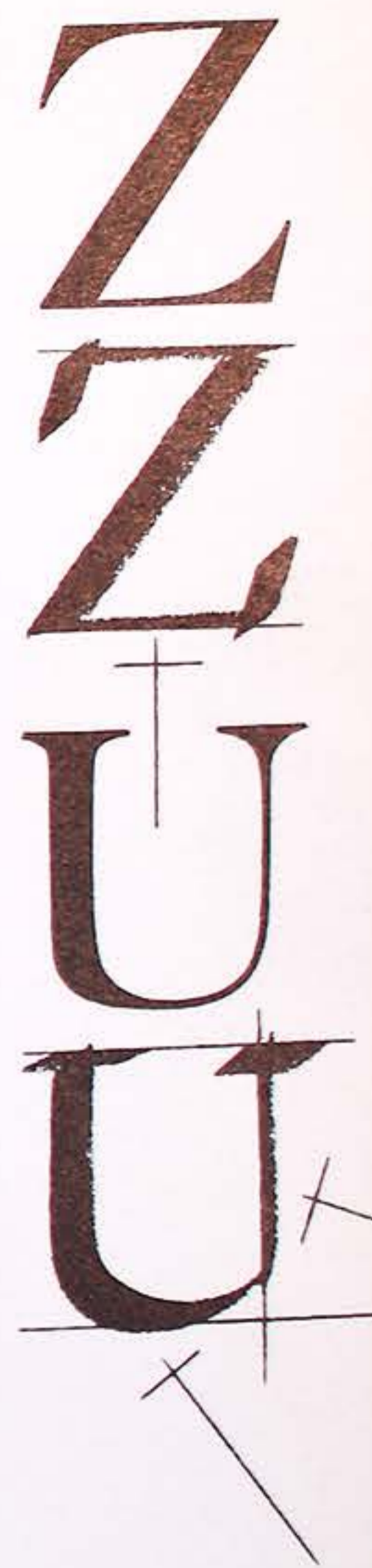
ALL TYPES ARE RELATED

THE RELATIONSHIP and proportions of our Roman letter forms in the alphabet reached a fine standard of perfection about two thousand years ago. Our better book types are a straight transposition of the stone-cut forms to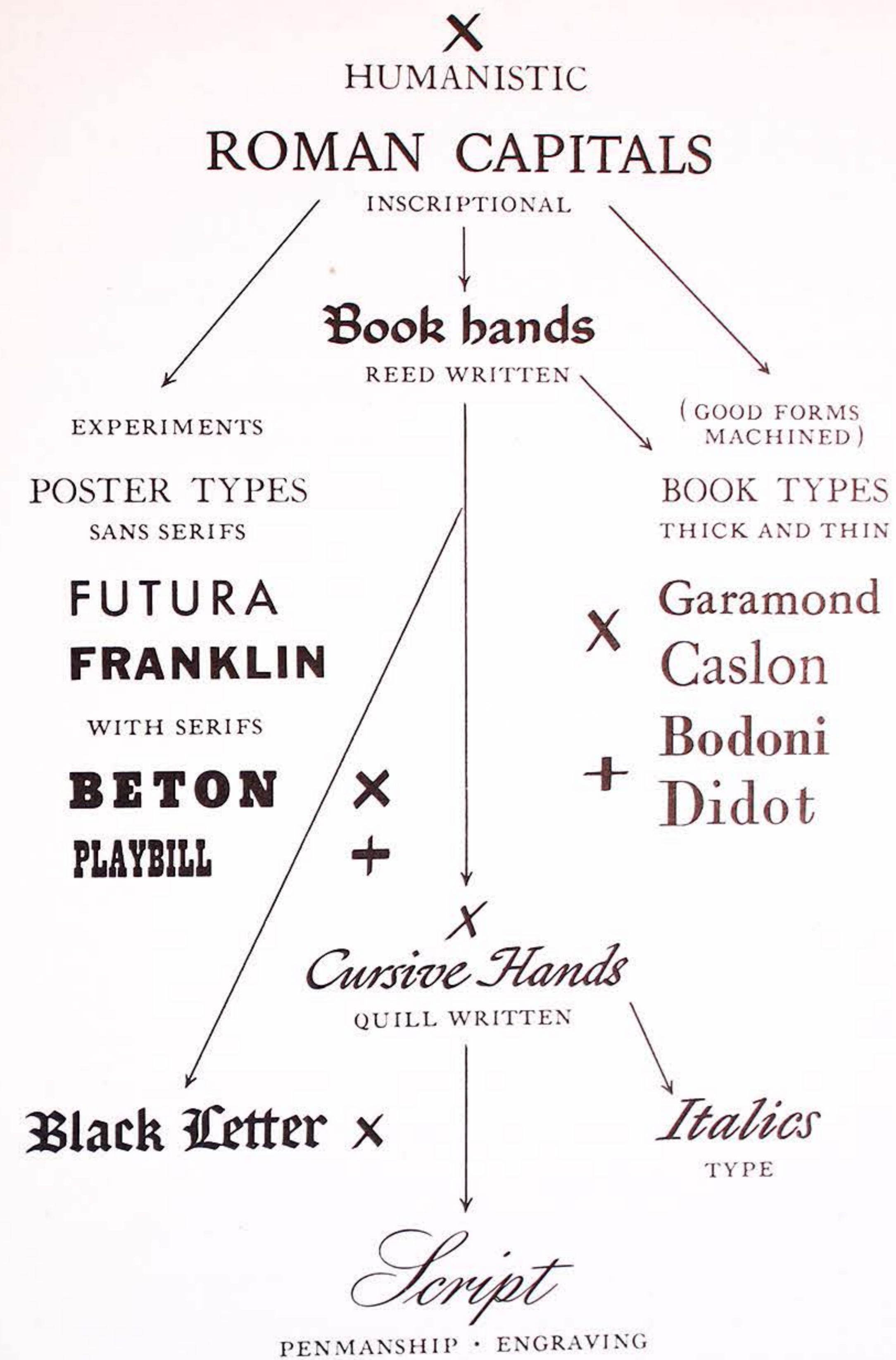 printing types, they are almost pure in form in the capital letters. Some weight has been added in most styles and the serifs strengthened and lengthened to aid in letter alignment.

A combination of the revised capitals and the best and most legible of the quickly written forms of the day were combined in the Roman types of Nicolas Jenson in the fifteenth century. All book types of today owe their origin to these intelligent interpretations of the best letter forms of the past.

The differences in weights and the slants of the curves in the two main groups of book types are due to an imitation of natural forms made by the different tools used to draw or write them. These characteristics were carefully imitated in printing types for, in the beginning of printing, more than in the present day, printing was a deliberate forgery of handwork, produced with hand illuminated initials and decorations and falsely sold not as printing, but as written books.

Book types may be roughly divided into two groups,

54

×
HUMANISTIC
ROMAN CAPITALS
INSCRIPTIONAL

Book hands
REED WRITTEN

EXPERIMENTS

(GOOD FORMS
MACHINED)

POSTER TYPES
SANS SERIFS

BOOK TYPES
THICK AND THIN

FUTURA
FRANKLIN

× Garamond
Caslon

WITH SERIFS

BETON

×

+ Bodoni
Didot

PLAYBILL

+

×
Cursive Hands
QUILL WRITTEN

𝕭𝖑𝖆𝖈𝖐 𝕷𝖊𝖙𝖙𝖊𝖗 ×

Italics
TYPE

Script
PENMANSHIP · ENGRAVING

55

Classic types, and Modern types. The former are so called because of their close adherence to hand drawn forms, the styles produced by a pointed reed or quill held in a natural writing position. The later group, the Modern types, are those styles produced after 1800 and bearing the mark of mechanical perfection.

Modern types are more extreme in the difference between thicks and thins and were developed because of a popular desire for excellence in technique and to print more brilliantly on the smooth coated and pressed papers fashionably desired in the trade of bookmaking.

The reflection of hand drawn work was sacrificed in the imitation of the sharper, copper-engraved method of printing, newly developed and competitive to the older method of letter press printing.

As engraving is a more precise imitation of hand forms, and as weights of letters are outlined and filled in with close shallow lines to catch the ink, it naturally followed that the forms of the letters became manufactured and less natural. The type imitations therefore followed this fashion not only in styles of letters but also to the snobbish state of dusting rosin in the wet ink and heating it so that it puffed up to simulate the thickness of the ink of a copper plate impression.

A characteristic of this style is that all weights and curved strokes are vertical. If they were rendered with a flat tool, it would be held unnaturally, with the flat edge square to the line. This is the method to employ in rendering this style of letter.

The Black Letter or Old English style as it is commonly named is an almost discarded experiment of the middle ages. To-day, it has only its quaint uses.

In developing this style, the Roman forms were squared and condensed to increase the number of characters in the line and thereby conserve materials. This resulted in a sacrifice of letter proportions and rhythm and legibility in words. Simpler to make, they are never easy to read for all the weights are too similar and, therefore, lack differentiation in the word.

This is the letter form first imitated by Gutenberg and his school of printing and was forsaken only when the true Roman forms were revived in the times of the Italian Renaissance.

In poster types of today and the near past, history repeats itself in the experiment of condensing, squaring and simplifying the letter proportions to the point of illegibility. This is contrary to the term poster.

Poster types were created as a means to an end and they do not represent any culmination of a desire in the minds of their designers for beauty in typography but express a flat demand for attention. The lower case characters in these types have proven notably unsuccessful.

BOA BOA

Futura is the first noteworthy attempt to design an alphabet with a compass and a ruling pen, observing the proportions of the Roman capitals but eliminating serifs and any human element of variation of weights.

Franklin Gothic, an older type, is another interpretation of mechanical perfection but suffers by condensing the letters. This Gothic tendency of condensing is its only claim to the name, Gothic. There are slight differences in weights between thicks and thins but these are only optical allowances to relieve too great a blackness that would occur in some letters if all weights were the same.

Beton, the next distinctive experiment in the poster and newspaper type field is even more crass and outstanding in its disregard for legibility. It is a sort of political attempt to reconcile the old with the new by restoring the serifs and the Roman proportions. This puts the reader to another disadvantage for the wide forms allowed still greater weight which, of course, was added to the letter and the serifs as well. Little white space remains to shine through to identify the letter, but the ultimate, almost complete blackness, was achieved in attention value.

Playbill is another version of the same experiment but suffers condensing and squaring and almost perfect illegibility. Here a parallel may be drawn between a

nes
nest
nes
nest

58

tenth century accident in bad letter forms and a well graphed and argumented one of the present time.

In poster design and newspaper typography, these gothic and sans serif types seem to be intrenched and they can be read plainly in a short line of few words. Their usefulness seems to end here and they have little place in the better forms of typography.

The best italic alphabets contain in their letter relations the same elements that are found in the upright Roman alphabets.
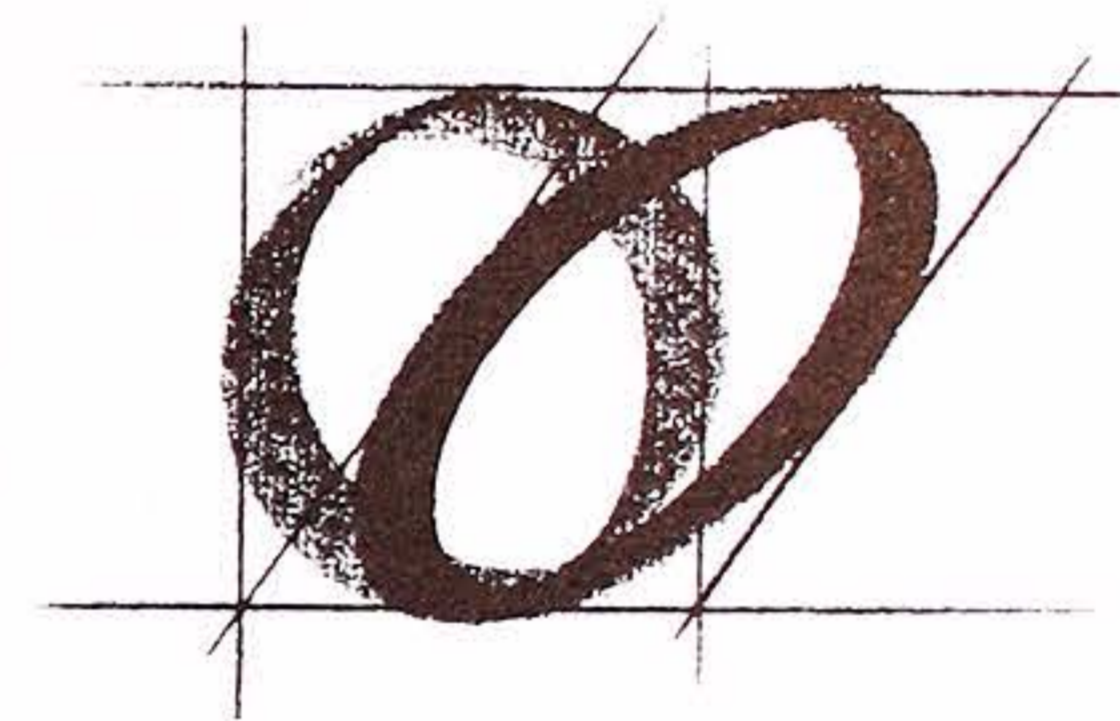
The difference is that they are slanted and, therefore, are condensed naturally in ratio. Certain small letters by custom follow the more simple and archaic forms, such as the *a*, *g*, *k* and *s*. They carry over more characteristics of the tools and the manner in which they were written than do most of the upright small letters. In modern types, they suffer progressively from a general disregard of their origin which is, of course, the everyday informal handwriting of the past.

59

Script letters are customarily made with a narrower pen point that is easily spread with pressure. This guides us in the use of the flat pointed pencil. The thin lines of the script are approximated by lightening the pressure and turning the pencil to its edge, while the bold strokes are naturally formed by drawing the pencil downward and curving the thick stroke from thin to thick to thin and lightening the pressure for the thin curves in the same manner in which you write in longhand.

For a thorough understanding of all natural alphabets, the student should search out the progenitors of our modern letters and, in each case, the kind of tool which originally formed them. He may then determine more fully the good qualities which have been retained and the flaws that have been mistakenly introduced into many of our type alphabets and allowed to remain by the redesigners.

THE ALPHABETS

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 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

OIX

XF

ABCDEFGHIJ
KLMNOPQR
STUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklm
nopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890;!?

BASIC STROKES IN RENDERING

AIOSTEonstag

ABCDEFGHIJ
KLMNOPQR
STUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklm
nopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890;!?

BASIC STROKES IN RENDERING

AIOSTEanogst

ABCDEFGHIJ
KLMNOPQR
STUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmn
opqrstuvwxyz
1234567890;!?

BASIC STROKES IN RENDERING

AIOSTE anosg

ABCDEFGHIJ
KLMNOPQR
STUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmn
opqrstuvwxyz
1234567890;!?

Basic Strokes in Rendering

AIOSTonslgap

TXO

ABCDEFGHIJ
KLMNOPQR
STUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklm
nopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890;!?

BASIC STROKES IN RENDERING

AIOST Egahios

XI

ABCDEFGHIJ
KLMNOPQR
STUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmn
opqrstuvwxyz
1234567890;!?

BASIC STROKES IN RENDERING

AEOTS Rhapsto

ABCDEFGHIJ

KLMNOPQR

STUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklm

nopqrstuvwxyz

1234567890;!?

BASIC STROKES IN RENDERING

AIOST Eanosg

ABCDEFGHIJ

KLMNOPQR

STUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklm

nopqrstuvwxyz

1234567890;!?

BASIC STROKES IN RENDERING

AIOST Eastergo

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

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 ; ! ?

Basic Strokes in Rendering

AIOSTRonaglvys

72

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 ; ! ?

Basic Strokes in Rendering

ASCDUsaghtf

73

To SERVE as specimens of functional purpose; to permit the student to compare a professional rendering with the eventual printed page, and so that he will understand that a rendering must be as practical as a blueprint, that it must work out in the plan for finished results, the following pages are presented. They are facsimile reproductions of some of the pages from the working dummy of this book.

Reproduced on the last page are some of the pieces of hand lettering that were expressly drawn for the production of this book. They are shown in the actual size in which they were lettered.

74

HOW TO RENDER

ROMAN

Letter

Forms

TOMMY THOMPSON

The Rendering of the Jacket Design.

75

TYPE   RENDERING

g g

BASIC STROKES   o g goc

C C

A Guide for a consistent Format throughout Book.   76

How to Render

ROMAN

LETTER FORMS

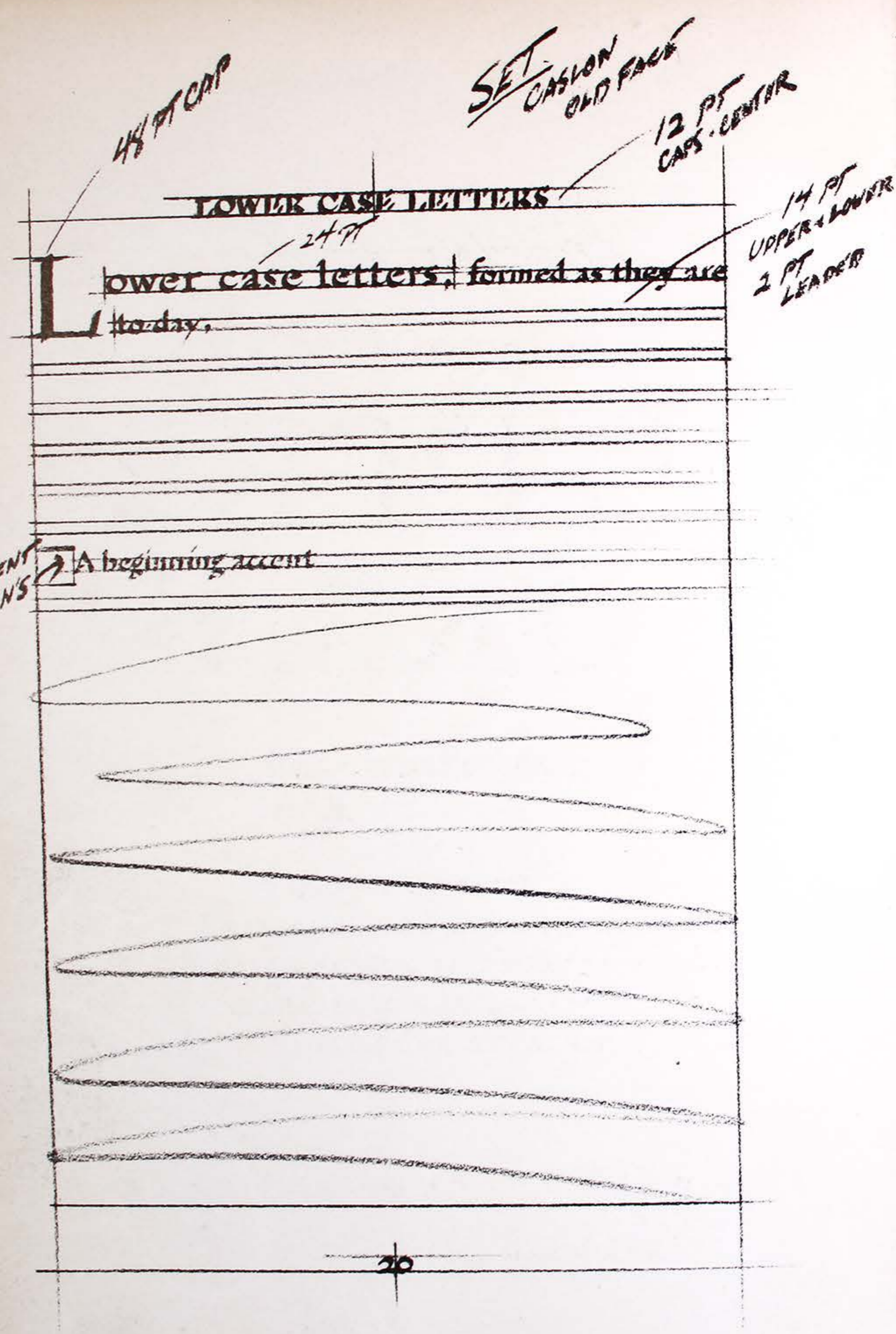TOMMY THOMPSON

A PATTERN FOR
UNDERSTANDING AND DRAWING
ROMAN LETTERS AND OTHER STYLES
OF LETTERING AND TYPE FACES
RELATED TO THEM

AMERICAN STUDIO BOOKS

NEW YORK AND LONDON

Markup annotations: cut · 14 PT CASLON OLD FACE · PASTE UP WORK OVER · 12 PT Caslon O.F. · FUTURA BOLD 10 PT · 12 PT CASLON O.F. · 10 PT Caslon OF.

77   *Layout of the Title Page marked for typesetting.*

Left page:

44 PT CAP

SET. CASLON OLD FACE

12 PT CAP. LETTER

14 PT UPPER + LOWER 2 PT LEADED

LOWER CASE LETTERS

24 PT

Lower case letters, formed as they are today,

INDENT 2 M'S → A beginning accent

Right page (book cover):
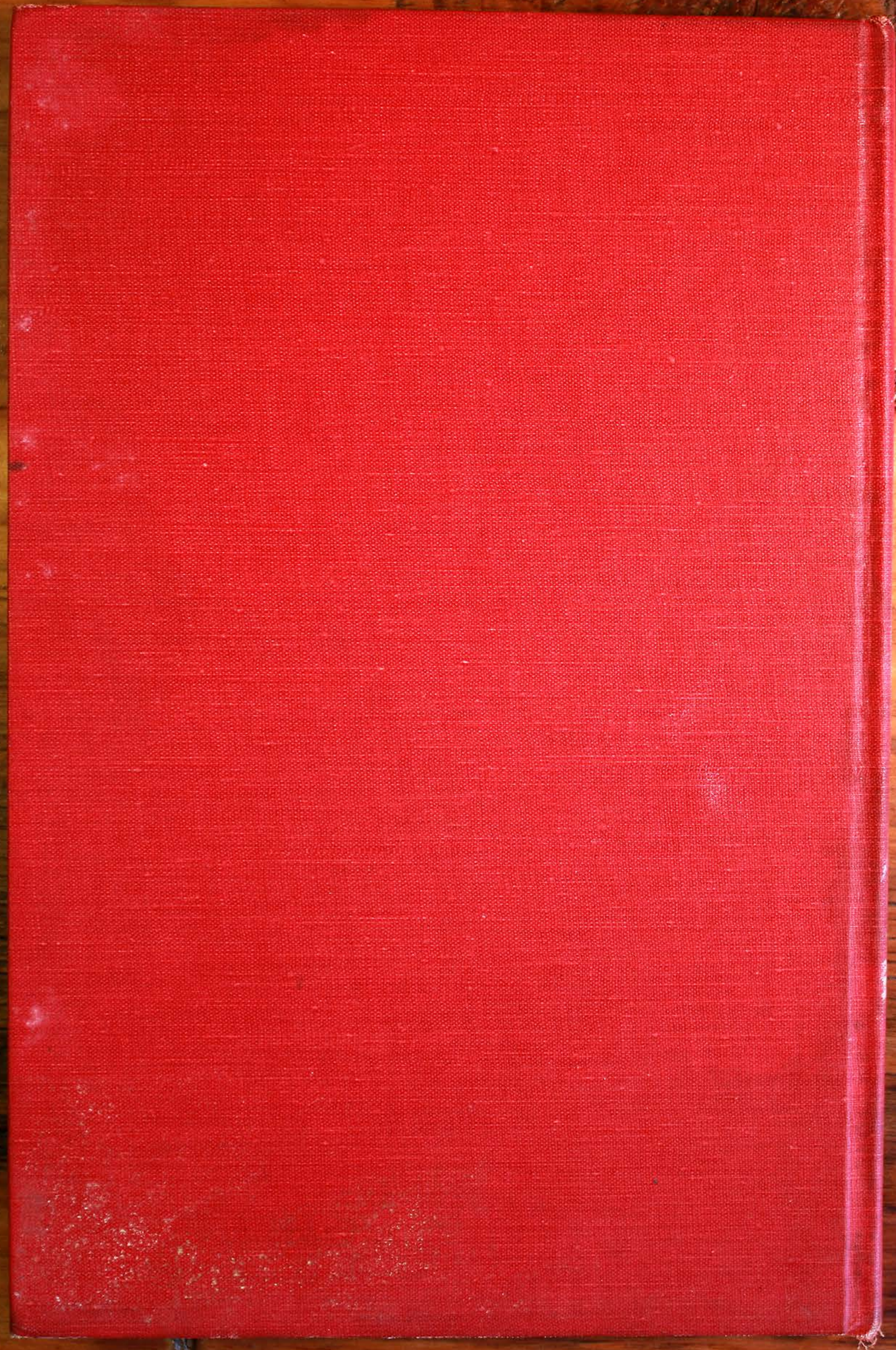
How to Render

ROMAN Script

Letter Forms

Black Letter

ROMAN CAPITALS

How to Ren

Book hands

WATER COLOR PAINTING

BY ADOLF DEHN

This "how to do it" book by the famous contemporary American artist has made a tremendous hit. Stages in the making of a water color are given, together with complete data on paper, brushes, colors and the hundred and one variations of technique.
6 x 9 $2.50

"A smart little book by one of our ablest watercolorists."   —Los Angeles Times.

PASTEL PAINTING

BY GLADYS ROCKMORE DAVIS

Another book by a famous American artist. Besides instructing the student on how to paint in pastels, it gives a brief history of pastel painting with illustrations of some of the greatest works in the medium throughout the centuries.   6 x 9 $2.25

"Belongs in every art library."   —American Artist.

DRAWING FIGURES

BY GEORGE GUISTI

The author combines classical with modern, quoting and demonstrating rules of proportions for face, arms, legs and body as set down by Leonardo da Vinci and other masters. A book for the beginner and advanced student.   6 x 9 $2.25

"An excellent $2.25 worth."   —Chicago Daily News.

BERNARD LAMOTTE

(Oil Painting & Brush Drawing)

Interpreted by LOUIS GAUTHIER

A book concerning this famous contemporary painter and how he works. Instructions on painting in oils and how to make black and white wash drawings are given with practical examples. The eight pages of color include some of the well known paintings executed by Lamotte for the Capehart Radio Collection. The works of modern masters are also included for analysis and comparison of technique.
6 x 9 $2.50

"This is a beautiful introduction to the talented artist."   —The World-Herald

Send for our complete catalog of books on all phases of art, decoration, photography.

AMERICAN STUDIO BOOKS, 381 FOURTH AVE., NEW YORK 16