

Young men have always wanted to rush into print

A note on Denis Glover's writings on typography

Lindsay Rollo

*A miniature press intelligently employed in youthful hands has
quite often led to the establishment of a printing office of
exceptional quality*

John Ryder¹

*Anyone is likely to be surprised to find an enterprise engaged upon
light-heartedly when young had now become the object of earnest
academic enquiry*

Robert Harling²

INITIATION

In 1926 two high school boys (both born in 1912) became enthused about typography. By 1938 they had each become influential in the movement in New Zealand for a 'new typography'. Denis (D J M) Glover and Bob (R W) Lowry met in 1926 in the fourth form at Auckland Grammar School and they were classmates in the succeeding year. Glover acknowledged Lowry as his mentor in typography, but the apparent influence of G T (Gerry) Lee has been understated. Glover records that at Grammar School Lowry

discovered a master, Gerry Lee, with a handpress and a collection of old type faces. Fired with enthusiasm and possessed of an instinctive flair for bold and masterly use of type...³

Lowry wrote in 1928 to Glover (then at Christ's College in Christchurch):⁴

My remarkable activity has lead me to the founding of a Grammar School Printing Club: workshop;- small room containing one bottled snake above library: sole prospects so far are a faint hope of cadging

a grant from the Board of Govs. and the certainty of having G T Lee to assume command...

This reference to Lee suggests that the master was well aware of Lowry's interest and activities and implies he took responsibility for supervision and/or guidance of any printing club activities. While the correspondence between the two at this time dealt mainly with common acquaintances, class matters, scholarship results and sporting fixture reports, printing or typographical matters appear frequently.

It is not until both were at university, and Glover was contemplating setting up some form of printing activity, that Lowry offered more directly the typographical advice and practical suggestions that influenced Glover's attitudes and activities. In the meantime Lowry had gained practical experience with both the Grammar School equipment and the resources he had assembled at, or accessed for, his Phoenix Press.⁵

I'm the only man in N.Z. who's got that unique experience and it took me five bitter years to get it. You're welcome to it, and you'd be a fool to make a move without it. A tenner's too high for a 2nd hand 8 x 6 treadle, for a start.⁶

The following month (18 October) he wrote:

A platen is emphatically not the best proposition, and if there's the slightest earthly chance of getting a cylinder (demy: S.W.O or equivalent:⁷ £100 should get you something satisfactory second-hand) then hang out for it. You've no idea how much work there is in getting out even 500 copies of a thing like Phoenix on a platen. ... I knew you'd get the printing-bug shortly. None but the hopeless hippopotamus hides ever fail to do so. But Bethold's type-list remains unknown to me. If you ever want something to do, look up the British Printer, the Inland Printer [USA] (either in library or at best printers: Whitcombe's get both up here) and, if you can possibly lay hands on them, any copies of the Fleuron (Camb. Univ. Press). A marvellous piece of work this last.

The letters continue to have snippets of printing and typographical advice and information, while the two tried to find both the time and the money to meet again. Finally, in February 1933, Glover was able to accept an invitation to join Lowry at his family home in Paeroa, and Lowry instructed him:

Bring a large notebook and an enquiring and receptive mind, and you may garner in a week the hard-won harvest of five years' blood and sweat. But if you don't undertake to print well and

conscientiously at the end of your condensed course, I'll quietly cut your jugular and burying you beneath the tung oil tree or *Aleurites Fordii* that grows outside my window. Because there are many more than enough bum type-manglers is this harassed little country already, and so help me God I'll be no party to letting loose another.

I've just begun to form the first vague theory of the aesthetics principles of typography. It's an enormously promising field even from the philosophical viewpoint, and has all the advantage of being almost entirely unsurveyed as yet; indeed it's hardly been discovered yet. You may, by getting me half tanked as cheaply as possible some time, get a really valuable earful on the subject.⁸

In early March, in a long letter, Lowry apologises first for a delay in sending type and continues, in a letter that clearly suggests Glover has committed himself to establishing a printing resource, to add advice and admonitions throughout:

I've also added 2 or 3 lines of ornamental hoojahs in 12 & 10pt. Also this you may take as a goodwill gift from the typographi academici of the A.U.C. Everything in the smaller parcel we're giving you, that is; and when you remember that type is a printer's life-blood, you may be good enough to print only to the best of your ability. You probably won't do much for a start; but the method is to do the best possible at every stage, to keep you eyes forever skinned for examples of good and bad typography (with reasons and suggested amendments), and to study the better trade journals: *The British Printer* and *The Inland printer* (U.S.A) are both sound: the *Fleurion* if its available in ChCh library (there were only 7 nos) and anything by Eric Gill.⁹ Stanley Morrison [sic] and a 2-vol work on "Printing types; their history, forms and uses" by someone Updike / Bernard?¹⁰

In this same letter was excellent technical advice on the choice of measure (type block width) for the press that Glover expected to use, together with sound practical recommendations of quantities of type, spacing materials, and other elements of printers' requisites that Glover would need to get started. There are also recommendations of the trade houses to contact and how to negotiate with them. Then follows:

That's the whole secret of printing decently — to do things as you personally yourself want them done. Advice from those who know on points you're doubtful of doesn't do any harm: but when you're not doubtful, when you have your preference, stick to it like Hell and let everybody else rip. Otherwise you'll end you days dishing up old hashes of other people's blunders of judgement & errors of taste.

Work well, send me specimens, use taste & discretion & infinite resource, call on Ch Coll Press when you get stuck, report anything wrong with our type if you see anything, & let us know if we can help you out ever. Do all this for my sake & the sacred name of

Typography ars omnium artum conservatrix; and shall try to join you in first vacation time.
 ... God bless the Cauty Coll Caxton Club; and catch us if you can.¹¹

It is notable that Glover chose, or rather was forced by lack of capital, to start with a less costly treadle platen press, subsequently motorised, and that it was post World War II before he raised the capital (borrowed) to invest in a rotary press.¹²

The question then arises as to how much of this advice Glover accepted and how much did his own experience, his reading and his contacts influence his subsequent typographical activities.

LOWRY'S BOOKS

Glover's first major published discussion of typographic issues appeared in *Book : A miscellany from the Caxton Press*. It appeared under the title *Typography / Bob Lowry's Books / A Note by Denis Glover*. It opens with a generous and genuine tribute:

If typography is a word that some of us now understand, the credit is Bob Lowry's. That we have not only a general interest in the appearance of printed matter, not only a few critics of typography but several zealous practitioners, is almost entirely due to the impetus provided by Lowry in the early thirties.¹³

The Note first discusses the early issues of *Phoenix*, the magazine of the Auckland University College Literary Club. Lowry set up and printed *Phoenix*. Knowing and appreciating as he did Lowry's trials and tribulations in handsetting and printing this edition of fifty-two pages, he characterised it 'if it is not typographically distinguished it is certainly a triumph over difficulties.' There is no discussion of typeface or layout.

His comments on the succeeding issues are a mixture of approval of the choice of Caslon Old Face '(surely the most ruggedly satisfying of all types)' and the indifferent use of Gill Sans 'The title-page consists of three asymmetrical dollops of Gill Sans, standing round like people who haven't been introduced at a party...' Glover's compositor's eye is also offended by poorly aligned initial letters.

Commenting on a 1934 book of poems from the Unicorn press (founded by Lowry and Ron Holloway) he declares it to be 'a book for the collector to prize for its appearance no less than its contents. It adheres to traditional format...' Again, he comments that a 1936 book 'has an air of distinction, due to choice quarter-binding and coloured end papers. Otherwise it is not

remarkable, except for a certain ordered plainness spoilt by indifferent press-work.’

Glover displays his wide knowledge of techniques and processes and his preferences when he says of another Lowry book ‘True, it has a yapp-edged¹⁴ cover and untrimmed head, features to be viewed with suspicion if not dislike. Double quotes spoil the appearance of the page rather; but this booklet is friendly and appealing to hand and eye, and its restraint is wholly admirable.’¹⁵ Glover goes on to say

Restraint? Lowry has not greatly cared for restraint. If he wishes to out-Herod Herod he will do it with a capital H the size of goal-posts.

He then comments on the three Lowry books published in 1933, 1937 and 1939 as ‘design indecorous and undismayed, fantasy on a free-wheel, typography without tears. ...This is hot-house tropical typography, where a flamboyant lunacy burgeons on every page.’

Further on Glover acknowledges ‘But if novelty and ingenuity are desiderata for booklet work (and I am not sure they always are), the Pelorus Press has pulled it off.’ Later he says:

Lowry’s typographical style seems to be setting out along lines of boldness, startling contrast, and a persuasive high humour. He is leaning heavily towards virtuosity in the use of exotics and grotesques. He is apt to turn the text into a pretext, into an opportunity for spectacular gymnastics. The danger is that his work may speak for itself rather than plead for the writer who briefs it, in inspired defiance of the edict that typography is a subsidiary art.

As Glover says:

Virtue is not modest, not in Auckland. It runs to ten-foot hoardings in front of churches.¹⁶ And so typography, in the hands of an Aucklander, becomes not so much the ubiquitous willow, resourceful yet yielding, useful but still graceful, but rather a pohutukawa in riotous raging blossom.

One senses that Glover, with his exposure to John Johnson of the OUP and to Stanley Morison during his wartime leaves, was left with a respect for the sanctity of the text and is troubled, if not offended, by the extravaganzas Lowry has created while admiring the richness of the works.¹⁷

Lowry may have been the mentor, but he is not now the preferred model.

AGAINST CHELTENHAM

This article appeared in a short-lived, trade house journal *Inkling* in December 1947. Its influence on the printing trades, at which it was aimed, has been dealt with elsewhere.¹⁸

The article is significant in that it contains the first direct references to the internationally known typographers Glover met in England during his war service in the Royal Navy and to the books and periodicals that Lowry recommended he study. He also enthuses on the types he favours for book work, which was his main interest.¹⁹ He is enough of an experienced professional to offer cautionary comments on the suitability of certain faces for particular combinations of papers and printing processes. He also nods to the more varied requirements and demands of the jobbing and general printer. Throughout the item his primary focus is on the selection of type faces. There is no discussion of format, proportions of type block to page area, or any of the myriad of issues that go to make sound typography.

However, Glover does set out in this essay his typographic credo:

Typography is a secondary art, not an end in itself. Its function is to serve the text; and anything that comes between the reader and readiest interpretation of the text must be distrusted.²⁰

It's interesting to see in a footnote about the author that Glover describes himself as 'a fearful snob about types, [who] thinks that nothing but the best faces will do, and to their correct use has devoted some time.'

In 'Against Cheltenham' Glover is an evangelist for classical book faces.

TYPOGRAPHY AND THE LIBRARIAN

This item appeared in two parts in *New Zealand Libraries*.²¹

In the first part Glover sets the scene by saying 'Anything to do with books comes naturally and properly within the scope of a librarian's interest.' After brief comments on good and poor paper, knowing about bindings, 'he should be able to recognise a handsome book when he sees one.' He then castigates librarians who 'plaster their offensive rubber stamps over the choicest of title-pages; others will underline a beautiful, swash capital for some base cataloguing reason (as if anyone fit to use a library would look for William Shakespeare under W.)' He then starts 'an examination of what a good book is.'

‘First of all, it is something to be read. It must be designed to “aid to the maximum the reader’s comprehension of the text”’.²² After giving a number of tongue-in-cheek suggestions of the practical use of books he says ‘it cannot be denied that they are primarily intended to be read. To that extent they are functional.’ He continues that tradition is important.

a book must look like a book, that pages turn from right to left, to find type beginning at the top of the page and running left to right to the bottom. And it must ordinarily be small enough to be portable.

Glover then quotes the first three sentences of Stanley Morison’s classic definition of typography (*see* Appendix), which emphasises appropriate formatting and avoiding visual distractions as aids to comprehension.

He then challenges the librarian with questions about the place of the human instinct for decoration and concludes that ‘to deny decoration altogether would rob us of many of our pleasantest books.’ His distaste for the arty and crafty books is summed up ‘They are commonly decorated, and over-decorated: there is too much icing on a fruitless cake.’ He accepts a place for legitimate and restrained decoration, and ‘many a modern book is deliberately designed to enliven the eye as well as enliven the mind.’

While Glover accepts Morison’s dictum that typography should be plain, (‘we [Caxton] would not care to send out *Landfall* other than in restrained and suitable clothing’) he believes experiment has its place. For example, while he deplores ‘the use of a second colour in a book as bad decoration, it may occasionally succeed on a title-page, but should be avoided in initial capitals, running heads, chapter headings and the like.’

In talking about fitness for purpose, Glover accepts that a ‘Penguin book is just as satisfying a piece of design, within its own limits, as the Oxford standard classics. The fact that they are designed for different purposes does not matter. The ordinary Telephone Directory is on an average cheap printing paper: those hung stoutly in public slot-machine are printed on thicker and tougher paper. This is functional typography.’

He then discusses paper at some length, expressing his distaste for coated stock, but pointing out the virtues of tough thin papers for Bibles, and the undesirable practice of using bulky papers for publicity purposes. He ends with the bookman’s and librarian’s practical preference ‘Thin paper binds better and, if the book has strong end-papers and is properly rounded on the spine, it should be useful as any for library purposes.’

The second of the two parts is devoted entirely to the history and choice of type faces.

Surveying briefly the fifteenth-century development of gothic and humanistic types and the subsequent modification and influence of sixteenth- to eighteenth-century type designers and punch cutters, he arrives at the point where he can, without hesitation or shame, promote his preferences for the old style fonts such as Poliphilus, Garamond, Caslon Old Face, and Baskerville, but includes the modern Bodo and Perpetua.

He agrees with the ‘consensus of expert opinion is that a too regular face is tiring on the eye.’ ‘To the reader, the type that draws attention to itself cannot but be irritating. The good type is the unobtrusive type (like the most expensive cloths.)’²³

Glover concedes there is a time and place for all types. A book of poems, or a small collection of essays, may appear to great advantage in one type, which would not be an appropriate face in smaller sizes in community magazines printed on smooth finished papers. ‘Baskerville is a good suit of clothes. Not too flippant for a funeral, it will do for a wedding as well. The book of poems or the stone fruitgrowers’ annual report—Baskerville has a quality of inevitable rightness on any occasion and on any paper. It’s a working face.’²⁴

Glover concludes the second part with a list of six books; three by authors Lowry recommended to him is his 1930s letters. Two of the authors Glover met in England while on leave during the war.

Throughout the whole of this essay he uses examples from authors and titles that he assumes the librarian will be familiar with, as he similarly used examples and allusions for a printing-industry-aware audience in ‘Against Cheltenham’. Glover does each audience the courtesy of assuming their interest and knowledge. In addition, Glover’s mastery of words and parenthetical insertions provides relief from the seriousness of his subject, and at the same time help capture his audience and carry his narrative forward.

SOME NOTES ON TYPOGRAPHY

Here Glover’s audience are the readers of *Yearbook of Arts in New Zealand*,²⁵ a much more diverse group than printers or librarians, and potentially with interests in a wider range of activities and media. As always, he sets the scene for his later assertions by defining his subject.

Style, fashion and technical mastery of the medium are susceptible of infinite and even violent change; but nothing serious can be

attempted without considering what others have succeeded or failed in doing in the past.

While the

laws of the arts may be more flexible, their means of application more numerous ... all the arts seem to embody certain principles that the wisdom of ages, and the right use of materials that are being dealt with, have dictated quite ruthlessly.

This is true of typography at least. ... And the tradition is real, persistent and conservative.²⁶

After identifying desirable and undesirable features associated with line length, word spacing, and what we now call widows and orphans, and noting the influence of text block size, marginal dimensions and the like, he thinks these matters are secondary to 'readability'.

What follows are a number examples of the effect of formatting on ease of comprehension, and the necessity to avoid visual distractions.

In general, whatever is self-conscious is bad, whatever has an ordered plainness is good. Since there is no little difference between a highly decorated edition of *Wilhelmina Stitch*²⁷ and a highly decorated edition of *Euclid*, the battle-cry "fitness for purpose" must trumpet just as loudly for the typographer as for the architect or manufacturer.

Here again is the echo of the Morison definition and his own credo. But Glover is a pragmatist: 'All dogma, however well-intentioned, must be qualified by ifs and buts. An ordered plainness is all very well in its way. ... It is an ideal that cannot be realised. Such typography could, and does, make a pretty pamphlet, nothing larger; and it neither compels nor retains the attention.'

Glover then returns to the human animal's need for decoration: 'Therefore it is an impulse not to be avoided but merely restrained.' There is no doubt that Glover approved of, and used in a restrained manner, the full range of printers' decorative flowers, ornamental rules and borders, and exotic types at his command. Yet he accepts that in the fight for sales the book jacket is the exception to the rule.

Inevitably Glover turns at the end of this article to the advocacy of improved typography and the advantages of classic book faces. Personal preference will lead one typographer to

the fragile grace of *Perpetua*, another to the elegance of *Centaur* in which this article is set, a third to the simplicity and strength of

Baskerville or Times. What is important is not so much the type as the use made of it; and it has been often enough pointed out that an undistinguished type well used is better than a distinguished one ill used. ... it is the ultimate purpose of the job he must bear in mind; it is by its realization that he will be judged. An electoral roll does not call for the margins of a Doves Bible nor a chemistry textbook for the mannered headings of an eighteenth century novel.²⁸

His closing sentence says it all: 'The best type is the type that is never noticed.'

THE MISSING ASSIGNMENTS

Glover records 'My first job at T.C.I. [the Technical Correspondence Institute] was to design and write a Stage III course in typography, which was indeed to my liking, being something of an expert in that unploughed field. Years later I finished it, and to me it still reads pretty well.'²⁹ The misfortune is that no copies of this course have yet been located in official archives or in private hands.

Glover brought to the task, in addition to his command of language, his demonstrated skills as a typographer and compositor over many years and in several printing works. He had also read widely on the subject: 'My private typographic library was as good as any in the country, and I was willing for it to be consulted.'

Any assessment of Glover's last major writing on typography and his mature judgement on the subject must therefore rely on assumptions and perhaps on speculation.

Within the limits of the nature of the task and the examination process it would allow little liberty beyond the preparation of a good teaching plan that aimed to cover the subject in appropriate detail. As he had demonstrated in the three earlier articles, he did not talk down to his audience but made reasonable assumptions as to both their prior knowledge and their continuing interest. What we cannot assess or know is the aptness of his allusions or the language designed to engage the student's interest and enthusiasm. The failure to conserve these assignments is a loss indeed.

We can make one assumption. Glover declared himself, on more than one occasion, to be 'a typographical snob'.³⁰ Wherever possible he would have promoted the virtues of his preferred classical typefaces. He would, however, in any assignment dealing with advertisements and promotional broadsheets and the like, been forced to acknowledge the place and

purpose of both condensed and expanded versions of typefaces for these products, despite his or others aversion to them in book work. But we may be sure he searched far and wide to find an acceptable substitute for Cheltenham.

GLOVER'S INFLUENCE AND LEGACY

As early as 1939, Glover's and Caxton's contribution to the 'new typography' had been commented on by P A Lawlor, when he said

I have purchased a number of New Zealand books bearing the Caxton imprint—books of typographical excellence. ...Denis Glover and his companion craftsman deserve all the support that can be given to them. I was pleased to note that these Caxton enthusiasts are establishing themselves, for in the centre of their printing room was a new and imposing automatic printing press. This I presume is for their bread and butter lines, for they will continue to produce occasional booklets of verse and prose where type and format blend artistically with the printed word.³¹

Glover's immediate post-war pursuit of typographic excellence in book publishing was to be to the detriment of the Caxton's financial security.

The articles commented on here were mostly written during this period. Glover displays throughout a conservatism characteristic of a dedicated bookman, ever promoting his beloved classical typefaces and book printing traditions. He acknowledges the place and role of other, more directly commercial, printed material, not grudgingly but perhaps with pragmatic resignation.

That he questioned established practices in the jobbing and commercial printing world with wit and humour from a wide theoretical knowledge and practical hands-on experience, gave him more credibility than might otherwise accrue to someone sometimes regarded as a buffoon. His material for librarians and for the arts community kept his ideas and ideals before an audience of potentially influential individuals.

He was not alone in the wish to see improved standards of choice and presentation in typographical matters. He notes that

The happy conjunction of J. C. Beaglehole and Joseph Heenan (later Sir Joseph), Secretary for Internal Affairs, produced the Centennial Survey series and several other notable booksFor the series, 13-point Bembo was specially imported. As an amateur learning much as he went along, Beaglehole considered carefully each detail of "style" and composition.³²

This series represents the van of the ‘new typography’ in New Zealand and pre-dated Glover’s post-war evangelical typographical activity.³³

Glover’s reference to Beaglehole as an amateur is uncalled for: just because he had not had the hands-on experience of printing Glover enjoyed was no justification for this implied abasement. After all Glover had no formal training as a typographer. Glover was initially mentored by a fourteen-year-old schoolboy who also had no formal training. Glover’s subsequent experience of hand setting type and composing it for a hand powered press, together with his eye for a well laid out text or poem, was the basis of his experience and judgement and later acknowledged competence. Beaglehole came to an acknowledged competence by another route. Furthermore, Glover had already acknowledged elsewhere Beaglehole’s influence in establishing the ‘new’ typography.³⁴

Beaglehole, as a university student, had worked with printers when he edited *Spike*³⁵ at a time when Glover was just entering high school. Later he spent some time in London and on the Continent becoming familiar with printing and typography. His involvement with the Dictionary of New Zealand Biography and Centennial books from 1939 consolidated his reputation as a typographer.³⁶ Janet Paul, who with her bookseller husband, was to establish a notably influential publishing house, was a colleague of Beaglehole in the Internal Affairs’ Historical Branch ‘where she learned the arts of typography, printing and publishing...’³⁷

Thompson has commented:

At the end of the Depression, however, and from the point of view of the excited tyro, printing in New Zealand no doubt seemed to be a trade lacking in both art and sense of tradition.³⁸

Don Donovan more recently said:³⁹

I doubt whether Glover and his chums knew all that much about typography compared with world cognoscenti, but they knew a lot more than others in New Zealand; they sort of introduced the subject to those in the country of the blind. They fell in love with letter forms from the European letter foundries and from Monotype and wanted to take knowledge of type beyond the mundane jobbing, linotype/intertype everyday.

They were practising compositors and that’s where my experience differs. I never composed type, I was only ever that sort of typographer who functions as a compositor’s architect. Compositors hated typographers (I suppose bricklayers hate architects). I once heard a comp. describe typographers as people

‘who could spot a fly on a tree at 500 yards and fall over a gate doing it!

James Belich (p. 121) has pointed out that

literacy as mass communication does not require a literate majority. All you needed was a literate minority large enough to give all classes independent access to written material, even if it is indirect [read aloud].⁴⁰

The same can be said for the ‘new’ typography. One needed only a typographically literate minority large enough to exert influence over a moderate number of printers and publishers to achieve, incrementally, a sea change rather than a revolution in knowledge and practice. Glover’s contribution to this sea change was perhaps more visible and vocal than some other participants, and to a wider audience. But he and Lowry were for a time the most active and audible. Had it not been for his absence on military service, Glover might have been a principal; as it turned out he was a leader of a section of a chorus.

What has been called the ‘new’ typography must now be called the ‘established’ or the ‘old’ typography. The advent of computing with word processors and digital type and the World Wide Web have truly revolutionised the presentation of text, not always to the reader’s advantage.

But the now established or old typography has infiltrated so deeply into the academic, corporate, publishing and governmental spheres that a report of the New Zealand Law Commission⁴¹ can quote Morison’s classic definition of typography on its opening page, and include the following paragraphs 2 and 3:

2 Good, functional typography and design are invisible. Good design allows readers to concentrate their energy on substance rather than be distracted by format. Good design can also facilitate the very drafting of legislation because it can make the task more logical. The nature of the message will of course influence the appearance of text: the design must be appropriate to the substance, and to the reader. But a bad design remains a bad design, even though it may be redeemed to some extent by familiarity.

3 In this sense legislation is like any other written matter — whether a novel, a newspaper or an advertisement. The way the matter appears on the printed page makes a great difference to its accessibility. Understanding of even the best drafted law may be hindered or helped by such factors as the typeface, type size, leading (the space between the lines of type), the length of line, the layout

and ordering of provisions, the use of headings, the indentation of the text, the placing and content of notes in the text, and the use of aids such as indexes, examples or flow charts. Even the size of the page and the feel, weight and tinting of the paper are important. Communication experts agree that a page which is well designed is not only more attractive but also aids understanding.

Glover and all the other members of the movement to adopt the ‘new’ typography have a right to be proud of their influence and achievements.

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APPENDIX

FIRST PRINCIPLES OF TYPOGRAPHY

by

STANLEY MORISON

Typography may be defined as the craft of rightly disposing printing material in accordance with specific purpose; of so arranging the letters, distributing the space and controlling the type as to aid to the maximum the reader's comprehension of the text. Typography is the efficient means to an essentially utilitarian and only accidentally aesthetic end, for enjoyment of patterns is rarely the reader's chief aim. Therefore, any disposition of printing material which, whatever the intention, has the effect of coming between author and reader is wrong. It follows that in the printing of books meant to be read there is little room for "bright" typography. Even dullness and monotony in the type-setting are far less vicious to a reader than typographical eccentricity or pleasantry. Cunning of this sort is desirable, even essential in the typography of propaganda, whether for commerce, politics, or religion, because in such printing only the freshest survives inattention. But the typography of books, apart from the category of narrowly limited editions, requires an obedience to convention which is almost absolute,—and with reason.

Since printing is essentially a means of multiplying, it must not only be good in itself—but good for a common purpose. The wider that purpose, the stricter are the limitations imposed upon the printer. He may try an experiment in a tract printed in an edition of 50 copies, but he shows little common sense if he experiments to the same degree in the tract having a run of 50,000. Again, a novelty, fitly introduced into a 16-page pamphlet, will be highly undesirable in a 160-page book. It is of the essence of typography and of the nature of the printed book *qua* book, that it perform a public service.

Page 1 of Morison essay — text reproduced (approx. full size) from
*Typographical Periodicals between the Wars / A critique of The Fleuron,
 Signature and Typography*, Grant Shipcott, Oxford Polytechnic Press : Oxford 1980,
 with Foreword by Robert Harling; see footnote 20 for publishing and translation
 details of the full essay.

ENDNOTES

1. *Printing for pleasure*, John Ryder Phoenix House : London, 1955 p.90.
2. Both the title and the quotation are from Harling's Foreword (p. xiii) to Grant Shipcott's *Typographical Periodicals between the Wars / A critique of The Fleuron, Signature and Typography* Oxford Polytechnic Press : Oxford 1980.
3. Glover-prepared entry 'Typographical Printing Today' in *An Encyclopaedia of New Zealand* A.H. McLintock Ed. Government Printer Wellington 1966 Vol 2, pp. 871-2.
4. Lowry: August 13th, no year [1928] Glover MS Papers 0418 FOLDER 002 ATL.
5. The following extracts from Lowry's letters show his understanding of the physical demands of printing on treadle presses; the time consumed in hand setting text; and the conflicting pressures of earning an income from his Press while pursuing his studies:

In short, the Association have shelled out £50 for a power-press size f'cap folio (about 10" x 15") and etceteras and a further £11 for a motor to operate same complete with a rheostat to run the outfit at any speed from dead slow to 2000 impressions/hour. I got them to procure for me this little gewgaw and a large and comprehensive supply of good type and falldedalls to play around with, but they are actually going to pay me for playing with it. In short the egg of a N.Z. Univ. Press has been fertilised & all that now remains to do is to watch it grow.

June 26th [1932?] Glover MS Papers 0418 FOLDER 001 ATL

... the thing would have to be linotyped. Prose, if any, in 10pt : verse in 12pt italics. That a mass of type, unspaced beyond what packed linotype naturally spaces itself, of dimensions 6" x 4" would contain about 600 words of 10 pt. and 500 words of 12 pt costing about 6/- per pages.

Sept 29th 1931 Glover MS Papers 0418 FOLDER 004 ATL

the Carnival Committee are trying to save money this year, so they want us to print their programme. Well that's a 4000 copy 40 page job and I'm not doing it on the toy. So the Carnival Committee may fork up £50 to get a 2nd-hand platen with a treadle and an attachment to fit a motor later. But treadling out a 4000 copy 40-pager takes some time and, besides Phoenix, I've got a degree to consider. Well, there are other prospects: a 2nd-hand automatic for £125 (without motor) is one. Both the £50 job and the £125 will do 2pp at a time. But there's a brand new flatbed rotary that will take 4pp of Review size and six of Phoenix size at one sitting, 4000 copies per hour being its maximum output. And the price not including motor [2 HP] is £285 to be spread over 3 years without interest if necessary. [then follow details of sourcing funds and potential work for new machine]

April 1st, 1932 Glover MS Papers 0418 FOLDER 005 ATL

6. Lowry: Sept. 13th, 1932 Glover MS Papers 0418 FOLDER 004 ATL

Neither Lowry nor Glover lost the certainty of confidence in their youthful opinions and visions and it seems never to have diminished or deserted either of them in their adulthood.

7. Demy SWO: the smallest Wharfedale press; maximum sheet size close to A2: i.e. fourA4 pages.
8. Lowry: Feb.10th. [1933] Glover MS Papers 0418 FOLDER 005 ATL
9. Glover was in touch with Eric Gill. Among the uncatalogued Eric Gill Manuscripts in the William Andrews Clark Library, UCLA, is one on a Caxton Press letterhead, signed by Denis Glover. According to the Clark Library's records, the letter was formerly laid into Gill's copy of *Fantastica*, now in the Clark Library's Gill collection. Glover is thanking Gill for a copy of his Three Type Faces. Glover has sent a copy of Fantastica & Dominion and asks Gill to offer an opinion on them, and includes both the authors and the type setting and heading. [details from a transcript in the author's possession: underlining was used with typewriters to indicate where italics would be used in printed text.]
10. Morison, Updike, and *The Fleuron* are among the useful books for the book designer listed in *Paragraphs on Printing* Bruce Rogers Dover Publications: New York 1979 p. 183–184. Rogers' *Lectern Bible* (OUP 1935) is recognised as one of the great Bibles of all times.
11. Lowry: 12/3/33 Glover MS Papers 0418 FOLDER 005 ATL.
12. see Rollo, <https://ojs.victoria.ac.nz/kotare/article/view/794/601>.
13. *Book : A miscellany from the Caxton Press* (No. 8. August 1946). [pages unnumbered].
14. Yapp-edge: 'A form of limp or semi-limp leather [or paper] binding with rounded corners and bent-in edges that overlap the sections, sometimes by as much as half the thickness of the text block, named after William Yapp, the 19th-century bookseller who designed the style for pocket bibles sold in England.' *Online Dictionary for Library and Information Science* by Joan M. Reitz. [http://lu.com/odlis/odlis_y.cfm]
15. Throughout this text Glover uses the double word space after each full point or period. This style is now unacceptable and is the subject of special mention by Robert Bringhurst in his seminal *The Elements of Typographic Style* Hartley & Marks Vancouver 2nd Ed.1996 pp. 28–29. After outlining the background to the use of 'this quaint Victorian habit' Bringhurst then identifies texts when the double space may be used: 'As a general rule, no more than a single space is required after a period, a colon or any mark of punctuation. ... The rule is generally altered, however, when setting classical Latin and Greek, romanized Sanskrit, phonetics or other kinds of text in which sentences begin with lower case letters. In the absence of a capital, a full *en space* between sentences will generally be welcome.
16. 'It is true that blowing one's own horn is not a strictly modern custom, but began at a very early date in the history of printing. Printers usually have a good opinion of their own productions. In the colophon of the *Eusebius*, printed by Jenson in 1470, he congratulates the author, the Doge of Venice, and even the Almighty himself, on their good fortune in having the work (a rather dull ecclesiastical history) so beautifully printed. Geofroy Tory [c.1480–1533], too, on some of his prefaces to the reader, was loud in the praises of both the scholarly and

the artistic qualities of his own work. *Paragraphs on Printing* Bruce Rogers Dover Publications: New York 1979 p. 9.

17. This statement is founded on Glover's views expressed in 'Against Cheltenham' see Rollo, *op.cit.*

18. Rollo, *op.cit.*

19. Throughout his accessible writing on typography Glover refers to individual types by their historical or proprietary names (Caslon Old Face, Cheltenham, Perpetua) and collectively to modern, traditional, old-style types. The use of typeface (one word) appears to be a creature of the electronic age — its first recorded use is in 1970s [personal communication from Dianne Bardsley, New Zealand Dictionary Centre].

20. This credo is, in fact, a paraphrase of statements in Morison's seminal essay *First Principles of Typography*. It draws together, in a succinct form, disparate elements of the essay—no bad thing in itself. Throughout all these articles Glover makes many un-attributed quotations, or clear paraphrases of statements in *First Principles of Typography*, published in *The Fleuron*, No.VII. (Cambridge, 1930). This statement was reprinted in 1936, 1946, 1951, 1955 and in 1966 (with a postscript) just before his death. It was translated into Danish, Dutch, French, German and Spanish in various editions and times. Morison's approach was primarily concerned with the typography of books. He acknowledged the differing needs of other printed matter such as advertising, and that statements about politics and religion required different typographical treatments. He argued in the postscript that despite the new technology and materials available after WW II that influenced many artistic endeavours (some of which he rejected) he maintained his original rationale still applied. Morison's thesis may be regarded as too prescriptive today, but it was immensely influential until the rise of the graphic designer, when conceit frequently reduces content and context to a subsidiary status over appearance.

21. *New Zealand Libraries* Vol.10, pp. 225–230, 1947; Vol 11, pp. 14–17, 1948.

Glover was well known to the librarian community. Caxton Press printed their journal; he was a participant in a panel session at the Association's 1947 Conference in Christchurch. He was a speaker at library-arranged functions in Otago which the journal reported 'had visits from distinguished writers', including 'Denis Glover, director of the Caxton Press, poet and Chairman of the Canterbury University College Library Committee' He participated in Canterbury Branch meeting with A. H. Johnstone, a local bookseller; and in Otago, 'in a series of public lectures under W.E.A. auspices, along with A. R. D. Fairburn, Allen Curnow, Winston Rhodes, and M. H. Holcroft.' *ibid*, Vol. 10, p. 138 and p. 215.

22. After reading many research papers on aspects of typography, and some of the recommended authors on the subject, this author prefers to draw a distinction between *legibility*: that combination of type and display that best aids the ease and speed with which the reader can recognise the structure and content of the text; and *readability*: the choice and order of words that engages the reader's interest combined with typographical cues that best allows the reader to comprehend the

text. These distinctions are more important in technical and professional books and journals, where several levels of typographic cueing may be necessary to delineate the complexity of the subject matter. Newspapers, general magazines and fiction rarely need more than three typographic cues: title or chapter heads, subheads or section signals, and paragraphs.

23. While Glover is referring to type, the view that typography in all its facets should be unassertive has been otherwise expressed: Beatrice Warde argued ... classical typography provides a transparent vessel for the ideas of the author—if one notices the type, one is distracted from the thought ... Quoted by Gunnar Swanson in *Serif: The Magazine of Type & Typography* Fall, 1994; this author, in seminar papers for UTDC, VUW ‘Good typography is seamless—it does the job so well no one is aware of it.’ An example of formatting influencing comprehension is the excessive leading used by some publications, typically company annual reports: the excess leading seriously reduces the visual cohesion of paragraphs and in extreme cases creates white pages interrupted by weak lines of type.

24. Baskerville was used, for a considerable period, for the text of New Zealand’s secondary legislation such as Regulations until the review of the printing of Parliamentary papers carried out by the Law Commission in the early 1990s. Now, after user testing by the Commission of several alternative faces, both Acts and Regulations are set in Times New Roman [see footnote 42 below]

25. Year Book of the Arts in New Zealand 1949 Wellington: Tombs pp. 165–172 (pp. 166, 168–9 are sample settings). Glover included this item in his *Bedside Book* A H & A W Reed : Wellington 1963 pp. 29–34, and in ‘Some Types Faces at a Glance’ p. 35 (see Rollo <https://ojs.victoria.ac.nz/kotare/article/view/794/601> Endnote 13).

26. The importance of tradition is spelled out in Morison’s *First Principles* and is echoed in the Bruce Rogers paragraph:

‘The best printing follows traditional lines because printing is a conservative as well as a preservative art, and these lines are the result of innumerable efforts in the past to produce the best, conditioned by the materials at hand and the capacities of the producer himself. All the crafts—the mechanical arts, and especially printing are subject to different standards of criticism from those used to evaluate a work of fine art—of painting, music, sculpture; because fine art, if it has no pleasure or meaning for the observer, may be merely passed by or ignored. You don’t *have* to look at a picture. Rogers, *op. cit.* pp. 5–6.

27. Wilhelmina Stitch, a pseudonym of Ruth Collie [1888-1936]. Notable for anthologised ‘homely little verses’ published in a London daily newspaper. Examples of her work can be found in the ebook: <http://www.gutenberg.ca/ebooks/stitch-fragrantminute/stitch-fragrantminute-oo-h-dir/stitch-fragrantminute-oo-h.html>

28. Unstated but implied, Glover is referring to a similar statement in ‘Against Cheltenham’: see Rollo <https://ojs.victoria.ac.nz/kotare/article/view/794/601>

29. *Landlubber Ho!* Collins : Auckland 1981 pp. 237–238

30. *op. cit.* p. 223; *Inkling*, No. 7. December : 1947 p. 7

31. *The New Zealand Railways Magazine*, Vol, 14, Issue 2 (May 1, 1939) p. 45 Lawlor was at that time using the pseudonym 'Shibli Bagarag'. http://www.nzetc.org/tm/scholarly/tei-Gov14_o2Rail-t1-body-d15.html
32. op.cit. footnote 2 above.
33. Glover's assessment of his contribution to the 'new' typography, as recorded in the self-authored blurb to his *Bedside Book* (loc. cit. endnote 25) is faulty. '... his genius for typography led him to found the Caxton Press, and the renaissance of typography in New Zealand in the 1930s was due almost entirely to his work at Caxton.' Or is this just an example of him writing 'his publisher's blurb with desperate inflation' (*Bedside Book*, p. 11).
34. Anon summary of Glover's contribution to a panel at recorded in *New Zealand Libraries Association Proceedings of the 16th Conference and 19th Annual General Meeting*. 'Dr Beaglehole, for one, has provided a tremendous impetus to the Government Printer and others, and the work undertaken by the Internal Affairs Department benefits greatly by his skill and knowledge.'
35. Victoria University College student newspaper.
36. In 1939 Beaglehole advocated the Government Printing Office 'should have a fundamental outfit of standard type-faces such as Caslon, Baskerville, Bell, Aldine Bembo, Perpetua Titling.' [These were almost the same faces Glover later promoted.] *A Life of J. C. Beaglehole: New Zealand Scholar* T H Beaglehole. Digitised Edition <http://www.nzetc.org/tm/scholarly/name-412970.html> p. 274. Other references to Beaglehole's typographic interests appear on pp. 106, 114, 147, 313, 315.
37. *The Turnbull Library Record*, The Friends of the Turnbull Library : Wellington Vol. 37. 2004 p. 11.
38. Thomson, J.E.P in *New Zealand Writers and their Works Denis Glover* Wellington : New York : Oxford University Press, 1977 [i.e. 1978] p. 22.
39. personal communication: email to author 1 Nov 2009. Donovan was a professional typographer in the UK before coming to NZ in 1960. Since retiring from advertising in 1990 he is now primarily a writer and illustrator with over twenty books to his name, including three e-books, and numerous context illustrations, cover and book wrapper designs to his credit.
40. Belich, James *Replenishing the Earth / The Settler Revolution and the Rise of Anglo-World, 1783–1939* OUP : 2009 p. 1.
41. *New Zealand Law Commission Report No. 27* 1993 p. 1 Also published as Parliamentary Paper E 31S.