

Lessons in Engrosser's script by WA Baird
(from the Business Educator)

Instructions for lesson No. 1

By way of apology for this course in Roundhand or Engrossing Script, little need be said of this style of penmanship itself. While it is an old style, it seems to be quite popular at the present time, and its popularity seems to be increasing.

To execute it to a fair degree of accuracy, you must first have a clear idea of the forms to be made, but outside of the shaded down strokes there is not such a great difference between the forms used in Roundhand and those used in Light-line writing, as at first seems apparent.

This style is strictly ornamental, and like most ornamental arts, is slow in execution.

Materials.

There is no paper, pen or ink made, that I consider too good for Roundhand. Most cheap papers will soak up ink like a blotter when any shading is attempted, and since Roundhand is a shaded hand, such paper is entirely unfit for this work. There are a number of good grades of paper on the market, but for a high-grade paper, cut to a convenient size I would recommend the "seventeen and one half pound Wedding" paper, handled by Zaner & Bloser.

I use "Zanerian" India ink; it is more convenient than and gives as good results as stick India.

Use an oblique holder, specially adjusted for Roundhand; the 10-cent holders handled by Zaner & Bloser are as good as any, and they will adjust them if instructed to do so. For these lessons use a Zanerian Fine Writer or a Gillott's No. 1 pen

Position and Movement.

Use the same position at the table as in light-line writing, both as regards the arm and the paper. Owing, to the comparatively slow speed, the pen must be held somewhat tighter than for business writing. The hand may lie turned farther to the right and may rest on the side; the little finger being the center of control.

The movement comes principally from the forearm and the wrist, giving the wrist a sort of rocking motion; the fingers are not used as much as might be expected. I would advise each one to lose no opportunity to watch some one write Roundhand, as you could then see the movement employed, and the work would be easier.

In the first exercise in the copy, try for uniformity in width of stroke and spacing between lines. Place your pen on the paper and press down on it until the points are forced open as wide as you desire the stroke to be, then move the pen downward and make the stroke; starting in this way will make the tops square.

The lower-turn exercise will naturally start the same as the straight line, and should hold the same width until the pen has traveled between two thirds and three fourths of the distance to the base line, when it should begin to taper in order to make the turn. See that the right side of the stroke is nearly straight, and that the taper comes from the left side. Raise the pen as you come to the base line and replace it to make the hairline-connecting stroke. Always raise the pen at the base line, and you will find it equally as helpful to raise it at the top of all minimum letters. Take particular notice where the hairline apparently joins the shaded stroke.

In making the upper-turn the introductory stroke should begin slightly below the base line; the upper-turn will naturally be the reverse of the lower turn.

The hard part will be to keep the strokes from getting wedge-shaped, too wide at the square end of the stroke, and too narrow near the turn.

In the exercise giving the double-turn, try to make the upper and lower-turns equally round.

The rest of the lesson is composed of these principals joined together. Strive for uniformity in width of line, in spacing and in slant.

Nearly every stroke used in making minimum letters is given in this lesson. Work hard and study the copy carefully.

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INSTRUCTIONS FOR LESSON NO. 2

We have in this lesson the remaining strokes used in the minimum letters.

I have given you a half line on the double turn the same as in the first lesson in order that you may have a chance to redeem yourselves for the mistakes you may make in your first attempt. Try to get both the top and the bottom turn equally round, and the shade heaviest at half the height. A good test for this exercise is to turn the paper up side down and see if your work looks equally well in that position. If it does not start in to remedy it.

The e, c, o and a contain the same principle and when one is mastered the others will come easy. The beginning stroke should be gracefully curved and made with a free movement, the shaded stroke should be made much slower, it is curved but not circular. Notice that the heaviest part of the shade is below half the height of the letter. In the 'e' the second shaded stroke is made downward the shade being near the top. The hook on the c is made downward and the dot should not be shaded too heavily. The first shaded stroke of the o is the same as that in the e and c. The second shade is made after the letter has been completed. The 'a' is similar to the 'o' so far as the oval part is concerned. It is finished same as the letter 'i'.

The letter x will be somewhat difficult, the heaviest part of the shade should be above half the height of the letter. The down stroke in the second part of the x is slightly curved. The main stroke of the x if turned upside down will make a good letter c.

The letter 'a' will perhaps give you more trouble than the others. The up stroke should be more slanting than the up stroke in the other letters, this will make it easier to get the shaded stroke on the same slant as the other shaded strokes, the dot or blind loop at the top of the s should be somewhat higher than the other minimum letter. See that the dot at the bottom of the s does not cross the first stroke.

In writing the word see to the spacing, try to keep the down strokes equally distant. Good spacing will cover up more faults than any other one factor.

This lesson will conclude the large work. It was given in order that your faults would be more readily noticed than in small work.

Work hard on this and the first lesson as the minimum letters are used much oftener than the extended letters or the capitals.

Send in your best efforts on this work and you will not regret in the end the time spent in learning this style of script.

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Instructions for lesson No. 3

The exercise on the first line of this lesson is one that should be mastered before beginning work on the letters themselves. You will find it extremely hard to keep the down strokes of equal heft, there will be a tendency to swell the shade when you have completed about one half of the stroke. This will be due to the fact that the stroke is much longer than in the minimum letters and you have to exceed your range of motion. You will soon overcome this difficulty however if you practice on the first line of the lesson and stick to it. Do not try the letters or words until you feel reasonably sure of the first line. Another tendency will be to taper the shade too much as you near the base line. After You have made a line of this exercise place your ruler over the upper half of the work and see if the lower part would resemble your best effort on an exercise of the small letter u. It ought to.

Be sure that you have your paper ruled and make the exercise two spaces high. The connecting hairline should extend up one space.

The letter t, given in the second line is a repetition of the first line with the crossing added. The crossing is made 1/3 of a space from the top).

The letter d consists of the oval used in the 'a' and is merely an 'a' with the second shaded stroke extended another space higher. See to it that both shaded strokes are of equal width.

The letter p is three spaces high being 1 1/2 spaces above the base line and 1 1/2 spaces below. The second shaded stroke of p is the same as the last stroke in the m and n. Retouch the strokes that are finished off square at either one, or both ends just as soon as you make them. It will soon become a habit to do this, and will in time be done almost unconsciously.

The letter h in this style is 2 1/2 spaces high, the second shaded stroke is the same as that in the letter p.

The first part of the k is the same as in the h, the second part however is entirely different, it consists of a hair line stroke commencing one space to the right of the first stroke and joining the first stroke 1-2 space above the base line, it should be a compound curve and can be made upward instead of downward if preferred. The second part of the finishing stroke begins at the junction of the two other strokes and is a compound curve, the general direction of which is nearly vertical. The joining of the two parts of the finish for the k forms a small loop.

The letter 'l' is the same as the first line exercise only 1-2 space higher.

The letter 'b' is the same as l except the finishing stroke which is the same as the finish for the v and w.

This lesson will be good training in slant as the long shaded strokes are what determines the slant of page writing, that is, more so than the minimum strokes do.

BAIRD'S CRITICISMS.

(Note: The specimen's listed below were not shown.....Joe)

R. L. H., Cincinnati, OH. Lower turns too sharp, and you are not particular about hitting the head line. Up strokes are made too fast, In fact all your work has the appearance of having been rushed. Square up

strokes in m and n by retouching after the stroke has been made. Raise the pen at the top of all minimum letters.

Rene G., Kansas City, MO. Your work is very fine. Shades taper a little too much in making the double turns. Would advise you to raise the pen at the top of all minimum letters, you will notice the benefit more when you get on smaller work.

Penfield, PA. Work is altogether too fast, shades are not heavy enough. Read the instructions carefully as to pen liftings. You use too much connective slant, the up strokes should be on nearly the same slant as the down strokes. Sign your name to your work.

W. A - D., Hartford, Conn. Your work is very good. It is a little too high for the width, but expect you to overcome that fault on small work. In writing words you are not careful enough about bringing all letters to the headline. To get ends of strokes square, it is necessary to retouch the work.

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Instructions for lesson No. 4

In this lesson we have the upper loop letters and you will no doubt find that the loop is quite difficult. There are two ways of making the loop, 1st, make it the same as you would make it in ordinary business writing by making the right side of the loop upward and going over the top make the heavier side downward. 2nd, after making the introductory stroke, which at the beginning of a word should begin a little below the base line, raise the pen and begin at the top of the loop and make the heavier side of the loop first, and after reaching the base line raise the pen again and beginning again at the top of the letter make the right side of the loop. In this way both sides of the loop are made downward and I believe that the average person will learn to make good loops in much less time than in the first way described. This is only my belief and it may have been formed on account of having learned that way myself, as the best writer of Engraver's Script that I know of makes the loops as first described. If this is your first attempt at Roundhand it would perhaps be a good idea to practice them both ways and by all means adopt the way by which you can do the best work.

In following the work rule lines for the tops of the loops which in this lesson are three spaces in height as compared with two and one half spaces the height given the extended letters in the 3rd lesson, but while the letter itself is longer by actual measurement in the loop style, it would not appear so on account of the shade tapering at the top while in lesson No. 3 the shade of the extended letters was as great at the top as at any other point.

You will notice that in beginning the loop the pen at first travels just about as much to the left as it does in a downward direction. Notice also that after the beginning of the shade the stroke is straight. This feature is quite noticeable in the f, hand k. The shape of the loop itself is a very important feature and a fault which seems to be a general one is to have a saggy looking loop, which is caused by keeping the loop the same width almost its entire length. Another fault is to drag the shade on the right side of the loop too far. This shade which should be very slight and kept as close to the top as possible adds greatly to the life of the letter, but if carried down too far, detracts from it.

The loop is the feature of this lesson, the finishing strokes of the h, k, l and b are the same as given in lesson three.

In this lesson however, I have given you two different finishes for the b, one is the loop and the other a blind loop or a loop that is afterward filled in. We also have an additional letter the f. The f is always made with a loop, the letter extends three spaces above the base line and one space below it. Notice the dot on the base line to the left of the stem, it should be made large enough to avoid looking weak, but not large enough to attract more attention than the rest of the letter.

Do not practice on the loops to the exclusion of the minimum letters, but try and build them all up together.

This is a hard lesson so work hard to master it. Let me receive your work between the 20th and 25th of the month.

Baird's Criticisms,

C. E. B., Winooski, Vt. Most of your work is very good and graceful. Second shade on first style of r is too heavy. Watch joinings in the small o exercise. Dots at top of s and second style of r are too large. Your lower turns generally are too sharp. I would advise you to use an ink that would produce soft brown hair lines and a black shade, the hair lines in your work are too black.

P. E. C., Bowling Green, Ky. Your work is very good. Second shaded stroke of first r is too heavy, while the second style of r' is too wide. The x is too wide. The x should be closed. Watch spacing in the words. I have some suspicions about you.

W. A. D., Rockford, Ill. Your work is ly good but has a labored appearance. Square up ends of strokes by retouching. You would do well to slant your work more. Send your work earlier next time.

A. A. A., Fitchburg, Mass. Your paper and ink are both poor, and your retouching is not very skillfully done. Both shaded strokes in small a should be the same in width. The down stroke in second part of small x should be a hair line, you have shaded yours slightly. You have a good Idea of the work. use better ink and paper and in large work write on every other line. rather than on every line. Your work will be more encouraging to you. You can easily become a good Roundhand writer.

F. L., Bristol, R. I. Your work is good but you are inclined to write too angular, but this fault you can easily overcome. You raise your pen too soon on your lower turns in n, m and w. You make shaded stroke in x and a too light. Raise your pen at top of minimum letters as well as at the base line.

J. F. C., Bellefontaine, Pa. The width of your shaded strokes varies too much in different letters. You get too much of a running hand effect in your work, this is especially true in your line of v's and x's. If you study the copy you will see that there is very little differ. ence between the slant of down strokes and up strokes. Shaded stroke in first r is wedge shaped. Study form.

R. L. H., Cincinnati, O. Your work on the third lesson is very good, especially so on the first two lines of the copy. You end the shade on the lower turns too abrupt. Your slant is had in some places where you have an extended letter in connection with the minimum letters.

Not knowing, I am unable to give you the information asked for. Would advise you to communicate with a few different companies.

R. C. Cottrell, supervisor of penmanship in the Public Schools of Logansport, Ind., has sent us a specimen of penmanship by a 13 year old pupil which would do credit to a great many of our older business college pupils. He slates that this pupil wrote the vertical six weeks ago.

Mr. L. H. Hausam, of the Salt City Business College, Hutchinson, Kans., is doing much to Influence the penmanship and commercial teaching professions by preparing young persons to engage in these lines of work. The following named students who have been under his instruction have recently taken positions as penmen and commercial teachers in the schools mentioned : C. A. Dillman, Nevada, Mo., Business College; F. M. Allworth, Metropolitan Business College, Red Wing, Minn.; C. L. Swenson, Bethany

College, Lindsborg, Kans.-. 1. D. Smith, Southwestern Business College Meade, Kans.; C. J. Hemphill, Commercial High School, Kingman, Kans.; N. A. Campbell, Manhattan Business College, Manhattan, Kans.; E. R. Cornell, Bethany College, Bethany, Nebr.; A. E. Wright, Los Angeles, Calif., Business College; C. Strahm, Pittsburg, Kans., Business College, and H. C. Hanson, Normal & Business College, Concordia, Kans.

We acknowledge the receipt of a number of very beautiful specimens of penmanship, ornamental style, executed by his students, all of which bear to a marked degree the characteristics of Mr. Hausam's work.

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Instructions for lesson No. 5 (?)

This month we have the loops below the line, which completes the work on the small letters. This lesson will undoubtedly be harder than the previous lessons in many ways and will call for harder work on your part.

The lower loop is just the reverse of the upper loop, the main stroke of the loop is practically straight on the inside as far as the shade extends which is about 2 and a half spaces. Write your work the same size as the copy and rule head and base lines for the minimum letters and also for the loops, be careful about pen liftings, all liftings are plainly shown in the copy and you should study the copy carefully.

The lower loop like the upper loop call he made in two ways: first, make both sides of the loop downward, the heavy side first and second, by making the loop with but one stroke. I would recommend the first way to beginners, but after one has become quite proficient I believe better looking work can be turned out by the second method.

The j is composed of a preliminary stroke and the loop with a dot above it be sure the dot is on a line with the loop and do not make it too large; the first stroke of the y is a double turn same as finishing stroke of n. The g is composed of an oval same as the o or a with the loop added, see to it that there is a small space between the hair line of the oval and the shaded stroke of the loop. The q is the same as the g as far as it goes, it extends only 1 1/2 spaces below the base line the same as the letter p, while all the other loops extend two spaces below the base line, the finishing stroke of the q is a slightly curved stroke to the right of the main stroke of the loop. The q is spoken of here as a loop but in reality it is not, at least in this style. The z will be found to differ some from the other loops, the first part of the x is the same as the first stroke of the n. In beginning the loop the pen swings to the right and then downward, be careful to keep the shade on this loop rather high as there is a tendency to drag it too far down, more so than in the other loops.

Study very carefully the spacing in the words, especially for letters which follow the o.

In the lower line of the copy we have the entire small alphabet, this will afford all excellent opportunity to see how often certain strokes are repeated. I have not given many different styles of letters, but have tried to give those which seem to me to be the most common in use. All the upper loop letters with the exception of the f call be made with a straight stroke the same as the second k, the g and j may be finished the same as the y, but when this finish is used it rarely extends more than one space below the base line.

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INSTRUCTIONS FOR LESSON NO. 9.

This month we have an example of Engraver's Script applied to a commercial Paper. You will also notice that the greater part of the work is smaller than you have had up to this time.

Arrangement and neatness in your work will be a factor this month more than ever, and I expect to see evidence of greater interest on your part, as the work should now begin to be a pleasure and not a task, because you will have something to look at besides a monotonous humdrum of letters when this lesson is finished

Write your work the same size as the copy, ruling both head and base lines to govern the height of minimum letters. The wording should be sketched with a lead pencil in order to get the proper arrangement. Watch the spacing between words as well as in them. Do not get the spacing narrow in one word and wide in the next, shifting the paper so as to keep the pen the same distance from the eye at all times will be found of great benefit as regarding spacing and slant also. Watch the slant carefully, as there is a tendency to write more slanting as the size of the work decreases.

Careful study of the forms of letters is of course of the greatest importance, but arrangement and neatness are also very important and they require no additional skill. They are merely a matter of carefulness and forethought.

It might be a good idea for you to look over the instructions given all through this course and examine your work carefully to see if you are following them.