

Taken from The Business Educator, November 1908

*The terms Engrosser's script and Engraver's script were used to describe what is commonly referred to as Copperplate.....Joe Vitolo

Charlton V. Howe's Suggestions and Instructions for Learning and Executing Engraver's Script.

A Few Suggestions as to Pens, Ink, etc.

Pens-After fourteen years' experience with various pens, I have come to the conclusion that the Gillott No. 303 pen is best adapted for Engraver's Script. It is sufficiently flexible for shading and the point fine enough to produce delicate hairlines. For very small, delicate script there is no pen equal to the Gillott 290 or 291.

INK-The proper ink to use in writing Engravers' script is a very important consideration. The best flowing ink I have ever used is a combination of Higgin's Eternal, two parts, and Underwood's Egyptian Black, one part. This combination produces a (lead black shade with a delicate hairline. The objection to this ink is that it is not waterproof and is affected by the moisture in the atmosphere that causes it to become sticky and smears whenever it is touched. It can be used successfully on work that requires little if any handling and the proper precautions taken. Walkden's Japan is a very dependable ink. While it does not flow as smoothly as the combination of Higgin's Eternal and Egyptian Black. It is more durable and will stand a great deal of erasing, without affecting the ink in the least. This ink is not acid proof, but otherwise it is absolutely permanent.

Pen Holders - This is also another important consideration in writing Engraver's script, Personally, I do not think the average oblique holder is well adapted to script writing unless the top side is flattened so the forefinger can rest upon both the holder and the tin at the same time, thus overcoming the tendency to grip or turn. The triangular oblique holder is well adapted to engrossing script.

Pen Holding have learned through experience that the nearer the point of the pen is grasped the better control of the pen is the result. In writing Engraver's script, I place my forefinger on the pen below the side piece of the oblique holder about half an inch from the point of the pen, which results in perfect control of my pen. It may seem awkward at first in grasping the holder and pen in this manner, but it is worth trying and may produce the results for which you have long sought.

MOVEMENT-Should be rather slow at first. Take sufficient time to properly form the shaded strokes. The tendency is to make the shaded stroke too fast, which results in a lack of uniformity of the length of the shades. This applies especially to the small m, n, etc.

RETOUCHING-After a page of script has been completed, it should be carefully gone over and the defects of each letter remedied, the bottoms of the m's, n's, r's, f's, h's, k Is and the tops of the a's, g's, i's, j's, p's, q's, t's, d's, u's and r's accurately squared. This is the best kind of training and cultivates the most painstaking care, which, after all, is the secret of mastering Engravers' Script.

WHAT CONSTITUTES FIRST CLASS ENGRAVERS' SCRIPT? Uniformity of size, slant and spacing, are the principle elements, and such details as being careful that each stroke comes exactly to the base line, and guide lines, to carefully round the dots of the i's, c's and s's, and to observe exact uniformity of shaded strokes..

LAYING OUT WORK-A section liner is an important aid in ruling a page for accurate Engravers' Script. After the page has been ruled carefully, sketch the wording to be written, taking particular pains to have each line come out even on the right side. Do not sketch the words so that some will be too open and others crowded at the end of a line.

Use a very soft pencil for ruling and sketching the wording, taking care to hold the pencil at the end so that there will be a very slight pressure on the point of the pencil in ruling. If the ruled lines are too heavy they will be difficult to erase. Always hold the pencil at the same angle in ruling and when the point becomes

slightly dull, sharpen it on emery boards made for the purpose; this will prevent variation in the distance between the ruled lines and the size of the script.

One of the secrets of first class Engravers' Script, I learned from one of the best engravers in Chicago. He pointed out to me how graceful script was constructed upon the principles of ovals. Instead of making the shaded stroke of the small i straight, it is curved slightly to the left and all similar strokes the same. This was a revelation to me and I have carried out his suggestion in all my work ever since with the best results.

INSTRUCTIONS.

EXERCISES No. 1-The object of this exercise is to assist in mastering long strokes which appear in the t, d and p, and for the upper extended letters in Bank Note Script-a style of script much used by Engravers. The small f is always made with a loop. Carefully true tops.

EXERCISE No. 2-This exercise will be helpful in mastering the capital stem. This principle is used in the following letters: F, T, P, B R, H, K, G, I, L, D. and S. The stem is three spaces in height in the following letters: B, P, R, I, Jr., and S, 2 1-2 spaces in D, F, T, H and K, and in the G a space and a half.

The stem is a most important principle and it is well to study the form, the length of the shade. its beginning and ending, so as to impress upon the mind the proper conception of its form. Carefully round the dot at the bottom of the stem. The dot should be made one-half space above base line. Avoid making the turn at the bottom of the stem too flat, it should be round and full.

In conclusion, I hope the foregoing suggestions will prove to be helpful to all who are trying to master Engraver's Script. Wishing you the greatest possible success, I remain,

Very truly yours,

Charlton V. Howe.