

*A Booke
Containing Diuers
Sortes of Handes.*



*By the Walden Font Co.
Winchester, Massachusetts*



he origin of writing is, like the origin of civilization, lost in time. It seems that every civilization developed a way to commit fleeting thoughts to permanence, but in Western Europe, it is the Roman Empire that reaches beyond its ruins and lives on in the way we write and print today. The Roman alphabet of 23 letters has shaped our past and will continue to shape our future.

Through the centuries, the way of writing has evolved — styles came and went, or were changed beyond recognition. Each era expressed its essence in the way it wrote: Gothic handwriting is narrow, spiring, obtuse and — to us — as mysterious as the grotesque gargoyles that were its contemporaries. The clearness of thought that dominated the renaissance, the unprecedented flowering of the arts finds its expression in the handwriting of that period.

The handwriting of the Gilded Age, the Victorian Era, tells us, in its steel-quilled exactness, its refined and ornate styling, about excess, money and the unstoppable progress of industry.

The Walden Font Co. is proud to present a glimpse — just a glimpse — of the journey that the written word has taken through the centuries. We hope you will enjoy using your new set of “Divers Handes” as much as we did when we created them.

UNCIAL

At the close of the first Millenium, the ancient Roman handwriting styles still dominated Western European writing. Around that time, parchment made from animal skins began to replace the traditional papyrus, and this new, smoother surface allowed for less rigid letterforms. Soon the lines of the letter shafts softenend and became rounded, resulting in the beautiful Uncial script. Many different variations of this hand were developed, and it stayed in style for several centuries.

IN PRINCIPIO CREAVIT DEUS CAELUM
ET TERRAM. TERRA AUTEM ERAT
INANIS ET VACUA ET TENEBRAE
SUPER FACIEM ABYSSI ET SPIRITUS
DEI FEREBATUR SUPER AQUAS.
DIXITQUE DEUS FIAT LUX ET FACTA
EST LUX. ET VIDIT DEUS LUCEM
QUOD ESSET BONA ET DIVISIT LUCEM
AC TENEBRAS. APPELLAVITQUE
LUCEM DIEM ET TENEBRAS NOCTEM
FACTUMQUE EST VESPERE ET MANE
DIES UNUS.

Xth Century Bookhand

The successor to the Uncial script is marked by a return to slightly straighter shafts. In the four centuries to come, this tendency became stronger, until a rigid, vertically oriented style was achieved: the Gothic Textura. The 10th century bookhand can be seen in some of the most precious illuminated manuscripts, but it was also employed in the everyday copying of school text-books.

Gallia est omnis divisa in partes tres,
quarum unam incolunt Belgae, aliam
Aquitani, tertiam qui ipsorum lingua
Celtae, nostra Galli appellantur. Hi omnes
lingua, institutis, legibus inter se differunt.
Gallus ab Aquitanis Garumna flumen, a
Belgis Matrona et Sequana dividit. Horum
omnium fortissimi sunt Belgae, propterea
quod a cultu atque humanitate provinciae
longissime absunt, minimeque ad eos
mercatores saepe commeant atque ea quae ad
effeminandos animos pertinent important,
proximique sunt Germanis, qui trans
Rhenum incolunt, quibuscum continenter

Bastarda

Parallel to the development of the revered book-hands, the chancelleries and scriptoriums of France developed a handwriting that was comparatively easy to write and well adapted to the needs of a growing world trade. The best features of several handwriting styles were combined, the resulting mix was widely used and known as Bastarda. Together with the printed Gothic Textura, it formed the basis of the later German Fraktur typefaces.



ominus Deus paradysum
voluptatis a principio in quo
posuit hominem quem formaverat.
Reproduxitque Dominus Deus de
hum o omne lignum pulchrum visu et ad
vestendum suade lignum etiam vite in medio
paradysi lignumque scientie boni et mali. Et
fluvius egrediebatur de lato voluptatis ad
inrigandum paradysum qui inde dividitur in

Spanish Court Hand

The Spanish bureaucracy held on to the Bastarda longer than most other nations. It was used for elaborate, ornaments and appointments as well as for everyday orders from the King and Queen. This version of Bastarda is based on a later specimen - somewhat cleaned up and made more legible than the truly cryptic original, this font makes a good impression on printed matter that commands a more prestigious appearance.



On the thirty-third day after I departed from Cadiz, I came to the Indian sea, where I found many islands inhabited by men without number, of all which I took possession for our most fortunate king, with proclaiming heralds and flying standards, no one objecting. To the first of these I gave the name of the blessed Saviour, on whose aid relying I had reached this as well as the other islands. But the Indians call it Guanahany. I also called each one of the others by a new name. For I ordered one island to be called Santa Maria of the Conception, another Fernandina, another Isabella, another Juana, and so on with the rest.

William Shakespeare

Inspired by the hand of the great bard, our “William Shakespeare” font brings an authentic Elizabethan flair to special documents. This rendition of an ancient handwriting, with its rough edges and charming uneven characters is perfectly suited for poetry, letters or any other fine writing that demands a warm and personal style.

*Two households, both alike in dignity,
In fair Verona, where we lay our
scene, From ancient grudge break to new
mutiny, Where civil blood makes civil
hands unclean. From forth the fatal
loins of these two foes A pair of
star-cross'd lovers take their life;
Whose misadventur'd piteous
overtthrows Doth with their death bury*

German Latin

The Old German Script has always been different from the Latin letters used by the rest of Western Europe. This particular rendition represents an early 18th century German hand as it would have appeared in official documents and formal letters. With some practice, you will be able to figure out the different characters and may come to read the German hand quite fluently. Even if you decide this font is utterly illegible, it still makes for a striking graphical accent when legibility is not of prime importance.

*Die schönsten und Romane eröffnen uns
die glänzendsten Züge der menschlichen
Grazie; unsere Phantasie wird
entzündet, unser Herz bleibt kalt;
unwissend ist die Welt, wenn wir
auf diese Weise versetzt werden, wir
ausgublicklich und unfern für's
praktische Leben. In dem nämlichen
Dingeblick, da uns die fehmücklose
Gefährlichkeit der unruhigen Pflanz bis*

Copperplate 1672

Advances made in printing technology gave the evolution of handwriting a completely new direction. Skilled engravers carefully etched letters into copper printing plates, creating scripts of hitherto unseen clarity and fineness of line. These calligraphic gems were first reproduced by the printing press, and then imitated by calligraphers and writers. The evolution from handwritten letter to printed sheet had come full circle.

My Lord,
The gratitude of poets is so troublesome a virtue to great men, that you are often in danger of your own benefits: for you are threatened with some epistle, and not suffered to do good in quiet, or to compound for their silence whom you have obliged. Yet, I confess, I neither am or ought to be surpris'd at this indulgence; for your lordship has the same right to favour poetry, which the great and noble have ever

James the Second

James II is a stately hand — suitable for “official” documents of all kinds from the 18th century onward. The broken letters and smudged appearance add authenticity to this striking font. Use it for headlines and, if you recreate old documents, for the handwritten parts of pre-printed forms. This is as close as you get to the handwriting of an 18th century scribe.



*We, James,
by the Grace of God
King of England*

English Hand

The standard handwriting developed in the late 18th Century, English Hand survives today in many variations as “Copperplate”. Difficult to write, but most beautiful, a handwriting such as this would be the pride of any scribe. English Hand is perfect for filling in partially printed documents, or writing out elaborate “official” documents, especially if you own handwriting looks nothing like this.

*Sir, I am fully sensible of the greatness
of that freedom which I take with you on
the present occasion; a liberty which
Seemed to me Scarcely allowable, when
I reflected on that distinguished, and
dignifying station in which you Stand;
and the almost general prejudice and
prepossession which is so prevalent in the
world against those of my complexion. . .
. That I am not under that State of
tyrannical thralldom, and inhuman
captivity, to which too many of my
brotheren are doomed; but that I have*

A Word about the long “s”

You will find that most of the fonts of “Divers Handes” contain two different forms of the letters “s”—the “long s,” produced by pressing the regular “s” key, and the “short s,” produced by pressing the “<” key. The long “s” is used in the middle of words and syllables, the short “s” is used at the end of words and syllables. Although you are not required to use both forms of “s”, it adds a further measure of authenticity to your documents.

Numerals

Not all the fonts in “Divers Handes” contain numerals. We produce our fonts from original specimens, some of which simply don’t feature numerals. Rather than adding our own numerals, which would take away from the authenticity of the font. In this case, you are forced to write out the numbers, or add them later by hand, preferably in a different color. This is in keeping with the original specimen and will further enhance the look of your documents.

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