

The Printed Book, Handout 1

TERMS

incunable (sg.), **incunabula** (pl.): European printed books printed before 1501.

post-incunable: early-16th c. book that doesn't quite make the cut as an incunable but still belongs to the early developmental phase of European printing

hand-press period: ca. 1450-early 19th century, the era in Europe when printing was carried out on manually-operated presses using handmade paper. The printing craft and trades are very stable throughout this period, with incremental but not revolutionary changes.

codex: our form of the book, with leaves joined at the spine, as opposed to a roll or scroll. Normally used to describe manuscript books in this form.

block book: a book printed from carved wooden blocks, with both text and image together on the block. Flourished briefly in Europe in the later 15th century.

parchment a.k.a. **vellum:** writing surface made from animal skin, normally sheep or cow. Vellum is just a fancy word for parchment and tends to be used by book dealers.

paper: a writing surface made of pulped plant matter, fabric, or other fibers

papyrus: a writing surface made from strips of the papyrus plant in the ancient world.

gathering, quire, booklet: several leaves gathered into a booklet and sewn through the spine. Several gatherings or quires bound together make up a codex. Also called a **signature**, though this more accurately refers to the marks that identify each gathering, rather than the gathering itself, which we will look at in subsequent weeks.

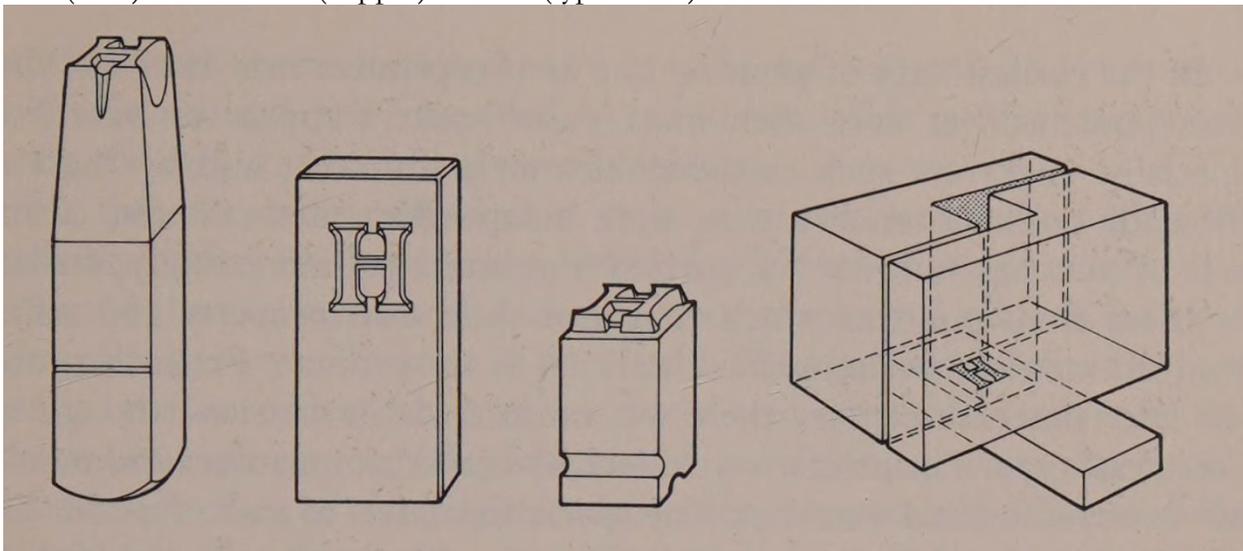
format: a description of the structure of a book in terms of how the sheets of paper that make it up have been folded to make up its constituent gatherings. (We will explain and illustrate this more in week 3.) A **folio** is folded once to make 2 leaves and 4 pages; a **quarto** is folded twice to make 4 leaves and 8 pages; an **octavo** is folded three times to make 8 leaves and 16 pages. Format can be a rough indication of size, but the size of the book depends on the size of the original sheet.

PUNCH
(steel)

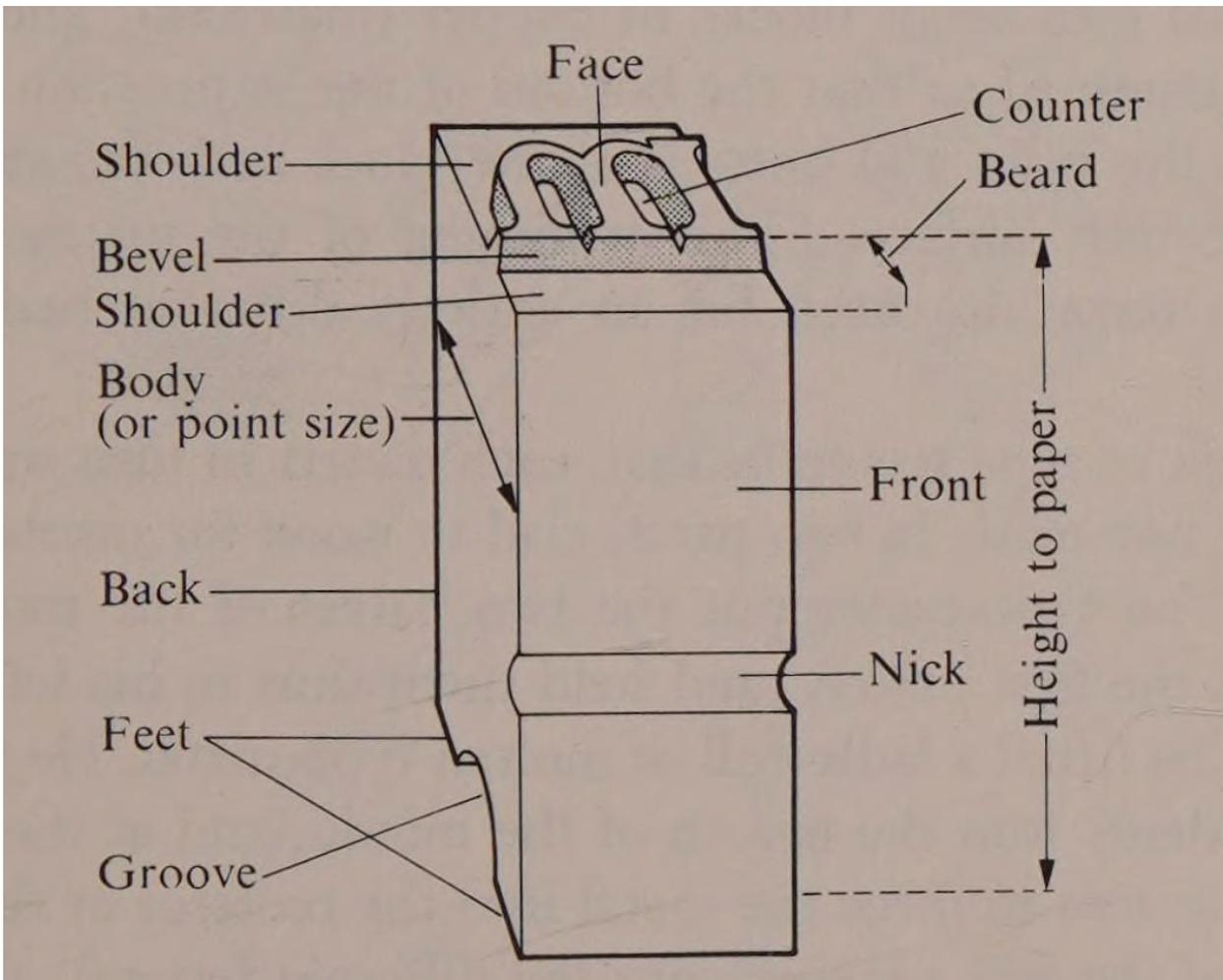
MATRIX
(copper)

TYPE
(type metal)

MATRIX IN A MOLD (schematic)



ANATOMY OF A PIECE OF TYPE



Illustrations from Philip Gaskell, *A New Introduction to Bibliography*