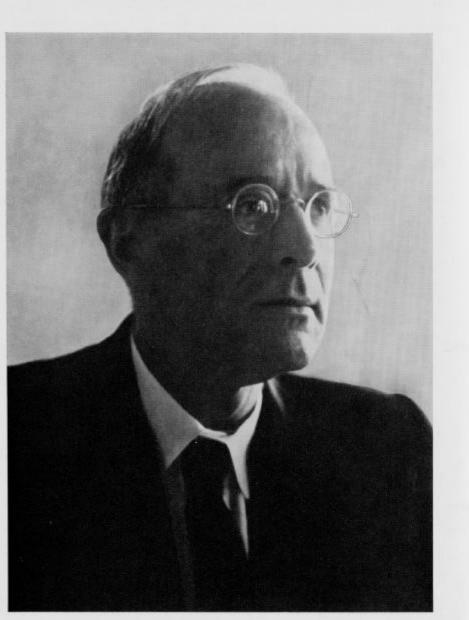PLATE XXXIV

STANLEY MORISON

STANLEY MORISON

1889–1967

STANLEY ARTHUR MORISON was born in Wanstead, Essex, on 6 May 1889, the only son of Arthur Morison, a commercial traveller, and Alice Louisa, *née* Cole. After the early death of the feckless father, the mother, son, and two sisters moved to London, and Morison considered himself a Londoner born and bred, though in his later years he liked to call himself a London Scot. His schooling, from 1900 to 1905 at Owen's School, was probably slightly better than that of the average East End boy around the turn of the century. Three youthful hobbies he preserved for many decades: Railways, Philately, and Cricket. His interest in railways is hidden in anonymous reviews of books on the subject contributed to the *T.L.S.*; what fascinated him in postage stamps was the lettering rather than the artistic design—a paper presented to the Postal History Society in 1946 seems to be the only 'literary' upshot of his youthful hobby. He gave up following the fortunes of County Teams when he had no longer the time to predict fairly accurately the composition of the next England Eleven: 'Either you know a thing thoroughly or you keep away from it'—a very Morisonian reproof to the present writer whose enthusiasm for Yorkshire was not supported by the knowledge of every man's bowling and batting average.

It may be assumed that Morison had always been a voracious reader. Morison's memoir of *Talbot Baines Reed, Author, Bibliographer, Typefounder* (C.U.P., 1960) suggests that the *Boy's Own Paper* kept a faintly nostalgic place in his memory. Otherwise we know for certain that, after he left school, he was proof against the allurements of poetry, novels, plays, or any other kind of light reading-matter. Listening to sacred music was perhaps the only relaxation he indulged in. Otherwise, information, not entertainment, was Morison's quest.

Morison's formal education ended in 1905. His self-instruction continued throughout his life.

After short spells as an office boy in the British and Foreign Bible Society and as a junior clerk in the London branch of a French bank, Morison's life took a decisive turn when his casual interest in printing led him to peruse the first Printing

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Supplement produced by *The Times* newspaper in 1912. There
he found an advertisement which asked for the application of
'a young man of good education, and preferably of some ex-
perience in publishing and advertising'. Morison had none of
these qualifications but, never lacking in self-confidence, he
applied for the job—and obtained it. The man who took the
risk was Gerard Meynell, and Morison became his factotum in
editing and running *The Imprint*, that quarterly which in its
short span of life (1912–13) revolutionized commercial printing
in this country and gave its name to one of the most successful
modern printing types. After the precipitate demise of *The
Imprint*, Morison went to the Roman Catholic publishing house
of Burns and Oates (he had become a Roman Catholic in
1909), controlled by Gerard Meynell's uncle Wilfred, husband
of the poet Alice and father of (Sir) Francis Meynell. Here
Morison not only received a sound training in the book trade
from editing and production to advertising and selling, but
became interested in the historical aspects of printing. In this,
Francis Meynell—who was eventually to become the publisher
of the famed Nonesuch Press and the typographical reorganiser
of Her Majesty's Stationery Office—was his mentor. Until
1916 Morison worked with him at the Romney Street Press
and the Pelican Press, two private presses set up by Meynell.
There followed a curious interlude. As a member of the Guild
of the Pope's Peace he refused to obey military orders and was
sentenced to imprisonment as a conscientious objector (1917–18).
After the war he reverted to the Pelican Press, the direction of
which he took over in 1919 when Meynell became the assistant
editor of the *Daily Herald*. When in 1921 an advertising agent of
the *Herald* established the Cloister Press in Manchester as a vehicle
for his ideas about the modernization of copy and layout of
newspaper advertising, he enlisted Walter Lewis as his chief
printer and Stanley Morison as Lewis's adviser, thus bringing
about a most fruitful collaboration. It not only survived the finan-
cial collapse of the Cloister Press but was greatly strengthened
when Lewis, appointed Printer to the Cambridge University
Press in 1922, persuaded both the Syndics of the C.U.P. and
the board of the Monotype Corporation to employ Morison as
'typographical adviser'. Both appointments took effect in 1923,
although the formal instalment in his Cambridge post was
dated 1925. There was a short break in his connexion with
the C.U.P. for he considered it improper to be associated with a
publishing firm while he was editing *The Times Literary Supple-*

ment (1945-7). Morison remained with the C.U.P. under Lewis's successor, Brooke Crutchley (from 1946), until he reached the age of seventy in 1959; but he continued to advise the C.U.P. (as well as the Monotype Corporation) until the end. Both University Printers—and the Secretary to the Press, Sir Sydney Roberts—showed their appreciation of Morison's work by gallantly putting up with his eccentricities as an author. The C.U.P. set up most of Morison's scholarly papers, printed for private circulation among his friends in a small edition of at most fifty copies—and compositors and printers must have had their patience strained to the utmost when they found that, in every case, S.M. treated the supposedly final page proofs as the equivalent of a first typescript draft to be worked over again and again.

Morison's appointment as 'typographical adviser' to the Cambridge University Press as well as the Monotype Corporation marked the end of his ten-year apprenticeship and the beginning of his independent career as a master in an ever-widening number of fields. For the rest of his life he remained firmly based on London, with frequent stays in Cambridge, occasional visits to the Bodleian and the O.U.P., and regular, from 1948 annual, trips to the Newberry Library in Chicago and the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York (both of which made him an honorary Fellow). The major change of his outward circumstances was his connexion with *The Times* newspaper. It began in 1929 and lasted to the end of his life.

A chronological recital of Morison's activities during these forty-odd years would be confusing rather than informative, as his practical work as type-designer, book- and newspaper-reformer overlaps in every instance with his researches in the history and theory of writing and printing, his successful editorship and authorship in matters as disparate as liturgiology, iconography, and contemporary politics, as well as his multifarious exertions as an adviser to British, American, and German encyclopedias and as the inspiring genius of the 1963 exhibition of Printing and the Mind of Man.

It will therefore be more profitable to deal with Morison's work according to subject-matter. In every field he displayed the same originality of thought—an instinct for hidden treasures in unknown territory and the resourcefulness of the authentic explorer in divining his way through undergrowth and bogs.

Typography

With an almost unbelievable speed he revolutionized the work of the Monotype Corporation. Their hitherto somewhat desultory production of currently acceptable type-faces was replaced by comprehensive planning. The handicraft (and often arty-crafty) notions of the William Morris school were jettisoned in favour of the technological principles of the modern machine age. The pseudo-historical velleities of William Morris were overcome by truly scientific investigations into printing history. Morison joyfully accepted the definition by the seventeenth-century writer, Joseph Moxon, of a typo-grapher as 'a scientifick man'.

The results of Morison's work—done almost single-handed, though from 1927 assisted by the forceful American scholar and publicist, Mrs. Beatrice Warde—were instantaneous as well as far-reaching. The London Monotype Corporation reaped rich rewards: it left its American associate far behind and, as the creator and distributor of contemporary type-faces, did more than any other agency in promoting good typography all over the world. The reading public benefited no less: the Cam-bridge University Press, where Walter Lewis put the Monotype faces first into practical use, proved that mechanical compo-sition and fine printing could go hand in hand. The printing trade and reading public accepted with enthusiasm the types which Morison placed before them. At the present time, there are very few books and not many newspapers that are not set up in one or another of the faces sponsored by Morison (in-cluding the text the reader has before him and the newspaper he has perused this morning).

Morison's study of the productions of sixteenth- to eighteenth-century type-designers and type-founders can be said to have originated with his application to D. B. Updike's *Printing Types*. From its review in the first volume of *The Fleuron* (1923) to the 'recollections' (1943, 1947), Morison regarded the great Ameri-can master-craftsman (died 1940) as one of the most formative influences upon his own work. Updike's researches (subsequently mostly superseded by Morison's) stimulated Morison to embark on a revival of a splendid series of faces which the nineteenth-century printers had forgotten or rejected. Discreetly modern-ized, carefully recut, and adapted to the composing machine, Italian, French, Dutch, German, and English type-faces re-appeared, named after their original designers or the books in

which they were used first. Every contemporary printer is familiar with, and every reader in this country, the United States, the Commonwealth, and Europe has had before his eyes the Garamond (created in 1922), Baskerville, Poliphilus (1923), Fournier (1925), Bembo (1929), Bell (1931)—a favourite of Morison's, Walbaum (1933), and Ehrhardt (1937).

In addition to resuscitating old faces, Morison began to commission living artists to design entirely new types. Eric Gill, Berthold Wolpe, Jan van Krimpen, and Giovanni Mardersteig are among those who have enriched the letter-cases and delighted the reading public. This also shows that Morison's historical awareness never turned him into an antiquarian. In his British Academy lecture of 1937 he not only clearly foresaw but positively welcomed the advent of filmsetting—'photographic composition' he then called it—which in 'the next generation' would revolutionize the art as practised since Gutenberg's days.

The culmination of these activities was the redesigning of *The Times* newspaper accompanied by the creation of *The Times* New Roman. He was appointed typographical adviser to Printing House Square in 1929 and a year later he submitted a 'Memorandum on a Proposal to Revise the Typography of *The Times*': connoisseurs will savour Morison's subtle conformity with what used to be considered, rightly or wrongly, the pomposity of the paper's leader-writers. Morison's proposals were accepted although the most revolutionary suggestion, namely the supersession of the eighteenth-century gothic titling by roman lettering corresponding to the type-face used in the text, required additional arguments embodied in a special 'Supplement to the Memorandum . . . '. The creation of *The Times* New Roman took nearly three years, and Morison supervised the design and cutting of nearly 15,000 matrices, including trials and rejects; the work was carried out in co-operation between *The Times* office and the Monotype Corporation. *The Times* first appeared in its reformed guise on 3 October 1932. A year later *The Times* New Roman was released for general use and within a few years had become the most successful original type-design of the present century. Thought-out rationally to the last detail, it proved to be applicable to printing jobs of every kind, executed by every kind of mechanical composition, and—an additional bonus—easily adaptable to the peculiarities of every Latin alphabet.

Printing history and theory

The Times New Roman was the most acceptable practical by-product of Morison's study of the theory and history of print-ing in general and of the development of the newspaper in particular—all closely bound up with the technical problems of typography past and present. He showed himself as a gifted editor, turning, for instance, the *Penrose Annual* (which he edited from 1923 to 1925) from a dreary technical paper into a leading organ of modern typography. Similarly from 1922 he transformed the *Monotype Recorder* from an undistinguished house-organ into a series of monographs, which have become indispensable aids to designers, compositors, and printers in numerous specialized fields.

To some extent, the *Monotype Recorder* continued the historical and theoretical role played by *The Fleuron*, which Oliver Simon and Morison founded in 1923, originally intended as the organ of the Fleuron Society which died at birth but bequeathed to posterity the seven volumes of one of the most important typographical periodicals. The first four volumes were edited by Oliver Simon and published by the Curwen Press; volumes v to vii (1926–30) were edited by Morison and printed by the Cambridge University Press. Some thirty original papers and critical reviews came from Morison's pen; most of them either anonymous or signed 'S.M.': and S.M. has ever since been the signature by which Stanley Morison was known to, and spoken of by, his friends. The planned edition of S.M.'s most significant contributions to *The Fleuron*, the *Monotype Recorder*, and other journals had a sad end; about which more anon.

Two monumental publications were side-issues of S.M.'s historical studies: *Four Centuries of Fine Printing* (1924), a large folio of 625 collotype plates of roman and italic printing be-tween 1470 (not 1500, as the sub-title says) and 1914; and *German Incunabula in the British Museum* (1928), a companion piece of 152 collotype plates given to 'black-letter' type-faces of which the author in 1924 had had 'no accurate knowledge': S.M. never hesitated to admit candidly any gaps in his erudi-tion and to acknowledge his debt to friends who helped him with the fruits of their more systematic academic training.

Of far greater importance, however, was a small paper of ten pages, published first in the final issue of *The Fleuron*, 'First Principles of Typography' (1930). This paper has been re-printed countless times in this country, the U.S.A., and the Netherlands, translated into half a dozen languages, eventually

issued in 1967 with a memorable postscript (the last item writ-
ten by Morison)—and during these four decades has become
the guide of every British, American, and European typographer,
from the printing apprentice to the designer and producer of
every kind of printed matter.

Calligraphy, paleography, epigraphy

Morison's intense study of the printing and printers of the
incunabula period led him almost inevitably back to investi-
gate the state of handwriting in the fifteenth century, that is
to say, the pattern on which the early type-cutters modelled
their type-faces. It is characteristic for his tendency to transform
theoretical knowledge into practical application that his first
acquaintance with the products of the Florentine scribes im-
mediately caused him to reform his own copper-plate school-
hand and to adopt an italianate hand, which has frequently
been reproduced as a model in handbooks of modern calli-
graphy. His contribution to E. E. Reynolds's *Junior Exercises in
English* (C.U.P., 1932) has perhaps exercised the most bene-
ficial effect upon the greatest number of primary school children
in this country.

Morison's interest in calligraphy was originally roused by the
American bibliographer C. L. Ricketts, whose collection of
writing books was later acquired by the Newberry Library.
The first object of his researches was Ludovico Arrighi Vicen-
tino, equally important as a calligrapher, writing master, and
printer of the chancery cursive. Sometimes in co-operation
with A. F. Johnson, the late James Wardrop, and the late
Henry Thomas, he extended his studies of writing manuals to
Giovanni Antonio Tagliente, Damianus Moyllus of Parma,
Luca de Pacioli, Eustachio Celebrino of Udine, Gian Battista
Verini of Florence, Andres Brun of Saragossa, Gerard Mercator
of Antwerp, and an anonymous Modus Scribendi from the
Abbey of Melk. The dozen or so facsimile editions of these
specimen books provide a conspectus of European calligraphic
instructions from the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries which
is still waiting for a comprehensive assessment. They were sup-
plemented by various papers of which his contribution on
'Calligraphy' in the 14th edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*
(1929) has not yet been superseded. He subsequently extended
his calligraphic studies to the *Copybooks of English Writing-Masters*
(1931) and the development of *American Copybooks from Colonial
to Modern Times* (1951). A convenient summary of the extant

(or until 1945 surviving) treatises and specimen sheets of gothic bookscripts is given in the reprint of Morison's British Academy paper on 'The Art of Printing' (entitled *The Typographic Arts*, 1949) and in his introduction to Signora Carla Marzoli's *Calligraphy 1535–1885* (Milan, 1962), a sumptuously illustrated catalogue of seventy-two writing books and specimens of Italian, French, Spanish, and Netherlands provenance.

The study of what the Italian humanists believed to be the 'antiqua' script led Morison to an examination of its true origins in the Carolingian era. He consolidated several earlier publications in *Notes on the Development of Latin Script* (C.U.P., 1949). Here Morison challenged the traditional view—never called in question by any student of paleography—that the script, commissioned by Charlemagne and carefully designed by the English scholar, Alchvine, was the logical and aesthetically most satisfactory adaptation of the ancient Roman inscriptional lettering and book-hands—capitals, uncials, minuscules. Instead, Morison maintained that the hitherto virtually unknown script used in the monumental Bible and some other service books commissioned by Abbot Maurdramnus of Corbie (772–81) was in every way superior to Alcuin's artificial renewal of the dead hands of bygone ages. For Maurdramnus carried on the tradition which through the centuries had naturally evolved the Merovingian script; without breaking this development, Maurdramnus discreetly pruned its excesses, simplified and standardized the letters, and thus produced 'an elegant, round, simple minuscule of generous size'.

Starting again from the Carolingian script-reform, he followed its development from the 'open, round, roman' hand to the 'pointed, narrow, gothic' script and type (*'Black-letter' Text*, C.U.P., 1942). Here, as elsewhere, Morison did not disguise his personal preference for certain 'gothic' features of late-medieval scribes and early German printers. In the end, however, his rationalist common sense made him unhesitatingly decide in favour of the roman alphabet as the only acceptable universal fount.

The expansion of Morison's interest into ever-widening fields and his resolution never to look back made him bear with fortitude the enforced abandonment of two major projects. A few years before the outbreak of Hitler's war Harvard University Press offered him the publication of a volume of plates and text, illustrating the development of Latin script from Imperial Rome to the Renaissance, designed to supersede Franz Steffens's

Lateinische Paläographie (2nd ed., 1909). By 1940 Morison and the present writer had brought together some eighty splendid photographs from all the relevant European libraries, and the accompanying text was only waiting for the final approval, which we were anxious to obtain, by E. A. Lowe. In early May 1941, S.M. suggested that, in view of the increasing bombing raids, photos and typescript should be moved from my place in Kent to the safety of the strong-room of the Monotype Corporation in Fetter Lane. A week later, a direct hit destroyed the Monotype building and with it S.M.'s 'Harvard book'; my house survived the war with only some blasted windows.

The second blow was the disappearance in the 1950s of the copy of a collection of S.M.'s papers on various topics of script and print chiefly of the fourteenth to seventeenth centuries. As certain theses of his earlier publications had been superseded by his own and others' subsequent researches—while other parts had remained valid—the twenty or so papers were thoroughly revised, conflated where necessary, and generally brought up to date in co-operation with the present writer. The copy was delivered to C.U.P. but, when it was to be sent to the composing room, could not be found. The probable explanation of this event, unheard-of in the annals of either university press, seems to be that an insane employee before he was sacked stole and/or destroyed the script and illustrations of what would have been a magisterial introduction into many aspects of the inter-relationship between epigraphy, paleography, and typography.

Morison's assignment to deliver the Lyell Lectures at Oxford University in 1957 gave him the opportunity—or, as he wryly admitted, put him under the obligation, reluctantly but gratefully accepted—to consolidate his researches in the field of epigraphy, paleography, and typography, and, at the same time, to place the development of Graeco-Latin script in the wider context of ancient, medieval, and modern history. In brief, his intention was to present the evolution of Western lettering from the sixth century B.C. to the twentieth century A.D. as an intrinsic part of Western *Kulturgeschichte*, under the special politico-philosophical aspect of 'authority and freedom'. How far Morison has succeeded in this aim cannot yet be ascertained as the text had not been put into its final shape at the time of his death. That much, however, can be confidently asserted that Morison's emphasis on the continuity from early Greek to modern Latin lettering cannot fail to free the study

of 'Latin' paleography from its unhistoric isolation in text-books and lecture rooms.

Newspapers

Morison's appointment as 'typographical consultant', as he liked to describe his post, to *The Times* newspaper in 1929 was epoch-making in his own career as well as in the history of the paper. For the next twenty years or more his main interest shifted to journalism, taking the term in its widest sense. First of all, he applied the knowledge he had gained in his work for the Monotype Corporation and the C.U.P. to the reform of the newspaper's outward appearance. The creation of *The Times* New Roman type-face, which has already been mentioned, was the most visible sign. But this was accompanied by a complete restyling of every feature of the paper, including the meaningful gradation of headings—from which full stops were banned—the rearrangement of the leader-page, and other items which made *The Times* for the next thirty years one of the two best-produced English newspapers—its nearest rival in this respect being the communist *Daily Worker*, redesigned by Morison's friend, Allen Hutt.

However, non-typographical problems soon claimed more and more of Morison's attention. From 1930 onward he wrote a number of books on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century newspaper-men, of which those on John Bell (1745–1831) and Thomas Barnes (1785–1841) are perhaps the most important. Here Morison did full justice to one of the most enterprising English printer-editor-publishers of all times (who incidentally abolished the long *ſ*) and to the greatest editor of *The Times* whose reputation had been unduly overshadowed by his more ostentatious, and vulgar, successor, John Delane.

These books went parallel with, and served as preparatory work for, two publications of Morison's which, if nothing else, will secure him a permanent place in English newspaper history. The first is the revised and expanded edition of his Sandars Lectures delivered in Cambridge in 1931. The title speaks for itself: *The English Newspaper, Some Account of the Physical Development of Journals printed in London between 1622 & the Present Day* (C.U.P., 1932). There is no aspect of the outward appearance of the English newspaper, from the make-up of the front page to the publisher's imprint, that has not been assigned its significant or insignificant place in this evolution.

Morison's intimacy with the Chief Proprietor, Col. John Astor

(later Lord Astor of Hever), Robert Barrington-Ward, deputy editor (from 1934) and editor (1941–8), and his successor, W. F. Casey, deputy editor (from 1941) and editor (1948–50) was probably responsible for his being charged with the editorship of *The History of The Times, 1785–1948* (4 vols. in 5 parts, 1935–52). When the first volume came out in 1935, on the occasion of the paper's 150th anniversary, the Preface included the sentence that the book was designed as 'the history of *The Times*, not of contemporary politics as seen from Printing House Square'. Whoever thus limited the scope of the *History*, Morison happily did not feel bound by this directive. From the second volume onward, which dealt with the period of 1841–84, Morison saw to it that the contributors, of whom he was perhaps the most industrious, enlarged *The History of The Times* into a general political history as reflected in the columns of the paper, though, of course, with continuous emphasis on what went on in Printing House Square. The inclusion, for instance, of long extracts from the reports of the Berlin correspondents is of supreme importance for an assessment of Anglo-German relations during William II's reign, more valuable in parts than any amount of official documents exchanged at ambassadorial and Foreign Office level. Characteristic of the freedom Morison was allowed is his frank treatment of the 'appeasement' years 1933–8, especially of the notorious leader of 7 September 1938, which certainly marked the nadir of *The Times*'s international reputation.

His wish to establish the study of the history of newspapers on a permanent basis led him to write a privately printed *Proposal to Establish a Readership in the History of Newspapers* (1938) which the University of London established in the following year, with Morison's financial support. But after its distinguished tenure by Graham Pollard the post was allowed to lapse.

Further efforts to bring together more closely the study of newspaper history with general history (*The Library*, 1954; *Gazette*, 1955) met with cool reception in this country and downright hostility in Germany, in spite of the tribute he paid to the German pioneers in the field of *Zeitungswissenschaft*, all of whom, however, happened to be democrats, a political hue still unpalatable to the majority of post-war German historians.

However, Morison gave some practical examples of the use of press and other contemporary records in the borderland between history and politics. His close friend, Lord Beaverbrook, put at his disposal unpublished material which permitted

Morison to elucidate 'Personality and Diplomacy in Anglo-American Relations 1917' (*Essays presented to Sir Lewis Namier*, 1956), and the First World War debate on 'The Freedom of the Sea', which went no further than proof.

Morison's most active connexion with *The Times* newspaper was his editorship of *The Times Literary Supplement* (1945–7). He was anxious to put the *T.L.S.* 'on the right lines', by which he understood doing away with its insular and narrowly 'literary' outlook and making it as representative of the international republic of letters as *The Times* was in the political sphere. In this respect, as in so many others, he achieved complete success. Under his guidance and that of his chosen successors, Alan Pryce-Jones (1947–59) and Arthur Crook (from 1959), the *T.L.S.* has become the foremost critical organ which no scholar or librarian can do without.

Liturgiology

Morison's fervent devotion to the well-regulated Christian worship as he found it most perfectly organized in the liturgy of the Roman Church directed his attention to the typographical and, earlier, paleographical aspects of 'the literature of Christian public worship', as the sub-title of his main publication on liturgical books defined his aims. His very first appearance in print, in no. 8 of *The Imprint* (1913) dealt with 'some liturgical books'; completely superseded by his later researches, the paper deserves mention for the curious fact that the author signed himself as 'Stanley A. Morison', using for the first and last time the initial of his middle name. In the course of years he amassed a considerable collection of liturgical books which he later sold to the Newberry Library in Chicago, after they had served him in writing his *English Prayer Books* (1943). Its success was instantaneous—it was, in fact, Morison's 'best-seller'. A reprint for the Alcuin Club was quickly followed by a second edition (1945) and a third, almost doubled in length (1949). The book was sponsored by the Anglican Deans of St. Paul's and Liverpool; but it at once secured an authoritative place among Presbyterian, Roman Catholic, Methodist, and other Christian scholars, as it covers with great impartiality the service books of every English denomination. Certain observations on the size, layout, and lettering of medieval manuscripts as well as printed books again display the advantages Morison derived from the application to historical problems of his practical experience as a printer and book designer. No theologian,

historian, or philologist had noticed, for instance, that books of private devotion have always been produced in pocket size, that antiphonaries had to be written or printed in a large format which permitted the whole choir to read and sing the words, that rubrics had to be set off in colour or by some other distinction so as to assist the priest in emphasizing the rhythm of the eucharist service. In brief, Morison stressed the importance of the medieval scribe and the modern printer in the composition of liturgical books, and that a badly produced service book is to be condemned for religious as well as aesthetical reasons.

Morison himself showed what he meant by applying the highest typographical standards to ecclesiastical printed matter in the specimen pages for the Book of Common Prayer of the American Episcopal Church, prepared for the C.U.P. and O.U.P. in 1927 (which was eventually and 'appropriately', as Morison testified, printed by Updike's Boston press); by critical studies of the production of the Geneva Bible of 1560 and of Roman devotional books of the eighteenth century; and finally by the magnificent *Form and Order* of the Coronation Services of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth II, which he designed for the C.U.P. and which are among the noblest specimens of the printer's art of all times and places.

Encyclopedias

The unquenchable thirst for factual information which accompanied Morison all through his life, made him an assiduous consultant and collector of encyclopedias, of which he owned a considerable number in various languages. As an established expert on the history and practice of typography he was invited to contribute two key-articles to the 14th edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. His article on 'Calligraphy' has already been referred to; the one on 'Typography' may be considered the germ which later blossomed into the *First Principles*.

Morison's connexion with the *Britannica* became very close when Senator William Benton became first the chairman of the editorial board and later the publisher. One more of Morison's ever-increasing number of congenial American friends, Senator Benton made him a member of the board (1961) and came to rely upon him as a general adviser to realize his ambitious plan to make the *E.B.* a 'college of light', a term coined by the father of modern pedagogics, Comenius. Morison was well prepared for such a role. He had actively participated

in the preparation and execution of the post-war edition of *Chambers's Encyclopaedia*, edited by Mrs. M. D. Law, O.B.E. (1945–50), and thoroughly discussed with the editor of the *Brockhaus Enzyklopädie* the different possible approaches to encyclopedic presentation. Some memoranda, prepared by S.M. and the present writer for Senator Benton, aimed at removing from the *E.B.* the insular traces of its Scottish origins and the even more insular features grafted upon it by successive American editors. Senator Benton wholeheartedly agreed with these suggestions, which may yet transform the *E.B.* into a standard work acceptable throughout the Western Christian world and its dependencies.

The crowning achievements

With the Lyell Lectures lacking the author's finishing touch, Morison happily saw the completion of his two most ambitious projects: the book on *John Fell* and the enlarged edition of the descriptive catalogue of *Printing and the Mind of Man*.

The types which Dr. John Fell (1625–86) bought for and later bequeathed to the Oxford University Press have occupied Morison, on and off, for over forty years. On the occasion of the three-hundredth anniversary of Fell's birth the then Secretary to the Press, R. W. Chapman, having published a folio of specimens of books printed with the Fell types, approached Morison with the request to conduct a 'scientific' inquiry into the origins of the types. In the Preface to the definite book of 1967 the author has traced the ups and downs of his researches, giving, as was his wont, unstinted praise to his many helpers and friends, among whom the Printers to the O.U.P., Charles Batey (1946–58) and Vivian Ridler (from 1958), and Harry Carter, the archivist of the Press, were specially singled out. The result was a signal triumph of Morison's belief in the 'application of paleographical methods to a typographical investigation'. By 1930 he had established that the types hitherto believed to be of seventeenth-century Dutch origin were, in fact, of a very mixed provenance. Some of them were sixteenth-century French founts; others could be traced back to Antwerp and Frankfurt foundries; while a number of Greek, black-letter, and various oriental types were specially cut by a German typefounder, Peter de Walpergen, whom Dr. Fell employed from about 1676 at the Press. Not content with the detailed examination of each puncheon and matrix, Morison exceeded his original commission—with the full approval of the Delegates,

it must be assumed—by making the Fell types the centre-piece of a comprehensive history of printing in Oxford from its begining in 1478 to the revival of the Fell types by Horace Hart in and after 1883. The biography of John Fell, successively Delegate of the Press, Dean of Christ Church, Vice-Chancellor, and Bishop of Oxford, naturally occupies a conspicuous place in the book. It has appropriately been printed in hand-set type cast in the Fell matrices.

Its official publication on 12 October 1967, the day after Morison's death, was celebrated by the Press with an exhibition, and by the *T.L.S.* with a long review, anonymously but unmistakably from the pen of Mr. John Dreyfus, Morison's successor at the Monotype Corporation and the Cambridge University Press.

In some respects the Fell book was a return to Morison's early interest in type-specimens as an invaluable source of typographical history. While working on the Fell types, he wrote an introductory essay to the *Reproductions of Fifteen Type Specimen Sheets Issued between the XVIth and XVIIIth Centuries* (ed. John Dreyfus, 1963). In it he gave a lucid summary of the causes, especially the economic considerations, which determined or influenced the change, sometimes imperceptible, sometimes radical, which the commercial founts underwent during the first three centuries.

Despite his enthusiasm for even the minutest aspects of Gutenberg's art, Morison never swerved from his conviction that printing is 'a servant art' whose sole purpose is 'to serve civilization'. The Gutenberg quincentenary, commemorated in 1940, gave him the first opportunity to show to the general public the interrelationship of printing, bibliography, and the history of the human mind. The Cambridge University Press mounted 'an exhibition of printing at the Fitzwilliam Museum' which was to be open from 6 May (Morison's birthday!) to Midsummer's Day but had to be dispersed after a week because of the risk of a German air-raid on Cambridge. For the catalogue Morison wrote the section on 'the progress of journalism' and, in addition, brought out a special number of *The Monotype Recorder* (which Sir Allen Lane later expanded into the Pelican *Five Hundred Years of Printing*).

This abortive exhibition, however, became the inspiration of 'a display of printing mechanisms and printed materials arranged to illustrate the history of Western civilization and the means of the multiplication of literary texts since the XVth

century', better known by its 'short title' *Printing and the Mind of Man*. This was organized in connexion with the Eleventh International Printing Machinery and Allied Trades Exhibition (IPEX) in July 1963. *Printing and the Mind of Man* was sponsored, under the patronage of H.M. the Queen, by the organizers of IPEX, and generously supported by the librarians of every notable library and individual collectors and publishers in this country, the U.S.A., and Europe. Thus, hundreds of rare books and other printing matter could be assembled, in addition to specimens of technical processes. Morison took special interest in the preparation of the catalogue which was entrusted to historical and technical subcommittees, composed by his friends and collaborators of long standing.

Right from the inception of IPEX Morison thought ahead. He wished to transform the catalogue with its necessarily brief annotations of the exhibits into a lasting and comprehensive monument. He was greatly encouraged by the combination of scholarly enthusiasm and shrewd assessment of the commercial possibilities, displayed by J. Matson, C.B.E., head of the Monotype Corporation, and the proposed printers and publishers, Brooke Crutchley and John Dreyfus of the C.U.P., and Desmond Flower, M.C., of Messrs Cassell & Co. The result was the monumental folio *Printing and the Mind of Man*, edited by John Carter, C.B.E., and Percy H. Muir, who had been responsible for the IPEX catalogue, and greatly enhanced in value by Professor Denys Hay's introductory essay 'Fiat Lux'. The book was published on Morison's last birthday, 6 May 1967; he was already too ill to attend the reception given in his honour in the crypt of St. Bride's church, the parish church, as it were, of the brotherhood of journalists, printers, and other practitioners of the 'black art', of whom Stanley Morison was an outstanding representative.

Morison: the Man

The poor boy for whom a penny ride on a London bus was an expense to be prudently considered, later came to know every country in Western Europe, the Near East, and large tracts of the United States and Canada. He spoke, fluently and regardless of grammar, French, German, and Italian, read with ease these languages as well as Spanish, Latin, and, at least some, Greek, and made fairly successful attempts to master the language of 'Shicorger', where he felt more at home than anywhere outside London. In fact, transatlantic men and

women were among his best friends, and the Newberry Library in Chicago his spiritual home on a par with the British Museum. The Americans were also excepted from S.M.'s quite irrational prejudices against Welshmen, Irishmen, 'Huns', and Jews— all the more irrational as some of his best friends belonged to these ethnic groups (not to mention his deep respect for German scholarship in general).

Morison was an extremely 'clubbable' man, an excellent table companion and brilliant host, and a genuine connoisseur of good food and good wine (one reason why he preferred the Garrick Club and its excellent cuisine to the Athenaeum). Completely free from envy or jealousy of people with a happier or more conventional social or academic background, he was naturally at ease with men and women of every class from dukes to dustmen, provided only they had something 'informative' to impart to him. In one respect only was he deliberately old-fashioned (and quite un-American). He abhorred the use of first names, although he quickly dropped the use of titles. Not only did he never address anybody by his Christian name, however long and intimate their relations might be, but conversely nobody ever referred to him, even in private conversation, as other than 'Morison', or, the height of familiarity, 'S.M.'. His charity was unbounded; numberless scholars, graphic artists, or serious publicists whom he considered worth encouraging can testify to the professional and very often financial assistance they received from him—open signs of gratitude always being deprecated.

The man whose formal schooling ended at the age of sixteen was in later life loaded with professional and academic honours. The invitations by Cambridge to deliver the Sandars Lectures, by Oxford to deliver the Lyell Lectures, and by the British Academy to deliver the Hertz Lecture on Aspects of Art have already been mentioned; the last named, first published in the Academy's *Proceedings*, xxiii, was reprinted in this country and the United States and translated into German. Morison was also honoured by two exhibitions of his work, the first at the Newberry Library in 1959 and the second in Brussels and The Hague in 1966. The Chicago exhibition was noteworthy as the books, pamphlets, and proof sheets shown were mostly presentation copies, including a number of unica, with additions and corrections in the author's hand. In fact, the work of the great British typographer can be studied in full only in Illinois on the shores of Lake Michigan!

The exhibition mounted in the Low Countries by M. Fernand Baudin has left behind it a catalogue, *Stanley Morison et la tradition typographique*, the 150-odd items of which together with its seventy-eight plates constitute a kind of running commentary on S.M.'s life and work. The illustrations and letterpress also touch upon a number of Morison's activities which it has not been possible to include in this memoir: his work as a technical and editorial consultant to English and American publishing houses such as William Heinemann, Doubleday, Ernest Benn, and Victor Gollancz (of which he was a director from 1928 to 1938); his ruthless distinction between the unobtrusive typography becoming to books and that appropriate to publicity which cannot be too glaring (for which he was pilloried as a 'typographical bolshevist'); or his occasional excursions in rarely trodden bypaths such as printers' flowers and arabesques.

Morison received the gold medals of the American Institute of Graphic Arts (1946) and of the (London) Bibliographical Society (1948), honorary degrees from the Universities of Cambridge (1950), Birmingham (1950), Chatham, New Brunswick (1959), and Marquette, Wisconsin (1960), and honorary fellowships of more than half a dozen learned societies. Of all these honours S.M. valued most the Litt.D. (Cantab.) because it was conferred upon him by his old friend, Sir Sydney Roberts, at the time Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge; but he would never allow himself to be addressed, orally or in writing, as 'Doctor Morison'. On the other hand, he was genuinely proud of seeing the letters F.B.A. after his name when the British Academy had elected him a Fellow on 7 July 1954—the one honour, he used to say, which money cannot buy and political intrigue cannot procure. He refused several offers of a knighthood—partly because he thought it improper for anybody connected with *The Times* to accept what might look like a bribe; partly because he regarded 'Stanley Morison' as a unique appellation whereas 'Sir Stanley' might easily convey the picture of 'a rich brewer or an unsuccessful backbencher'.

Morison's political development is closely bound up with his philosophy of life. The catholic communist, conscientious objector, and adherent of the Labour Party grew into what the friends of those days would probably describe as a pillar of the Establishment, hardly distinguishable from a true-blue tory. His creed was an amalgam of the rigid and uncompromising rationalism of his Scottish forebears—no doubt Covenanters to a man—, the more comprehensive but hardly less austere philoso-

phical doctrines of Thomas Aquinas, and a strong belief in the idealistic aspects of the marxist interpretation of history. This combination of seemingly incompatible tenets was one of the reasons why his conversation was spellbinding whatever subject he chose to discuss, to attack or to defend—tempered always by his glorious humour and his ability to laugh with others or at himself.

Morison's outlook on life can perhaps be summed up in the words with which, in his 1967 Postscript to the *First Principles*, he pronounced the essential premisses of good printing, sound scholarship and human dignity (to him three facets of the same intellectual and spiritual entity), 'observation, thinking, rationalism and logic'. These principles embody the secret which enabled an original genius, who owed everything to his own unaided efforts, to reach the height of academic distinction and to leave an indelible mark on many branches of scholarship.

S. H. STEINBERG

NOTE

The preceding memoir is based chiefly on the writer's collaboration and friendship with S.M. which began in 1935 and ended only with his death.

There are two bibliographies of S.M.'s writings (including writings on S.M.), all the more valuable as S.M. himself contributed some explanatory notes and self-critical comments.

JOHN CARTER, *A Handlist of the Writings of Stanley Morison* (C.U.P., 1950); additions and corrections in:

P. M. HANDOVER, *A Handlist of the Writings of Stanley Morison, 1950–9* (Motif 3 and separate reprint, Shenval Press [1960]).

Connoisseurs of academic wit will appreciate the *Prolegomena ad curriculum vitae* which Sydney Roberts wrote on the occasion of S.M.'s sixtieth birthday (C.U.P.). Ten years later Hans Schmoller and the present writer collaborated in a profusely illustrated sketch on 'Stanley Morison' in *Der Druckspiegel*, June 1959.

Two pieces of autobiography deserve to be mentioned:

In the 'Preface' to '*Black-letter*' *Text* (C.U.P., 1942) S.M. described the bombing raids which hit his flats on 20 September 1940 and 12 May 1941.

The paper by James M. Wells on 'The work of Stanley Morison' in *The Newberry Library Bulletin*, v. 5 (August 1960), has been given its final shape by S.M: textual critics cannot fail to detect his interpolations.

Unfortunately S.M. used his influence with *The Times* office (as he gleefully admitted to the present writer) to 'revise' drastically his own obituary by cutting out or toning down virtually every passage in which his colleagues and friends had expressed their admiration of the man and his work. In the version published on 12 October 1967 the last reviser did his best, within the few hours at his disposal, to make some amends for this unprecedented (but typically Morisonian) piece of editorial tyranny.