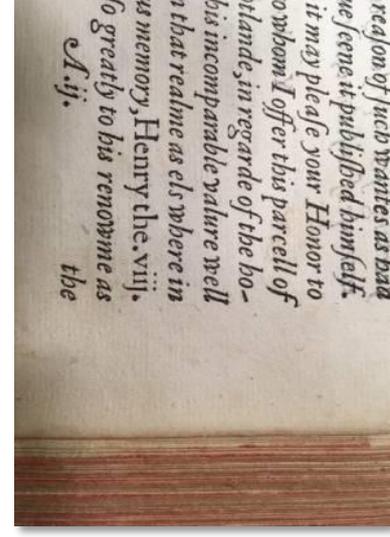


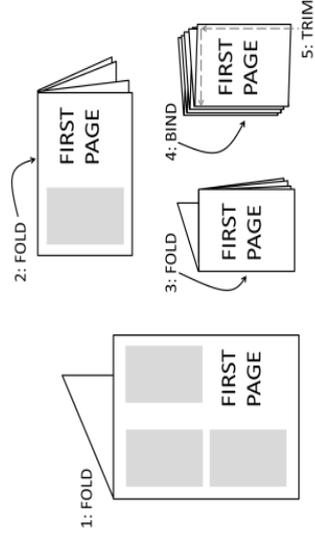
Type: each letter of the alphabet was carved at the top of a thin piece of metal, called a punch. This was hammered into a softer metal to create a mould which was filled with liquid metal to cast the pieces of type. These were sorted by letter and stored in shallow cases.

Ink: printing ink consisted of a varnish and a colour. The varnish was made by combining vegetable oil with a resin to prevent the ink from spreading. Bread crusts and onions were added to the oil to remove grease. Soot was added to make black ink and ground vermilion to make red ink



To make a book, the sheets were placed in order on long tables. Page numbers were often wrong so the sheets were kept in order by the 'signatures', letters printed below the last line of text on the first page on each sheet. A sheet was picked from each pile and folded and cut to form a section of a book.

Printing: the forme was placed on the bed of the printing press. One man inking the type whilst the other attached a damp piece of paper to a frame on the forme and folded down onto the forme and was rolled under the 'platen'. The platen was lowered by pulling the handle and forcing the paper onto the inked type.



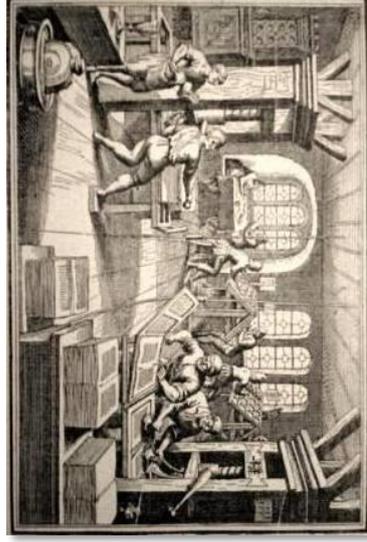
KB



Hand-Press Printing

Setting the type: the compositor, worked from the handwritten text, picking letters from the type cases and placing them upside down and left to right in the 'composing stick'. When a few lines had been set, they were transferred to a 'galley', a three sided tray. When the galley held a whole page, the type was placed in an iron frame called a 'chase'. The chase held type for all of the pages to be printed on one side of the sheet of paper, metal or wooden wedges being hammered in to create a rigid structure known as a 'forme'.

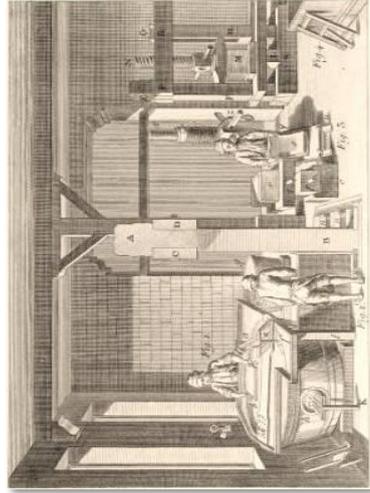
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15

Early books were often sold unbound or in paper covers so that the buyer could have the book bound to his own design. The Binder sewed the separate sections of the book together and attached this 'text block' to the boards with cords. The boards were covered with leather and often decorated.

When enough copies of one side of the sheet had been printed they were turned over, the forme was changed and the second side was printed. The damp sheets of paper were hung up to dry at the end of the process and the type cleaned and returned to its case.

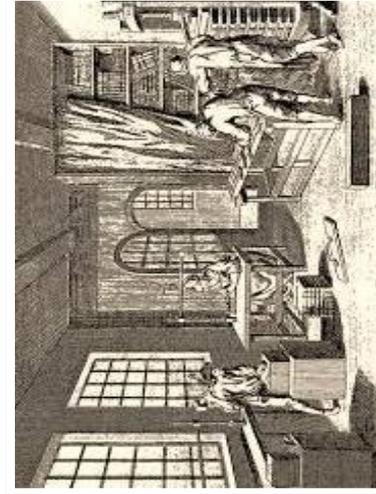
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6



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14

Paper: for the first five hundred years of printing, paper was made from linen or cotton rags. These were cut up and mixed with water to create a mixture known as 'stuff'. The paper-maker dipped a mould, a rectangular wire sieve, into a vat of the stuff shaking it to lock the fibres together. Lines made by the sieve can be seen in hand-made paper.