1. THE APPEARANCE OF THE SCHEFFERS TYPE: JOHAN I ENSCHEDE (1768)

Since, on 9 March 1743, the business of Johan I Enschede of Haarlem had bought up the material of the Wetstein type foundry in Amsterdam, things had gone well. One of the reasons for this was that the Enschedés had also managed to obtain the talents of one of the Wetsteins’ punch-cutters, Johan Michael Fleischmen, a native of Nuremberg. Other punch-cutters working for the type foundry at this time were the Belgian François Rosart and his son Mathias. Izaak Enschedé, the business’s founder, had died in 1761. A few days before his death his son Johan I had bought the house and land on the Klokhuisplein (then called the Koolmarkt) and moved the firm and its printing works and type foundry there. It is still there, a flourishing concern, to this day.¹

For Joh. Enschedé en Zonen the year 1767 was almost as significant as 1743 had been. On 19 October 1767, together with the brothers Ploos van Amstel of Amsterdam, the Haarlem type founder bought the foundry of Jan

¹ It is to the late lamented Gonne Flipse, curator of the museum of the Stichting Museum Enschedé that I owe my information on the modern history of the types. The present article has been greatly enriched by her great knowledge of the collection and the charm, expertise and generosity with which she assisted my research. Mrs. I. Marseille-Heringa very kindly helped me with the work of tracing information on Johan I and Charles Enschedé. I am grateful to the Board of Joh. Enschedé en Zonen to publish so much of the treasures of the Stichting Museum Enschedé. The Royal Library in The Hague and the University Library in Leiden gave permission to publish items in their collections. Dr Christine M.G. Berkvens-Stevelinck helped me with information on Prosper Marchand and his archives in the University Library of Leiden; Mr Paul Valkema Blouw communicated to me the passage on the Scheffers types in A.F. Johnson’s article of 1941; Mr W. Kees Gnrrip drew my attention to Dr M.E. Kronenberg’s criticism, published during the war years in Het Boek; I owe to Mr Sem Hartz a reference to the Scheffers types by Johan I Enschedé; Mr Fons van der Linden reminded me of the Chaucer translation of 1930-3; I am grateful to Dr G. Puchinger for information on Prof. C. Gerretson; and Prof. Herman de V Fontaine Verwey drew my attention to the article by Dr Kronenberg in Het Boek 1952-4.

Roman & Cie. With this purchase the company also acquired the matrices that are attributed to Henric Lettersnider.

The new acquisitions of 1767 were presented along with the firm’s own collection in a type specimen that appeared in 1768. This was also the year in which Fleischman died. The type specimen says of him that ‘since the invention of printing there has been no so excellent punch-cutter who has made and left us so many types as Mr Fleischman’.

At the back of the Proef van letteren of 1768 there are three pages devoted to types cast from matrices acquired by Enschedé when they were already over two hundred years old, types which testified to the Enschedés’ need to preserve, in the town in which tradition held it had been invented, evidence of the glorious past of printing in the Netherlands. Johan I Enschedé was convinced that the key to the invention of that exceptional art could be found in the technique of cutting and casting type. The irregularity of the type matter in the ‘Costeriana’ was, he believed, the result of casting from lead (later copper) matrices that had been punched with a copper (later steel) punch. At the same time the irregularity in the casting itself he believed to be the consequence of the fact that matrices could be cast together.

Various types are combined, many cast two and a few three together, which is easily visible to a type founder’s eye. I should never have been able to discover how such types were made and cast if I had not seen any matrices by Peter Schoeffier of Gernsheim and had I not myself been the possessor of matrices made in Holland in the 1470s, having put them to the test and set three matrices of them in the mould alongside each other and thus cast them together.

2 ‘Zedert de Uitvinding der Boekdrukkonst’ there never was a ‘zo uitmuntend Letter-Stempelsnyder’, ‘die zo vele Schriften gemaakt en nagelaaten heeft, als de heer Fleischman’; Proef van letteren, welke gegoetent worden door de nieuwe Haarlemsche lettergieterij van J. Enschedé 1768. A separate section refers to Severzoon’s ‘Great Primer Textura’ (Vervliet T10; Enschedé No. 3), Lettersnijder’s ‘English Textura’ (Vervliet T20; Enschedé No. 1), Lettersnijder’s ‘2-line Brevier Uncials’ (Vervliet U5; Enschedé No. 2). Cf. H.D.L. Vervliet, Sixteenth-century printing types of the Low Countries. With a foreword by Harry Carter (Amsterdam 1968).

3 Verscheide Letteren zyn gecombineert, veele twee en enige wynige drie aan malkander gegoeten, dat is zeer klaar voor Lettergieters oogen te zien, ik zoude zulks nooyt hebben konnen ontdekken hoe zulke Letteren gemaakt en gegoeten zyn indien ik geene matricen van Peter Schoeffier van Gernsheim had gezien en selve geen bezitter was van Matricen in Holland gemaakt tusschen de Jaaren 1470 en 1490, hebbende daar van de proef genoomen en 3 Matricen daar van in de Vorm gezet naast malkander en dus gelyk gegoeten.

4 This note by Johan I Enschedé occurs in a copy of the survey Liber extimiae raritatis. Boeken in Quarto in the collection of Mr S. Hartz. The original was unavailable for examination during my research for this article. The importance attached to Johan I Enschedé’s discovery is also evident in the fact that according to A. de Vries, Lijst der stukken betrekkelijk de geschiedenis van de uitvinding der boekdrukkunst berustende op het raadhuis te Haarlem (Haarlem 1862), p. 49, No. 5, the following was exhibited: ‘Six letters, cast on matrices from the beginning of the