Gill Sans

Gill Sans is a sans @-@ serif typeface designed by Eric Gill and released by the British branch of Monotype from 1928 onwards .

Gill Sans takes inspiration from the calligrapher and lettering artist Edward Johnston ? s 1916 " Underground Alphabet " , the corporate font of London Underground , now although not at the time mostly simply called the " Johnston " typeface . Gill as a young artist had assisted Johnston in its early development stages . In 1926 , Douglas Cleverdon , a young printer and later a BBC executive , opened a bookshop in Bristol , and Gill painted a fascia for the shop in sans @-@ serif capitals . In addition , Gill sketched an alphabet for Cleverdon as a guide for him to use for notices and announcements . By this time Gill had become a prominent stonemason , artist and creator of lettering in his own right and had begun to work on creating typeface designs .

Gill was commissioned to develop his design into a full metal type family by Stanley Morison , an influential Monotype executive and historian of printing . Morison hoped that it could be a competitor to a wave of German sans @-@ serif fonts in a new " geometric " style , which included Erbar , Futura and Kabel families , which were being launched to considerable attention in Germany during the latter 1920s . Gill Sans was released in 1928 by Monotype , initially as a set of titling capitals that was quickly followed by a lower @-@ case . Gill 's aim was to blend the influences of Johnston , classic serif typefaces and Roman inscriptions to create a design that looked both cleanly modern and classical at the same time .

Marketed by Monotype as a design of " classic simplicity and real beauty " , it was intended as a display typeface that could be used for posters and advertisements , as well as for the text of documents that need to be clearly legible at small sizes or from a distance , such as book blurbs , timetables and price lists . Designed before setting documents entirely in sans @-@ serif text was common , its standard weight is noticeably bolder than most modern body text fonts .

An immediate success , the year after its release the London and North Eastern Railway chose it for all its posters , timetables and publicity material , a use later extended across all British railways . It also soon became used on the modernist , deliberately simple covers of Penguin books , and was sold up to very large sizes which were often used in British posters and notices of the period . Gill Sans was one of the dominant typefaces in British printing in the years following its release , and remains extremely popular : it has been described as " the English Helvetica " because of its lasting popularity in British design . Gill Sans has influenced many other typefaces , and helped to define a genre of sans @-@ serif , known as the humanist style .

Monotype rapidly expanded the original regular or medium weight into a large family of styles , which it continues to sell . A basic set is included with some Microsoft software and Mac OS X.

Characteristics

The proportions of Gill Sans stem from monumental Roman capitals in the upper case , and traditional " old @-@ style " serif letters in the lower . This gives Gill Sans a very different style of design to geometric sans @-@ serifs like Futura , based on simple squares and circles , or realist or grotesque designs like Akzidenz @-@ Grotesk , Helvetica and Univers influenced by nineteenth @-@ century lettering styles . For example , compared to realist sans @-@ serifs the " C " and " a " have a much less " folded up " structure , with wider apertures . The " a " and " g " in the roman or regular style are " double @-@ storey " designs , rather than the " single @-@ storey " forms used in handwriting and blackletter often found in grotesque and especially geometric sans @-@ serifs .

The upper @-@ case of Gill Sans is partly modelled on Roman capitals like those found on the Column of Trajan . Edward Johnston in one of his books on lettering had written that " the Roman capitals have held the supreme place among letters for readableness and beauty . They are the best forms for the grandest and most important inscriptions . " While Gill Sans is not based on purely geometric principles to the extent of the geometric sans @-@ serifs that had preceded it , some aspects of Gill Sans do nonetheless have a geometric feel . The " O " is an almost perfect circle and the capital " M " is based on the proportions of a square with the middle strokes meeting at the

centre ; this was not inspired by Roman carving but is very similar to Johnston . But the influence of traditional serif letters is clear in the " two @-@ storey " lower @-@ case " a " and " g , " unlike that of Futura , and the " t " with its curve to bottom right and slanting cut at top left , unlike Futura 's which is simply formed from two straight lines . The lower @-@ case " a " also narrows strikingly towards the top of its loop , a common feature of serif designs but rarer in sans @-@ serifs .

 Following the traditional serif model the italic has different letterforms from the roman , where many sans @-@ serifs simply slant the letters in what is called an oblique style . This is clearest in the " a " , which becomes a " single storey " design similar to handwriting , and the lower @-@ case " p " , which has a calligraphic tail on the left reminiscent of italics such as those cut by Caslon in the eighteenth century . The italic is nonetheless quite restrained , almost an oblique in many characters such as the " e " with its straight line on the underside of the bowl where serif fonts normally add a curve . Like most serif fonts (but unlike most sans @-@ serif fonts) , several weights and releases of Gill Sans use ligatures to allow its expansive letter " f " to join up with or avoid colliding with following letters .

 The basic letter shapes do not look consistent across styles (or even in the metal type era all the sizes of the same style) , especially in Extra Bold and Extra Condensed widths , while the Ultra Bold style is effectively a different design altogether and was originally marketed as such . Monotype executive Dan Rhatigan , author of an article on Gill Sans 's development after Gill 's death , has commented that " Gill Sans grew organically ... [it] takes a very ' asystematic ' approach to type . Very characteristic of when it was designed and of when it was used . " (At this time the idea that sans @-@ serif typefaces should form a consistent family , with glyph shapes as consistent as possible between all weights and sizes , had not fully developed : it was quite normal for families to vary as seemed appropriate for their weight until developments such as the groundbreaking release of Univers in 1957 .)

 In the light weights , the slanting cut at top left of the regular " t " is replaced with two separate strokes . From the bold weight upwards Gill Sans has an extremely eccentric design of " i " and " j " with the dots (tittles) smaller than their parent letter 's stroke .

= = Development = =

 Morison commissioned Gill to develop Gill Sans after they had begun to work together on Gill 's serif design Perpetua from 1925 onwards . Morison is known to have visited Cleverdon 's bookshop while in Bristol in 1927 where he would have seen Gill 's fascia and alphabet . Gill wrote that " it was as a consequence of seeing these letters " that Morison commissioned him to develop them , although this may not have been the exact point when he started to consider commissioning a sans @-@ serif design from Gill ; they had been collaborating for some years by this point and could have discussed the idea earlier . In the period during and after his closest collaboration with Johnston , Gill had intermittently worked on sans @-@ serif letter designs , including an almost sans @-@ serif capital design in an alphabet for sign @-@ painters in the 1910s , some " absolutely legible @-@ to @-@ the @-@ last @-@ degree ... simple block letters " for Army and Navy Stores in 1925 and some capital letter signs around his home in Capel @-@ y @-@ ffin , Wales . Gill had greatly admired Johnston 's work on their Underground project , which he wrote had redeemed the sans @-@ serif from its " nineteenth @-@ century corruption " of extreme boldness . Johnston apparently had not tried to turn the alphabet (as it was then called) that he had designed into a commercial typeface project . He had tried to get involved in type design before starting work on Johnston Sans , but without success since the industry at the time mostly created designs in @-@ house . Morison similarly respected the design of the Underground system , one of the first uses of a standard lettering style as corporate branding , writing that it " conferred upon [the lettering] a sanction , civic and commercial , as had not been accorded to an alphabet since the time of Charlemagne . "

 Morison and Gill had met with some tension within Monotype while developing Perpetua and while Morison was an enthusiastic backer of the project , Monotype 's engineering manager and type designer F. H. Pierpont was deeply unconvinced , commenting that he could " see nothing in this

design to recommend it and much that is objectionable " . (Pierpont was the creator of Monotype 's previous mainstay sans @-@ serif , a loose family now called Monotype Grotesque . It is a much less sculptured design inspired by German sans @-@ serifs .) Morison also intervened to insist that the letters " J " and " Q " be allowed to elegantly descend below the baseline , something not normal for titling typefaces which were often made to fill up the entire area of the metal type . In the early days of its existence it was not always consistently simply called " Gill Sans " , with other names such as " Gill Sans @-@ serif " , " Monotype Sans @-@ Serif " (the latter two both used by Gill in some of his publications) or its order numbers (such as Series No. 231) sometimes used .

Extensive material on the development of Gill Sans survives through records in Monotype 's archives and in Gill 's papers . While the capitals (which were prepared first) resemble Johnston quite closely , the archives document Gill (and the drawing office team at Monotype 's works in Salfords , who developed a final precise design and spacing) grappling with the challenge of creating a viable humanist sans @-@ serif lower @-@ case and an italic , which Johnston did not have . Gill 's first draft proposed many slanting cuts on the ends of ascenders and descenders , looking less like Johnston than the final draft did . Early art for the italic looked very different , with swashes on many capitals . However , Gill did not use the calligraphic italic " g " he would later use on his serif designs Perpetua and Joanna , using instead a standard " double @-@ story " " g " in italic .

In the regular or roman style of Gill Sans , some letters were simplified from Johnston , with diamond dots becoming round and the lower @-@ case " L " becoming a simple line , but the " a " became more complex with a curving tail in most versions and sizes . In addition , the design was simply refined in general , for example by making the horizontals slightly narrower than verticals so that they do not appear unbalanced , a standard technique in font design which Johnston had not used . The " R " with its widely splayed leg is Gill 's preferred design , unlike that of Johnston ; historian James Mosley has suggested that this may be inspired by an Italian Renaissance carving in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London . Particular areas of discussion during the design process were the " a " (several versions and sizes in the hot metal era had a straight tail like Johnston 's or a mildly curving tail) and the " b " , " d , " " p " and " q , " where some versions (and sizes , since the same weight would not be identical at every size) had stroke ends visible and others did not . Rhatigan has commented that Monotype 's archives contain " enough [material] for a book just about the " b , " " d " , " p " , and " q " of Gill Sans . "

The titling capitals of Gill Sans were first unveiled at a printing conference in 1928 ; it was also shown in a specimen issued in the Fleuron magazine edited by Morison . While initial response was partly appreciative , it was still considered dubious by some ultra @-@ conservative printers who saw all sans @-@ serif type as modern and unsound ; one called it " typographical Bolshevism " . Sans @-@ serifs were still regarded as vulgar and commercial by purists in this period : Johnston 's pupil Graily Hewitt privately commented of them that :

In Johnston I have lost confidence . Despite all he did for us ... he has undone too much by forsaking his standard of the Roman alphabet , giving the world , without safeguard or explanation , his block letters which disfigure our modern life . His prestige has obscured their vulgarity and commercialism .

Nonetheless , Gill Sans rapidly became popular after its release .

Gill broached the topic of the similarity with Johnston in a variety of ways in his work and writings , writing to Johnston in 1933 to apologise for the typeface bearing his name and describing Johnston 's work as being important and seminal . However , in his Essay on Typography , he proposed that his version was " perhaps an improvement " and more " fool @-@ proof " than Johnston 's . Johnston and Gill had drifted apart by the beginning of the 1920s , something Gill 's groundbreaking biographer Fiona MacCarthy describes as partly due to the anti @-@ Catholicism of Johnston 's wife Greta . Frank Pick , the Underground Electric Railways Company managing director who commissioned Johnston 's typeface , privately thought Gill Sans " a rather close copy " of Johnston 's work . Gill 's biographer Malcolm Yorke has described Gill as " tactless " in his claims that the design was " as much as possible mathematically measurable ... as little reliance as possible should be placed on the sensibility of the draughtsmen and others concerned in its machine facture " ,

when so much of the development process such as size @-@ specific design and spacing was contributed by Monotype 's largely anonymous but highly experienced drawing office team ; Monotype executive Daniel Rhatigan has made similar comments .

Weights and styles

Following the initial success of Gill Sans , Monotype rapidly produced a wide variety of other variants . In addition , Monotype sold moulds (matrices) for Gill Sans in very large sizes for their " Supercaster " type @-@ casting equipment . Popular with advertisers , this allowed end @-@ users to cast their own type at a very competitive price . This made it a popular choice for posters . Gill 's biographer Malcolm Yorke has described it as " the essence of clarity for public notices " .
Versions of Gill Sans exist in a wide range of styles such as condensed and shadowed weights . An ultra @-@ light version slightly lighter than the normal light style was also not digitally available until the 2015 Nova release . Several shadowed designs are currently available , including a capitals @-@ only regular shadowed design and a light @-@ shadowed version with deep relief shadows . In the metal type era , a ' cameo ruled ' design that placed white letters in boxes or against a stippled black background was available . These can be used together with the regular , printing in different colours , to achieve a simple multicolour effect . Some of the decorative versions may predominantly have been designed by the Monotype office , with Gill examining , critiquing and approving the designs sent to him by post . Monotype would later also create a book weight , intermediate between the light and regular weight , suitable for body text . (Gill 's colleague Robert Harling wrote in his anthology of the density of the basic weight making it ugly in extended passages of text , printing a passage in it as a demonstration . The suspicion that Gill Sans ' lower @-@ case is less of a success than its capitals began early : William Addison Dwiggins called it and Futura " fine in the capitals and bum in the lower @-@ case " while proposing to create an alternative , Metro , for Linotype around 1929 .) The long series of extensions , redrawings and conversions into new formats of one of Monotype 's most important designs (extending long beyond Gill 's death) has left Gill Sans with a great range of alternative designs and releases .

Gill Kayo

In 1936 , Gill and Monotype released an extremely bold design named Kayo (from KO , or knockout , implying its solidity) . This has often been branded as Gill Sans Ultra Bold , though in practice many letters vary considerably from the structure of Gill Sans . It is available in regular and condensed widths . Gill , who thought of the design as something of a novelty , considered naming it " Double Elefans " . Gill 's colleague Robert Harling (who many years later would collect an anthology and assessment of Gill 's lettering) described it as " dismal " and sarcastically commented that " typographical historians of 2000AD (which isn 't , after all , so very far away) will find this odd outburst in Mr Gill 's career , and will spend much time in attempting to track down this sad psychological state of his during 1936 . " In his 1976 book on Gill 's work , he described it as " the most horrendous and blackguardly of these display exploitations " . Some initial drawings of Kayo may have been prepared by Gill 's son @-@ in @-@ law Denis Tegetmeier ; it was particularly popular in graphic design of the 1970s and 80s .
The bold weights of Gill Sans , including Kayo , are particularly controversial for design issues such as the eccentric design of the " i " and " j " , and for their extreme boldness . (Gill Sans ' standard weight is , as already noted , already quite bold by modern standards .) Gill argued in his Essay on Typography that the nineteenth @-@ century tendency to make sans @-@ serif typefaces attention @-@ grabbingly bold was self @-@ defeating , since the result was compromised legibility . In the closing paragraph he ruefully noted how he had contributed to the genre :
There are now about as many different varieties of letters as there are different kinds of fools . I myself am responsible for designing five different sorts of sans @-@ serif letters ? each one thicker and fatter than the last because each advertisement has to try and shout down its neighbours .

= = = Alternate characters = = =

To cater for the tastes and national printing styles of different countries , Monotype developed a set of alternate characters . These include Futura @-@ inspired designs of " N " , " M " , " R " , " a " , " g " , " t " and others , a four @-@ terminal " W " in the French style , tighter versions of " R " , an alternative " Q " with tail that looped upwards (similar to that on Century among others , and preferred by the LNER) , oblique designs as opposed to the standard true italic , a more curving , true @-@ italic " e " and several alternative numeral designs . In particular , in the standard designs for Gill Sans the numeral " 1 " , upper @-@ case " i " and lower @-@ case " L " are all a vertical line and look identical , so an alternate " 1 " with a serif was sold for number @-@ heavy situations where this could otherwise cause confusion , such as on price @-@ lists . (Not all timetables used it : for example , the L.N.E.R. preferred the simple version .) Some early versions of Gill Sans also had features later abandoned such as an unusual " 7 " matching the curve of the " 9 " , a " 5 " with a different shape , and a lower @-@ case letter @-@ height " 0 " .

Gill was involved in the design of these alternates , and Monotype 's archive preserves notes that he rethought the geometric alternates . With the increasing popularity of Futura Gill Sans was not alone in being adapted : both Erbar and Dwiggins ' Metro would undergo what historian Paul Shaw has called a " Futura @-@ ectomy " to conform to taste . Monotype would later add text figures to Gill Sans , numbers at the height of lower @-@ case letters . Popular in design for body text , these are a traditional feature on serif fonts which Gill Sans did not originally have .

= = = Phototypesetting = = =

Monotype offered Gill Sans on film in the phototypesetting period . The fonts released in 1961 included Light 362 , Series 262 , Bold 275 , Extra Bold 321 , Condensed 343 , all of which were released in film matrix sets " A " (6 ? 7 points) and " B " (8 ? 22 , 24 points) . Also after Gill 's death , Monotype created versions for the Greek and Cyrillic alphabets .

= = = Infant and rounded versions = = =

Monotype created an ' infant ' version of Gill Sans using single @-@ storey " a " and " g " , and other more distinguishable characters such as a rounded " y " , seriffed " 1 " and lower @-@ case " L " with a turn at the bottom . Infant designs of fonts are often used in education and toys as the letters are thought to be more recognisable to children being based on handwriting , and are often produced to supplement popular fonts such as Akzidenz @-@ Grotesk and Bembo . Monotype also created a version with rounded stroke ends for John Lewis for use on toys .

= = Digital releases = =

The digital releases of Gill Sans fall into several main phases : releases before 2005 (which includes most bundled " system " versions of Gill Sans) , the 2005 Pro edition , and the 2015 Nova release which adds many alternate characters and is in part included with Windows 10 . In general characteristics for common weights the designs are similar , but there are some changes : for example , in the book weight the 2005 release used circular ij dots but the 2015 release uses square designs , and the 2015 release simplifies some ligatures . Digital Gill Sans also gained character sets not present in the metal type , including text figures and small capitals .

Like all metal type revivals , reviving Gill Sans in digital form raises several decisions of interpretation , such as the issue of how to compensate for the ink spread that would have been seen in print at small sizes more than larger . As a result , printed Gill Sans and its digital facsimile may not always match . The digital release of Gill Sans , like many Monotype digitisations , has been criticised , in particular for excessively tight letter @-@ spacing and lack of optical sizes : with only one design released that has to be used at any text size , it cannot replicate the subtlety of design and spacing of the metal type , for which every size was drawn differently . In the hot metal

era the structure of the font varied by size as is normal for metal type , with wider spacing and other detail changes at smaller text sizes . In the phototype period Monotype continued to offer two or three sizes of master , but all of this subtlety was lost on transfer to digital . To replicate this , it is necessary to make manual adjustment to spacing to compensate for size changes , such as expanding the spacing and increasing the weight used at smaller sizes .

Former ATypI president John Berry commented of Gill Sans ' modernised spacing that " both the regular weight and especially the light weight look much better when they 're tracked loose . " In contrast , Walter Tracy wrote that he preferred the later spacing : " the metal version ... was spaced , I suspect , as if it were a serif face " .

= = = Gill Sans Nova (2015) = = =

A massive remastering and expansion , Gill Sans Nova adds many additional variants , including some of the previously undigitised inline versions and stylistic alternates and an ultra @-@ light weight (once an option in metal type) which had been digitised for Grazia . The basic set of Regular , Light and Bold weights is bundled with Windows 10 . The fonts differ from Gill Sans MT in their adoption of the hooked 1 as default , while the regular weight is renamed ' Medium ' . Monotype celebrated the release with a London exhibition on Gill 's work , as they had in 1958 to mark the general release of Gill 's serif design Joanna . One addition was italic swash caps , which had been considered by Gill but never released .

= = Usage = =

First unveiled in a single uppercase weight in 1928 , Gill Sans achieved national prominence almost immediately , when it was chosen the following year to become the standard typeface for the LNER railway system , soon appearing on every facet of the company 's identity , from metal locomotive nameplates and hand @-@ painted station signage to printed restaurant car menus , timetables and advertising posters . The LNER promoted their rebranding by offering Gill (who was fascinated with railway engines) a footplate ride on the Flying Scotsman express service ; he also painted for it a signboard in the style of Gill Sans , which survives in the collection of the St Bride Library .

When British Railways was created by nationalisation in 1948 , Gill Sans was used in much of its printed output , very often in capitals @-@ only settings for signage . Specially drawn variations were developed by the Railway Executive (part of the British Transport Commission) for signs in its manual for the use of signpainters painting large signs by hand . Other users included Penguin Books ' iconic paperback jacket designs from 1935 and British official mapping agency Ordnance Survey . It was also used by London Transport for documents which could not be practically set in Johnston . Paul Shaw , a historian of printing , has described it as a key element of the ' Modernist classical ' style from the 1930s to the 1950s , that promoted clean , spare design , often with all @-@ capitals and centred setting of headings .

Gill Sans remains popular , although a trend away from it towards grotesque and neo @-@ grotesque typefaces took place around the 1950s and 1960s under the influence of continental and American design . Typefaces that became popular around this time included original early " grotesque " sans @-@ serifs , as well as new and more elegant designs in the same style such as Helvetica and Univers . Mosley has commented that in 1960 " orders unexpectedly revived " for the old Monotype Grotesque design : " [it] represents , even more evocatively than Univers , the fresh revolutionary breeze that began to blow through typography in the early sixties . " He added in 2007 " its rather clumsy design seems to have been one of the chief attractions to iconoclastic designers tired of the ... prettiness of Gill Sans " . As an example of this trend , Jock Kinneir and Margaret Calvert 's corporate rebranding of BR as British Rail in 1965 introduced Helvetica and Univers for printed matter and the custom but very similar Rail Alphabet for signage , and abandoned the classical , all caps signage style with which Gill Sans is often associated . Kinneir and Calvert 's road signage redesign used a similar approach .

An additional development which reduced Gill Sans ' dominance was the arrival of phototypesetting

, which allowed typefaces to be printed from photographs on film and (especially in display use ? hot metal continued for some body text setting for longer) massively increased the range of typefaces that could cheaply be used . Dry transfers like Letraset had a similar effect for smaller projects ; their sans @-@ serif Compacta and Stephenson Blake 's Impact exemplified the design trends of the period by choosing dense , industrial designs . Of the period from the 1930s to 1950s , when he was growing up , James Mosley would later write :

 The Monotype classics dominated the typographical landscape ... in Britain , at any rate , they were so ubiquitous that , while their excellent quality was undeniable , it was possible to be bored by them and to begin to rebel against the bland good taste that they represented . In fact we were already aware by 1960 that they might not be around to bore us for too long . The death of metal type ... seemed at last to be happening .

 While extremely popular in Britain , and to a lesser extent in European printing , Gill Sans did not achieve popularity with American printers in the hot metal era , with most preferring gothic designs like Franklin Gothic and geometric designs like Futura and Monotype 's own Twentieth Century . Monotype 's competitor Linotype was dominant in the American market at the time , which may have been a factor in this . The shadow @-@ effect capitals @-@ only fonts appear in some US specimen brochures that otherwise excluded it in this period . Gill Sans therefore particularly achieved worldwide popularity after the close of the metal type era and in the phototypesetting and digital era , when it became a system font on Macintosh computers and Microsoft Office . One use of Gill 's work in the United States in this early period , however , was a custom wordmark and logo made by Gill for Poetry magazine in 1930 based on Gill Sans . Its editor Harriet Monroe had seen Gill 's work in London .

 The BBC adopted the typeface as its corporate typeface in 1997 for many but not all purposes , including on its logo . Explaining the change , designer Martin Lambie @-@ Nairn said that " by choosing a typeface that has stood the test of time , we avoid the trap of going down a modish route that might look outdated in several years ' time . " The BBC had an earlier association with Gill , who created some sculptures on Broadcasting House . Other more recent British organisations using Gill Sans have included Railtrack (and initially its successor Network Rail) , John Lewis and the Church of England , which adopted Gill Sans as the typeface for the definitive Common Worship family of service books published from 2000 . Notable non @-@ British modern businesses using Gill Sans include United Colours of Benetton (which commissioned a custom variant) , Tommy Hilfiger and Saab Automobile . British rock band Bloc Party has used Gill Sans in its logo . AT & T used it until 2006 , before changing it to Clearview after feeling that it was too in keeping with market research that people found the company " monolithic . " Edward Tufte , the information design theorist , uses Gill Sans on his website and in some of his published works . The Wikimedia Foundation uses Gill Sans on its wordmark .

= = Similar fonts = =

= = = Early competitors = = =

 An immediate metal type competitor to Gill Sans was Granby from Stephenson Blake ; it was based on Gill Sans and also Johnston . Stephenson Blake had cut the original metal type for Johnston , making them familiar with its design and perhaps explaining its Johnston @-@ influenced diamond @-@ dot tittles . A large family , it also included a " Granby Elephant " weight influenced by Gill Kayo .

 Another similar but more eccentric design was created by Johnston 's student Harold Curwen for the use of his family company , the Curwen Press of Plaistow . Named " Curwen Sans " or " Curwen Modern " , it has many similarities to Johnston also , and was occasionally used by London Transport in work printed by the Curwen Press . Curwen described it as based on his time studying with Johnston in the 1900s , although it was not cut into metal until 1928 , around the same time as Gill Sans was released . Jan Tschichold , who would later make extensive use of Gill Sans while

designing books for Penguin , created a similar design for an early phototype machine , which was at the time little @-@ used .

Besides similar fonts , many signs and objects made in Britain during the period of Gill Sans ' dominance , such as the famous Keep Calm and Carry On poster , received hand @-@ painted or custom lettering similar to Gill Sans . Fighter Command during the war used a standard set of letters similar to it and Matthew Carter , later a prominent font designer , recalled in a 2005 profile playing with linoleum block letters in the style cut by his mother during the Blitz .

Later and digital @-@ only designs

The category of humanist sans @-@ serif typefaces , which Gill Sans helped to define , saw great attention during the 1980s and 1990s , especially as a reaction against the overwhelming popularity of Helvetica and Univers in the 1960s and 1970s . It can be identified by a tendency to use ' double @-@ storey ' as and gs in the roman and " single @-@ storey " as in italic , like serif fonts .

Modern sans @-@ serif designs inspired by Gill often adapt the concept by creating a design better proportioned and spaced for body text , or create a wider and more homogeneous range of weights , something easier since the arrival of the computer due to the use of multiple master or interpolation . Jeremy Tankard 's Bliss and Volker Küster 's Today Sans are modern variations . Rowton Sans is inspired by Gill but has a nearly upright italic , similar to that used by Gill in his serif font Joanna . More distantly , Arthur Vanson 's Chesham Sans is inspired by the British tradition of sans @-@ serif signpainting , with many similarities to Gill 's work . Bitstream 's Humanist 521 was an unofficial digitisation , to which its Russian licensee ParaType added a Cyrillic version in 1997 . The companies SoftMaker and Fontsite also released Gill Sans digitisations under different names including ' Chantilly ' , ' Gibson ' and others .

More loosely , Syntax by Hans Eduard Meier is similar in some ways . Released in 1968 , it was intended to be a more dynamic , handwriting @-@ influenced sans @-@ serif form . Tschichold , whose serif font Sabon had influenced it , described it as " very easy to read , well designed : better than the related Gill Sans . " Its italic is , however , more of an oblique than Gill 's . Hypatia Sans , designed by Thomas Phinney and released by Adobe , was intended to be a more characterful humanist sans design .

Font superfamilies

A logical extension of the humanist sans @-@ serif concept is the font superfamily : a serif font and a matching humanist sans @-@ serif with similar letterforms . Martin Majoor 's FF Scala Sans is a popular example of this influenced by Gill 's work , as are Charlotte Sans and Serif by Letraset and Mr and Mrs Eaves by Zuzana Licko , which are based on Baskerville . Indeed , Monotype themselves released Joanna Sans in 2015 , as a screen @-@ optimised sans @-@ serif font intended to complement (but not exactly match) Gill 's serif design Joanna . It is intended for use at smaller sizes than Gill Sans .

Legal aspects

Typeface designs are in many countries not copyrightable , while in others such as the United Kingdom the design is out of copyright with 70 years passed since Gill 's death in 1940 , by which time the metal type family was essentially completed . This makes it legally permissible to create alternative digitised versions of Gill Sans (although not necessarily of later Monotype additions to the font such as the book weight and Euro sign) . However , the name " Gill Sans " remains a Monotype trademark (no . 1340167 in the US) and therefore is not eligible to be used to name any derivative font .

No complete , direct open @-@ source Gill Sans clone has yet been released . One of the most extensive is Gillius , a derivative by the Arkandis Digital Foundry project and designer Hirwen Harendal , which includes bold , italic , condensed and condensed bold styles . It is not a pure clone

, but rather partly created by modifying Bitstream Vera , and adds influences from geometric fonts particularly visible in the design of the " w " . K22 , a foundry in Quezon City operated by the designer " Toto G " , has released two Gill Sans shadowed variants as K22 EricGill Shadow (digitising the Gill Sans Shadow 338 design) and K22 EricGill Shadow Line , an inline variant , for free for " personal , private and non @-@ commercial purposes " and for sale for commercial use . A direct clone of the medium weight , Sans Guilt , was released by Brussels open source design group OSP in 2011 , but it contains several obvious glitches such as misaligned " w " and " x " characters . As a pioneering example of the humanist sans @-@ serif style , many other designs are influenced by Gill Sans to some extent .