

# Hebden Bridge: the typeface



*above: The two plaques on the Packhorse Bridge   below: Lettering set in the new typeface*

REPAIRED BY THE  
RIDINGE BY ORDER  
OF SESSIONS  
AUGUST 4 1657  
BY HNR CR

THIS TYPEFACE has been designed for the 500th anniversary of the stone packhorse bridge from which the town gets its name.

The bridge was repaired in 1602 and again in 1657. Each repair was marked with a plaque on the updoom side of the bridge above the arch which does not cross the water. The weathered lettering is now hard to read, but the above photograph taken by Martin Parr in the 1970s shows the inscriptions quite clearly.

Lettering on the two plaques shows some variation, the earlier one being coarser and more rounded, but they both seem to be based on a similar model and show similarities to 17th century gravestone inscriptions.

Among the idiosyncrasies are:

- Heavy seraphs

- Sloping descender on the letter Y
- Distinctive embellishment of the letter A
- Breaking words at the end of a line without the use of hyphens
- Identical forms for letters U and V.

The Hebden Bridge typeface is based on the letters of these two plaques as they appear at present, though the inscriptions would have been sharper when freshly carved. Letters and numerals which do not appear on the plaques were designed in the same style to complete the font.

## Using the typeface

There are no lower-case letters. Using the shift key produces a bar beneath each letter for separation between lines. A blank bar is produced by typing underscore (Shift+Hyphen). In the example above, a row of blank bars was typed above the first line.

By adjusting the type-size separately for each line, you can reproduce the effect of the original plaque. A distinct letter U has been included, but for greater authenticity, V should be used for both letters.

The typeface will be available as a TrueType font for Windows and Macintosh and can be downloaded free of charge during 2010 from the website:

[www.hebdenbridge.co.uk/hb500/](http://www.hebdenbridge.co.uk/hb500/) or

[www.frogsdesign.co.uk](http://www.frogsdesign.co.uk)

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