

Extract from a letter of Mr. L. B. Baker, Consulting Accountant,
Foxboro, Massachusetts.

The Nickerson Typewriter Co.
Racine, Wisc.

Gentlemen: -

You perhaps know that I have been giving some attention to the Nickerson Typewriter for some months, and have been closely associated with Mr. Nickerson in presenting the machine to experts and others in New York and New England. And it occurs to me that you may be interested in knowing what impressions I have gathered as the result of this work and association.

My own liking for and estimation of the typewriter as a tool has been growing constantly. Simply as a writing tool it is a wonder when compared with others in its line. To speak of it as an improvement on existing types does not adequately express the value of the differences and advantages.

The differences so vitally effect the economy of office operation, so far as typewriting is concerned, that it must, simply because of this economy, gain favor eventually.

The gain in efficiency aside from economy of work is also so marked as to command the attention of large users. I refer now particularly to quality, for it is in the large office that more than usual difficulty is found in maintaining quality, or appearance.

The reduced cost of maintenance must also appeal to large users. It is an unanswerable argument which the salesman will doubtless use with great effectiveness.

My own conviction of the value of this typewriter as an office appliance has been further established by the concurring opinion of the many competent men to whom we have shown it. In this respect the managers of large business colleges are likely to give very intelligent opinions.

The mechanical principles have appealed to me, but I have hardly considered myself competent to pass upon them. As the result of taking to the typewriter quite a number of men of unquestioned ability as designers and manufacturers of tools of the highest grade I am now assured that the typewriter will pass the closest scrutiny in this respect. Some of these men have been closely associated with typewriters for many years, and others have had an intelligent acquaintance with the art. Some have reasoned simply from an expert knowledge of design.

The above facts force the conclusion that Mr. Nickerson has been successful in bringing out a type of machine which must sooner or later win on its merits. Some of the best men who have investigated it state that it will become the type of machine which all others will try to copy, as the visible writing principle has been copied.

It has not only one, but a great many winning points, of so much importance that any one of them should carry it to a practical success. I question whether your company know how good a thing you have. If you make proper connection with capital and ability, your success is assured.

Foxboro, Mass. May 15, 1911.

(Copy)

N. W. Mutual Life Ins. Co., Milwaukee Wisconsin.

June 21, 1911.

The Nickerson Automatic Typewriter Comapny.

Racine, Wisconsin.

Gentlemen: -

After a most thorough demonstration and personal use of the Nickerson Automatic Typewriter, I am very glad to say it is the most COMFORTABLE machine I have ever used. From the minute the paper is inserted to the last of addressing the envelope one is positively assured of accuracy on the part of the machine. On most typewriters one can not address the envelope without having constantly in mind the thought of its possible slipping. With this thought eliminated from one's mind it would mean of course quicker work. The light touch is especially attractive, also the machine locking within a certain distance from the foot of the page; no catching of type in rapid writing, the easily adjusted ribbon with no soiling of hands, the very simple manner in which a new platen may be adjusted at very small cost and worn type renewed, keeping up the work of the machine to first class though the typewriter may be several years old. Another attractive feature is the ease with which one can drop the work out of sight should callers come in and you do not want the work looked over by outsiders.

It is certainly a most economical typewriter, for adjustments are so easily made; the most inexperienced hand could make them. Therefore the repair man would be out of a job.

Truly Yours

Grace E. Lovell.

(COPY)

Goodwin, McDermott & Cowen,
Shorthand Reporters,
120 Miller Building,
Milwaukee, Wis. June

Mr. F. G. Bigelow, , City,

Dear Sir: -

I have examined the Nickerson Typewriter carefully and am favorably impressed with it.

I think if it can be manufactured cheaply there should be no difficulty in getting a good ready market for it. Of course I pass no judgment on the cost of manufacture.

I find among others the machine has these advantages:

(1) A light finger key action. This is the most important point in the operation of a writing machine. Without the light finger key action the machine cannot be sold.

(2) The best tabulating device I have seen. (3) Visible writing

sight if the operator is interrupted.

(4) The ease with which the sheet can be dropped out of sight if the operator is interrupted.

(5) Good ribbon device which enables the operator to use up all the ribbon. (6) Readily adjusted typebar tension.

(7) Interchangeable platens and the substitution of a platen of small diameter for the ordinary 10 inch platen, using the soft platen for letter work and the hard platen for manifolding.

(8) Good manifolding qualities.

(9) Automatically adjustable type plates, so that when a type is worn out a new one can be put in without trouble.

(10) Good alignment, secured by automatically adjustable bearing.

(11) Direct action typebar stroke. This stroke is perfect.

(12) There is no liability of the typebars clashing, and they have good clearance.

(13) Space for four more characters than are used on the ordinary typewriter.

(14) Perfect registration. (15) Readily adjustable margin.

(16) Adjustable, light, rigid carriage.

In fine, this machine, while it is something entirely new in typewriter construction seems to have many points of superiority over the ordinary, usual construction, and few, if any disadvantages.

The machine should be capable of great speed for the reasons above given.

The only objections that could be made to the machine are that the platens might wear out too easily, and are perhaps too narrow, and that in manifolding great care must be taken in inserting carbons to see that they do not fall out, and that it is necessary to use clips in putting them in. I do not consider these as serious defects.

Yours Truly

H. D. Goodwin

(Copy)

383 Irving Place, Milwaukee,

July 10, 1911.

The Nickerson Typewriter Company,
Plankinton House, Milwaukee.

Gentlemen:

As an instructor (high-school) in shorthand and typewriting I have found the points to be first considered in a typewriter are -

Keyboard,
Simplicity of mechanism, and
Durability of the machine, i.e., its ability to stand vigorous usage. I am satisfied your machine will comply with the conditions in these particulars.

The use of the universal keyboard makes it possible for an operator to transfer to the machine with the minimum amount of inconvenience.

I am favorably impressed with the simplicity of the paper movement, and am satisfied that the bottom margin warning would be a very real advantage.

Your tabulator will be invaluable for general correspondence; in dating and addressing a letter, in the correct placing of the complimentary closing, and in addressing envelopes in a uniform style.

The use of the return lever would speedily become second nature to the operator of any machine, and the ability to drop the work out of sight, without any ostensible effort, must appeal strongly to any typist who has ever had a curious office visitor give a casual glance over her shoulder.

The reduction in the weight of the carriage from pounds to ounces will not only increase the amount of work which the typist can do in the day, but will lessen the fatigue incident to the physical effort of typewriting, to an extent unbelievable by any one who has not handled a machine eight hours on a stretch.

The ease with which the ribbon may be changed will appeal to instructors in typewriting as well as to typists; for I am sure I am not the only teacher of typewriting who has grown more than a trifle irritated over a mussy and obstinate ribbon when the time was valuable for instruction purposes. The man who pays the bills will relish the arrangement for making the ribbon do fourfold duty, and which thus decreases the expense of operating the machine; and the rapidity with which the platen may be changed, and the provision of a new platen by the company every time a new ribbon is bought, when compared with the ordinary cost of replacing a platen, sounds like a fairy tale come true.

For the card work of the librarian and the loose-leaf system of the present-day bookkeeper, the machine seems to be perfectly adapted.

I regret that I cannot now have a machine to try myself and to put in use in my class-room, for I feel sure it would give thorough satisfaction, and I look forward with pleasurable anticipation to the time when the machine will go on the market.

Very Truly Yours

Susan M. Drew.

(Copy)

Milwaukee, Wisconsin, June 16, 1911.

Nickerson Typewriter Co.

Per Mr. F. G. Bigelow:

Dear Sirs: -

You understand that I am an Oliver operator, and had to overcome the difficulty of mastering the keyboard on Dr. Nickerson's typewriter, which is the universal keyboard, while the Oliver is not; but after practicing on the machine four consecutive days for an hour a day, I was well enough acquainted with it to give it a fair trial. I have done speed, regular correspondence and carbon work on it.

(1) The construction and appearance of the machine is entirely different from the present typewriters, and it is bound to attract attention; and when you once have the attention of the prospective purchaser or operator, the various devices of the machine speak for themselves. The appearance is very unusual, but one soon grows accustomed to it, and with the changes proposed in the frame it will make considerable difference and I believe will make the machine more attractive. Appearance counts for a great deal in a typewriter.

(2) The paper feed of the vertical carriage, which requires the paper to be fed into it face up and is operated by a throw-back lever in the same natural motion as the key board motion, in my opinion is a great time and nerve saver, and becomes second nature to an operator in a very few minutes. The devices attached for holding the paper insure perfect registration at any point on the page, with the aid of the indicator and back spacer, which impressed me very favorably. The rapidity and ease with which postal cards can be handled in the machine and envelopes addressed by means of the construction of the carriage and paper holding devices is very good.

(3) The action of the machine is very light. It responds beautifully, a feature that will appeal to all women, and I believe to most men operators of a typewriter and which indicates the wonderful speed possibilities of this machine; combined with the fact that the individual type clear each other after traveling such a very short distance and which does away with the annoying feature (as is the case with so many present machines) at a certain rate of speed the letters pile on top of each other. This will never happen on Dr. Nickerson's machine. From the test I gave the machine I am satisfied that it is splendidly adapted for speed work. Again, the fact that the machine can be adjusted almost instantly from a hard to light or medium action is a very good feature, as it is a relief to an operator to change to a lighter action as the day grows.

(4) The tabulator of Dr. Nickerson's machine exceeds anything that I have ever seen, and this point alone should make it a favorite with operators doing this class of work. The ease and rapidity with which certain points can be reached on a line is remarkable. It requires practically only one motion to shift the throw-back carriage lever and touch a tabulator key for a certain indentation.

(5) The ribbon device is especially good, and I am satisfied will be enjoyed by every operator. Again, the fact that the entire ribbon width is used will prove an interesting saving item in the maintainance of the machine.

(6) The interchangeable platen is a desirable feature and will always insure the machine being equipped with a good platen according to the class of work required to be done, and good results obtained in manifolding work.

(7) The margin stop at the bottom of the page in my opinion is very fine, for the reason that it will insure an even and always parallel line at a given distance from the bottom of the page.

(8) The additional keys for extra characters which this machine accommodates should prove a great advantage and valuable in many branches of business.

(9) I judge from the typebar construction, attached to a self adjusting spring pivot will always insure perfect alignment of the machine, no matter how great the wear, and prolong the life of the machine.

(10) The machine runs comparatively noiselessly and with the proposed new open design of the frame considerable more sound will be lost.

(11) There are several minor changes which Dr. Nickerson proposed to make, such as bringing the keyboard slightly forward away from the frame: using celluloid or metal rim keys according to the purchaser's wishes (I personally prefer the celluloid keys) and larger clamps on the carriage for accommodating heavy manifold work, all of which will add toward making it a more perfect machine. Dr. Nickerson, I fully believe, has built a machine that is equal to all emergencies, and has accomplished his aim to make the typewriter as nearly automatic as possible, and save the operator time, temper and worry.

I venture to say that beginners, having learned to operate this machine will never change to another and that old operators, after having mastered the various automatic devices will never care to go back to an old style machine, as all the levers and keys of the various devices are so accessible and within natural reach and motions of the hand that an operator becomes familiar with them in a very short time.

Yours Truly

Clara Velguth.

Western Railway Weighing Association
and Inspection Bureau. Milwaukee, Wis.