John Baskerville Encyclopedia Article

John Baskerville

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John Baskerville

1706-1775

British printer and inventor who, after beginning his career as a calligrapher and gravestone engraver, gained lasting recognition for developing a typeface in 1754 that is still used today. In the 1740s, John Baskerville became prosperous in the japanning trade before founding a printing press in 1750. In 1757, he published his first work, an edition of Virgil. Baskerville became a printer for Cambridge University in 1758, for whom he published his masterpiece, a folio Bible, which was printed in 1763 using his own typeface, ink and paper.