

Competing against calligraphers in order to sell his new mass-produced books, Gutenberg's *textura* letterforms copied the style of scribes. When Joseph Moxon wrote the world's first printing manual in 1683, he referred to the *textura* style for the first time as **Old English**. Developed and stylized by Victorian typesetters, Old English letterforms give an air of authority to many newspaper mastheads.

The New York Times



Not the first group to ever play jazz – Buddy Bolden had preceded them by at least 22 years – the

Original Dixieland Jazz Band were the first jazz group to be recorded, in 1917. The five white musicians learned jazz from their black fellow New Orleans players but happened to get their big break first. They were not the best band of the time, but during 1917–1923 they did a great deal to popularize jazz. Their exuberant music – exclusively ensembles with short solo breaks – caused a major sensation, firstly in New York and then



in London. Their first record, *Livery Stable Blues* – which featured the band imitating farmyard animals – was a huge hit that launched the Jazz Age. *Tiger Rag*, *At the Jazz Band Ball*, and *Royal Garden Blues* followed, but by 1923 when many of the first black jazz giants finally were recorded, the **ODJB** was regarded as unsophisticated and obsolete and soon broke up.



A mechanical device that illustrates the relative positions and motions of the planets and moons in the solar system, an **orrery** is typically driven by a clockwork mechanism with a globe representing the Sun at the centre. The first orrery of the modern era was produced in 1704, and presented to the **Earl of Orrery** – hence the name. A *Philosopher Giving a Lecture on the Orrery*, by Joseph Wright of Derby, depicts a public lecture with a lamp – representing the sun – illuminating the faces of the audience in his characteristic melodramatic chiaroscuro style.

Formed in the First World War to give advance warning of Zeppelin attacks, the **Royal Observer Corps** came into its own in 1940. The radar defence system was able to warn of enemy aircraft approaching the

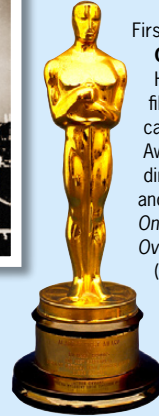


British coast, but once having crossed the coastline the **Observer Corps** provided the only means of tracking their position. During the Battle of Britain the observers were at full stretch operating 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, plotting enemy aircraft and passing this essential information to RAF Fighter Command, a task repeated for the duration of the later mass bombing raids directed against cities.

Founded in 1897 and pioneering the automobile assembly line, the once



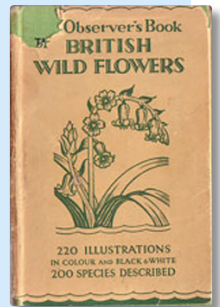
technically advanced **Oldsmobile** company adopted the outlandish styling and lumbering performance typical of 1950s American cars. After years of decline the brand was discontinued by General Motors in 2009.



First awarded in 1929, the **Oscar** is the peak of Hollywood acclaim. Three films have received the so-called Big Five Academy Awards (best picture, director, actor, actress, and writing): *It Happened One Night* (1934), *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (1975), and *The Silence of the Lambs* (1991).

David Niven holds the record for the shortest performance to win a leading actor Oscar, with just 15 minutes and 38 seconds on screen in *Separate Tables* in 1958.

The **Observer's Books** were first published in 1937. By the time of their demise in 2003 over one hundred topics had been featured, with more than eight hundred editions.



The last letter of the classical Greek alphabet, **Omega** is often used to denote the last, the end, or the ultimate limit of a set.



O is for ... **OXO**.

The OXO concentrated meat extract company was the first commercial backer of the Olympics, sponsoring the 1908 London Games and



supplying athletes with Oxo beef drinks to fortify them. Denied permission to include illuminated advertising signs on



Born in Texas in 1936, **Roy Orbison** had 22 hit records in the early 1960s. The emergence of groups such as the Beatles put his melancholy ballads such as **Only the Lonely** out of favour, while the death of his wife in a road accident and later two sons in a house fire led to his withdrawal from the music business. His great friend George Harrison later enlisted him – with Bob Dylan, Jeff Lynne and Tom Petty – in the Travelling Willburys for a second burst of fame before his death from a heart attack aged 52.

Wounded while fighting in the Spanish Civil War – as recounted in *Homage to Catalonia* – and following a stream of biting social



commentaries, **George Orwell** introduced new words such as *newspeak*, and phrases such as *big brother*, in his powerful novels such as *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and *Animal Farm*.



their new art deco headquarters, the tower was built with sets of internally lit windows spelling out the company name.

OK!

