Joscelyn Secretary Hand – the Joscelyn font   Anne Ramon (member 4730)

The Joscelyn font provides a version of 'secretary hand' which, itself, was a development of late medieval cursive gothic. It was aimed at helping rapid writing with a quill pen. It produces the kind of writing we all often find hard to read in Wills and Parish Registers. Is that a 'c'? It looks like an 'r'? Can you read the surname? Are those scribbles 'm's or 's's?

The Joscelyn font was developed by Peter Baker and was based on the main hand used in a manuscript held by Corpus Christ College (MS 488) – *Historiola Collegii Corporis Christi* by John Joscelyn who was secretary (but probably not the actual scribe) to Archbishop Matthew Parker.

You might like to have a play with the font and become familiar with the letter formats. It is not usually found as a standard font on most word processing softwares – Microsoft Word is a case in point - but you can add it. The latest version of the font (version v1.012) is in a Zip file freely available on GitHub at: https://github.com/psb1558/Joscelyn-font/releases

Make sure you download the latest version which was v1.012 as at the time of writing (April 2021).

The basic steps are:

- Click on the link for the latest version of the font in GitHub
- Extract all the files to your computer. The key ones are the PDF, which gives instructions and information, and the *.otf* (Open Type font file) which is the file containing the font.
- Open the *.otf* file and select 'Install'
- Joscelyn 𝒥𝑜𝓈𝒸𝑒𝓁𝓎𝓃 will then be an option in your dropdown lists of fonts.

  Choose the font and start typing. Or highlight some text you've already written and then select the Joscelyn font. Hey Presto!
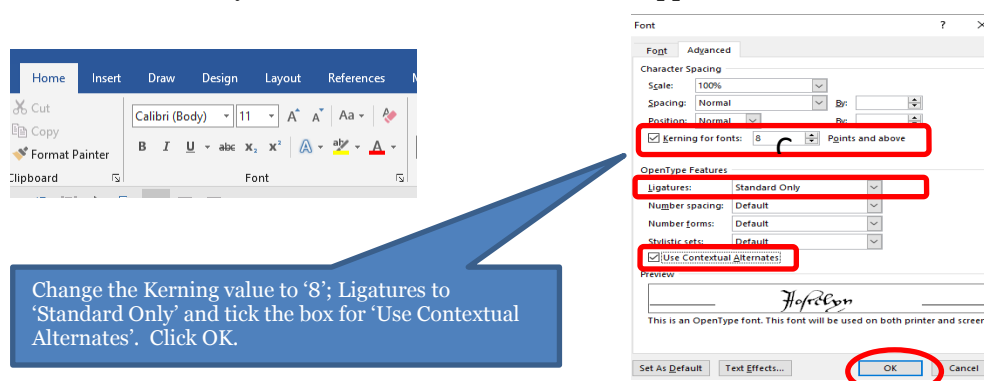
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Name examples can be very helpful: *Richard James Mary Anne Smith Brown Cooper Owen Forrester Jones*

And places : *Bletchingley Southwark Bermondsey Lambeth Surrey London*

Joscelyn is simple to use: just change the font to "Joscelyn" and type. Most software (including Adobe InDesign and LibreOffice) automatically enables the OpenType features that govern the cursive attachment of letters and their variability by context (for example, the use of the sigma-like s at the ends of words).

However please note that Microsoft Word doesn't render the typeface completely as it should. You can correct for this in the Advanced Font Settings tab. Click the arrow in the bottom right corner of the Font section of your toolbar and a Font Menu will appear. Choose Advanced.
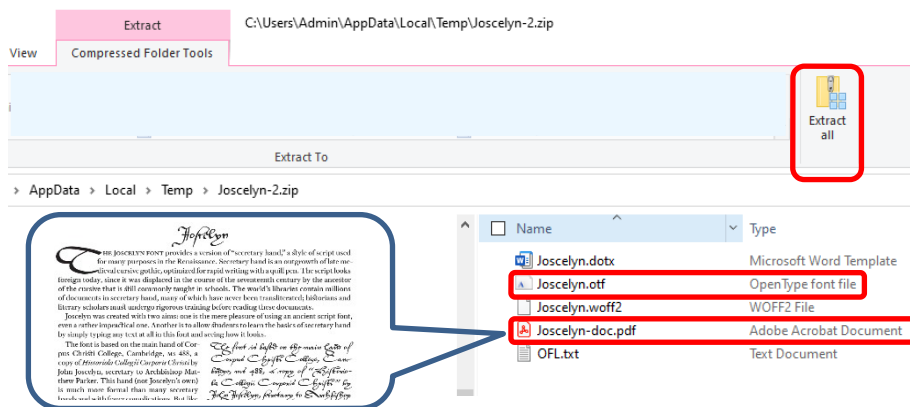

Change the Kerning value to '8'; Ligatures to 'Standard Only' and tick the box for 'Use Contextual Alternates'. Click OK.

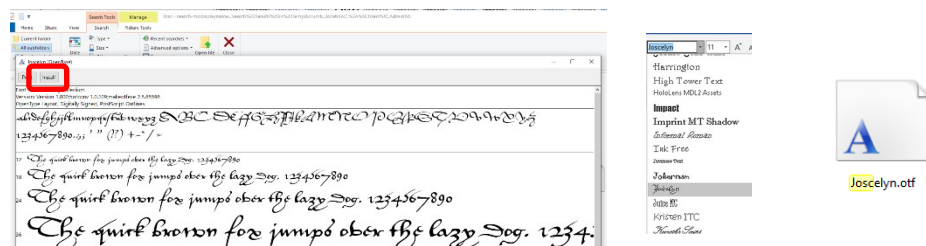Click on GitHub at: https://github.com/psb1558/Joscelyn-font/releases

Click on the Zip file and 'Extract all' to a folder of your choice.

The pdf document provides a helpful explanation of the font and the font characteristics you may want to turn on. The '.otf' file gives you the font.

Find the otf file on your computer(This is the icon version but you may have it in a list form.) Click on it to see examples of the handwriting and choose 'Install'. Joscelyn will then appear in your Font Dropdown list.

And start typing …

Try your family surnames and first names…

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Anne Orgled fflorey

And placed Standlake Oxfordshire Bletchingley Surrey

Note that the Joscelyn font has no italic or bold face, so if you attempt to apply those features to text in the "Joscelyn" style, you will get *some strange results*. ***East Surrey Family History Society***