

The Royal  
Quiet De Luxe  
Circa 1943

This Royal typewriter belonged to my grandfather. He learned to type on it 70 years ago. I wonder if he had to hunt and peck at the keys as I do now.

It is an interesting device. Fascinating and interesting and frustrating and wonderful, all in its own ways. How often do writers today pine for a distraction-free writing tool, one which gives you nothing but your thoughts, a blank page, and the means to put your words onto that page. This typewriter is the very embodiment of what so many wish for today.

When typing on The Royal, you have no option other than honesty. Every mistake, typo, or other error made -- by you or the Royal, it does not matter -- is there for all the world to see. Imprinted with ink onto paper is your pathetic, but honest, attempt at prose.

But honesty in writing is a gift. The best writing is that which touches and moves us. And who is moved by insipid paragraphs filled with half-clever turns and twists and barely formed ideas?

What the Royal lacks in convenience and speed, she makes up for in her ability to keep you true to your words. You must think before you type because there is no going back. ■■■ "Leave it on the page," she says. "What is typed is typed."

And when it is time to take a break, she will let you know. Because the ribbon will run dry, or the hammers will jam, or the paper will require changing. We have come so far in the advancement of our writing tools. But are we advanced? What software can teach you to be honest in your writing and to keep on typing? What app rewards with a bell of accomplishment at the end of each line?