

Herencia: Centuries of Spanish Legal Documents

17th Century Printed Latin Orthography

quadā

Whenever there is a line or tilde over a vowel, it is an abbreviation for the letters m or n. In this case, the full word is *quadam*.

debēt

In this instance, the line over the e represents an omission of the letter n, giving the word *debent* when written in full.

cambij negotijs

Whenever a word in Latin had an instance of the letter i in succession, the second i was always written as a j. This applies to all words wherein ii is present and also to the Roman numeral ii, which was written as ij. Therefore, *cambij* = *cambii*, *negotijs* = *negotiis*.

quę

The e with a cedilla was an abbreviation for the letters ae. This word spelled out is *quae*.

deniq. quacunq;

Following the letter q, a period or semicolon was used as an abbreviation for the letters ue. The first example reads *denique*, the second one is *quacunque*.

vltima euentum

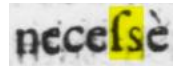
In the seventeenth century, the letter u and v were interchangeable and not yet viewed as two distinct letters. While not universal, a general rule is that if u or v began a word, it was written as a v; if a u or v occurred in the middle or end of a word, it was written as a u.

fuis

In the 17th century, a lowercase s had two forms- one long and one short. As a general rule, when a lowercase s occurred as the first letter of the word or in any other place in the word except as the final letter, it was written with a long s, which resembles the letter f. At the end of a word, it is always written as the modern lowercase s.

The image shows the word "remissionem" written in a cursive script. The two 's' letters in the middle are highlighted with a yellow background.

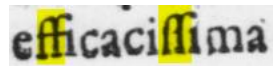
Occasionally in cursive script, when there are two s letters next to each other, the double s ligature is used. Note that this is still used in German today. The word above says *remissionem*.

The image shows the word "necesse" written in a cursive script. The two 's' letters in the middle are highlighted with a yellow background.

Use of two s letters sometimes violates the rules above. As we can see with the word *necesse*, the two s letters are not written with the ligature and the second s after the first one is written as a short s, even though it is not at the end of the word.

The image shows the word "IESVS" in a printed, serif font. The two 'S' letters in the middle are highlighted with a yellow background.

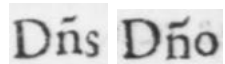
Whenever s appeared as a capital, it was always written as a standard S.

The image shows the word "efficacissima" in a printed, serif font. The two 'f' letters in the middle are highlighted with a yellow background.

This word *efficacissima* demonstrates the similarities between the lowercase f and long s. The horizontal line crossing the vertical stem of the letters is more pronounced in the f than the long s.

Other abbreviations

Some abbreviations were ubiquitous in medieval manuscripts and were carried over into printed texts. Once such abbreviation was *dn̄s* or *dn̄o*.

The image shows two abbreviations: "Dñs" and "Dño", written in a medieval script. The 'ñ' is a combination of 'n' and 's'.

Dñs represents *Dominus* (nominative singular for lord)

Dño represents *Domino* (dative or ablative singular for lord)