



## GUILD OF BOOK WORKERS JOURNAL

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JOURNAL OF THE GUILD OF BOOK WORKERS

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The photograph on the cover is Charlotte M. Ullman in her own workshop. It is reproduced here by courtesy of Sickles Photo-Reporting Service, Maplewood, N. J.

"All the world's a stage  
And all the men and women merely players..."

We have seen unfold before our very eyes in recent days awesome and incredible drama. We have seen an assassin's hand strike thrice; we have seen a vital, handsome hero suddenly struck down, in the prime of his career; we have seen a heroine rise to new heights in courage and dignity; we have seen understudies emerge quietly and self-assuredly from off stage; we have seen determination, endurance, fortitude, and sacrifice intertwined with pathos and fleeting bits of humor. We have seen the sequel to all these things in an unprecedented setting of majestic splendor, pomp and ceremony - hand in hand with eulogies, cannon blasts, muffled drums, bagpipes and bugles.

Why and how, we ask, did all this happen. Was it simply the act of one sick man, or was it the result of a society rife with discontent; was the grandeur a way to forget, or a way to remember?

President Kennedy was a symbol of hope to the free world. His speeches, delivered with personal charm, vitality and eloquence, all had the overriding theme of a better life for mankind; a life free of hunger, disease and ignorance, a society free of fear and hate.

Even as he spoke there was always a great discordant chorus of immature, irresponsible and prejudiced voices in the background. These voices too often increased in volume until they, in truth, dominated the scene.

Mature, responsible and self-respecting people have waited silently too long in the shadow of the wings; already an irrevocable cue has gone unheeded. Let us resolve to assume our role in the drama of life, let us awake from our lethargy and band

together in a chorus of tolerance and understanding so loud and so clear that the voices of hatred, fear and injustices shall be heard no more.

Then, and only then, will our hopes for peace become reality. Then, and only then, will man, clothed in a new dignity, be free to pursue in security and happiness the activities of his choice.

LSY

Nov. 26, 1963

This issue of the Journal is proud to salute Charlotte M. Ullman, Peggy to most of us, as the first American hand bookbinder (to our knowledge) who has received a grant from one of our great Foundations to study abroad. A detailed report of her experiences is included in this copy of the Journal. Dare we hope that this recognition of Peggy's accomplishments may be only the first of such awards; and that our many Foundations are becoming increasingly aware of the important role that the hand book craftsman plays in our present day culture. We have much to offer to the rare book library, the rare book dealer, the serious collector and to the individual who may own, or wish to own one cherished volume.

Peggy graduated from the Arnold College of Hygiene and Physical Education in New Haven, Conn. in 1927, and after some years of teaching phys. ed. in elementary schools, private schools and colleges wearied of "one, two, three, four ' jump ' one, two, three, four" and began looking around for some more rewarding and less strenuous occupation.

At the suggestion of her Father she began book-binding lessons in her spare time with Mr. Jacques Nosco, a French binder in New York City. She later enrolled in the Columbia University bookbinding class given by Kathryn and Gerhard Gerlach. So outstanding was she as a pupil that the Gerlachs offered her a position in their own shop. She worked with them for some fifteen years and terminated this association only when the Gerlachs moved from New York City to Chappaqua, N. Y.

Peggy had a well-equipped workshop of her own in her New Jersey home, and with this change decided to

devote full time to her own clients. One of these was the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York for whom she did special restoration jobs. The Morgan Library was, incidentally, one of the first great libraries in this country to employ a resident hand bookbinder; this post was held by Marguerite Duprey Lahey, one of our members, from 1909 until her death in 1958. After Miss Lahey's death Peggy was offered and accepted the position as binder to the Morgan Library, first on a part-time basis and later as a full-time associate.

Peggy has been a useful and active member of the Guild since 1942. After our re-organization in 1949 she served as Chairman of the Supply Committee for one term and in subsequent years has supported us wholeheartedly in our endeavors, and has lent a hand when called upon.

She has been a consistent exhibitor in Guild shows; and has also submitted entries to other book-binding exhibitions around the country. In 1953 she won first prize in a binding exhibition sponsored jointly by the Brooklyn Museum of Fine Arts and the American Craftsmen's Council. She has won several prizes at the famous Los Angeles County Fair, in which Mrs. Margaret Lecky, another one of our members, has been very active. In March of this year she exhibited in a show of fine modern crafts "Eight by Eight" held at the Dallas Museum of Fine Arts. She was one of two binders in the New York area invited to submit entries to this show. Miss Mariana Roach, also one of our members, was doubtless responsible for the inclusion of bookbindings in this exhibition.

Though teaching is not her forte, Peggy has had a number of private pupils and a few years ago yielded to pressure and taught a class in bookbinding in

the Adult Classes offered in Chatham, N. J., and is currently teaching a similar class in the South Orange-Maplewood, N. J. Adult School.

Peggy is a very modest, quiet, unassuming person, and an intelligent, skilled craftsman. The Guild is pleased that this unprecedented honor was bestowed on one of our ablest members.

Our hats off to Peggy!



MY TRIP ABROAD / Charlotte M. Ullman

Report of Three Months spent in France  
and England studying Bookbinding under  
a Fellowship Grant from The Ford Founda-  
tion.

The first two weeks of my three months search for possible new methods and materials in gold tooling and book restoration were spent in Toulouse, France. This is a very busy and lively city with a large and active Library in the basement of which is a bindery where M. and Mme. Moor work at restoration and preservation of the library bindings and manuscripts. These two friendly and pleasant people have their equipment conveniently placed and material neatly kept so there is no clutter and confusion which would in any way hamper a worker. Here I worked quietly learning their methods of restoration including the washing and sizing of paper. There was a similarity to the way I had been working. Chemical paste is generally used rather than wheat paste or even glue. The glue was heated once in my two weeks there and that was to glue the spines of my two books. Their rebacking jobs were very neat due in part to paring the leather very thin. The majority of cases were slip cases of heavy cardboard. M. Caillet, the Director of the Library, showed me many of his treasures and gave me a book describing the country and many of the buildings and cities of the area. In these two weeks I completed, using the original covers, a vellum binding and a leather binding belonging to the Morgan Library.

In Paris, a month of mornings in the Bibliotheque Nationale bindery allowed me to actually work

at the restoration of one the libraries 17th Century books. Care was taken to note the condition of the binding, color and style of headbands, number of raised bands, etc. so that the book restored would have the feeling of the original. The pages were cleaned by erasing and brushing. Small tears and missing corners were repaired with matching paper, tissue and paste. Corners and full pages soft and worn had to be resized with gelatine size, made as follows:

30 gr. gelatine  
5 litres water  
2 pinches alum  
1 pinch shaved soap

Stir over heat until it boils then keep warm so the hand can stand it. This solution is put on with a soft brush where needed and in order to avoid a water stain the rest of the sheet is wet with plain water dabbed on with a sponge. Dry between blotters then lay between tissue sheets between bristol folders for a quick press. Remove the tissue then return to the folder for over night pressing. Coffee or chickory added to the size will tone the paper to the proper shade. Silking is done on the valuable books when necessary but the paste used is very thick and glassy looking. It is purchased prepared by the barrel and is called a chemical paste. The silked pages go through half dozen or so pressing steps between tissue and bristol until dry enough to be left over night under pressure. Protective boxes were made in the regular styles of slip cases and folding boxes. Some had clear fronts of plastic so the jeweled bindings could be viewed without handling. These bindings and others were shown to me on a special tour through the stacks.

In this same month the afternoons at the Ecole Estienne taught me the French way of gold tooling, laying the gold leaf on the blinded design. The glaire or sizing used is no longer the beaten white of egg but a prepared shellac painted into the blinding as usual but stands to dry at least an hour. It is better if left over night and is still toolable after several weeks. The young boys in the forwarding classes keep the finishers supplied with dummy spines and plaques of leather so the students of finishing will be able to design and tool as they would on a book. Professor Mondange was an exacting teacher, very patient and anxious to have me learn as much as possible in the short time. I had never before had concentrated instruction in tooling and feel now that my gold will have a brilliance it did not have before and it will be more solid. The light, facilities and equipment in the school were excellent and tools were in very good order. The pupils were hard workers, friendly, clever and serious, a pleasure to be with. I completed the tooling of four spines and two plaques, one with a bit of mosaic work on it.

In England, the week of living with Mr. Roger Powell in Petersfield was spent to good advantage and I became acquainted with more tools new to me. The type of binding very often done by Mr. Powell and his associates is the French joint which has a deep hinge giving the appearance of a case binding. It is stronger than a case binding but does not appeal to me for full leather but could well be used for cloth, paper and half leather. I partially completed a book using this method and have it as a model. I also purchased a small dictionary in full leather done this way and tooled by Mr. Powell. I

used a turntable for holding my work for tooling and found it so handy I have had three made for my own use. Other than my model book I completed tooling two plaques and the glaire used was shellac as it was in France. The blind tooling with Mr. Powell was not a deep blinding, the theory being that the gold going into a deep blinding is likely to crack. Potassium lactate solution is used when dampening the leather for covering. One of the many tips gathered here was to correct a slip in tooling. Dampen the damaged leather then at the proper time press on a piece of Scotch tape and lift immediately. It will lift the leather with it and when the leather has dried can be retooled. Poly vinyl acetate, 1 part to 2 parts water, is brushed on mending tissue then when dry can be used for mending tears by ironing on with a hot polisher or iron thus eliminating the moisture of paste and saving time with good results. With Mr. Powell while I was there was a young Dutchman and a young woman from Iceland. Both were learning and again there was washing and sizing of sheets. Mrs. Powell often works in the bindery as does Mr. Peter Waters who has books on exhibit in the Victoria and Albert Museum. Mr. Waters also teaches in London.

A week in the British Museum allowed me to observe in all departments of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. There is a special room for the deacidification of paper and laminating with acetate and heat. There was a large department for the mending of small tears and laminating with tissue or silk. Girls were sewing in this same room. Laminating with silk is done on the more valuable books even with the knowledge that the silk will last not more than eighteen or twenty years. The covering department was as usual and water is used

when covering with leather. The adhesive used was a chemical paste similar to that of the French but the box maker was using real glue. Finishing on new leather wash with paste wash to fill the pores and grain then after a minute wash off before the paste dries to white. Blind, glaire and vaseline. Lay on the gold, two layers, and press in carefully. Heat the tool to just under sizzle. The glaire is dry albumen dissolved one cup in one pint of water and to prevent frothing add two drops of milk. For titles individual letters and brass type is used. Newspapers are kept and bound because of copyright but they are done in a separate plant in Allyndale outside of the center of London. I was driven there by Mr. Pointer who had already given me a great deal of time and information. Most of these books are hand sewn using the butterfly stitch and bound tight back or tube in leather or cloth. Some covering material is Linson. These books are for the most part stored.

My final week was spent as a commuter to Letchworth where I worked and observed with Mr. S. M. Cockerell. Mr. Cockerell is one with whom I had contact who gave me a feeling I could ask him anything about bookbinding and he would answer fully. For my work there I sewed a book of heavy sections on double cords using the herring bone stitch then laced on the boards. I stretched vellum leaves pinning them to the table by means of clamps and awls. Tears in the vellum can be held together with Scotch tape while stretching but it must be removed immediately after. The spoke shave is used for paring leather in Mr. Powell's shop as well as in Mr. Cockerell's and I was given one by Mr. Cockerell. I saw Mr. William Chapman marbling paper and can hardly believe that so much paper,

patiently marbled, comes from this tiny building on Mr. Cockerell's property.

These are a few of the many things I saw and learned and I hope in time to put this information into print so all may benefit from this experience of mine. I have many to thank and am grateful for the help I had from the beginning to the end of my trip. I especially enjoyed being in the Bibliothèque Nationale with M. André Davanne and the girls in the mending room, Paula, Jaquette, Josy and Josette. They had a remarkable amount of patience.

As a bit of addenda - I did some sight seeing along the way from the walled city of Carcassonne where I was driven by M. and Mme Moor on their May Day holiday from Toulouse, to Versailles, to Winchester Cathedral with Mr. Powell, to the Bodleian Library at Oxford, to Hitchin for leather, etc., and finally for a short country stay at Bryant's Bottom near Great Missenden to be with a childhood friend who lives there. It was all fine, every bit of it.

MR. FILBY'S LECTURE / Enid Eder Perkins

On November 8th, at the invitation of the Museum Division of the Special Libraries Association, a number of GBW members braved the wind and rain to hear a most interesting talk on Calligraphy by Mr. P. W. Filby, Assistant Director of the Peabody Institute Library of Baltimore. Mr. Filby, himself an expert penman, is peculiarly qualified to speak on the subject with knowledge and enthusiasm. In 1959 and again in 1961 when he organized exhibitions of calligraphy and handwriting at the Library, he received the full cooperation of public and private collectors here and abroad in obtaining rare items, and his personal contacts with the greatest of present-day calligraphers enabled him to assemble exhibits which provoked enormous interest and favorable comment. Work of four of our members, Catharine Fournier, Thomas Patterson, Mary Janes and Enid Eder Perkins, appeared in these exhibitions. Mr. Filby edited a beautifully printed and illustrated catalogue of the last exhibition, which has just been published under the title "Calligraphy and Handwriting in America."

The lecture began by a brief mention of the mss. books of the Middle Ages, written with quill or reed pens and richly illuminated in gold and brilliant colors; at first the treasures of the churches and monasteries and later, as the ability to read spread to the upper classes, the property of kings and nobles who commissioned them. By the 16th century there were numerous manuals of instruction in the art of handwriting printed, of which the Italian masters were the pioneers. The letterforms they developed derived naturally from the straight-edge quill pen and the need to write with

speed and legibility. Their style is known variously as italic, Chancery (for it was used in the courts for transcribing legal documents) or cursive (i.e., "running," as opposed to the lower-case unjoined letters of the Roman or Gothic scripts.)

In the 18th and 19th centuries, the writers of handwriting manuals, the "inventors" of various "systems" pompously styled themselves "professors," and the copy-books they designed were filled with pious quotations and mottoes aimed at instilling good morals simultaneously with fine penmanship. The title page of a handbook of 1818 reads in part: "A New System of Chirography, Together with Concomitant or Corresponding Eclaircissements, Directions and Remarks; to Which are Subjoined Some Useful Expositions and Dilucidations Relative to the Art of Brachygraphy. Designed for the Melioration of Youth, to Aid and Assist them to Write with Propriety, Beauty and Effect, etc., etc."

This typical elegance of literary expression was equalled by the fantastic flourishes that embellished the pages of these books; decorations, not to be scoffed at, however, because the skill necessary to produce them is astounding. (I have reason to believe that Mr. Filby spoke from sad experience - or experiments - in making this comment.)

By the end of the 19th century, the renaissance of fine printing and book-making - in fact, the renewed interest in fine handicraft and design in general, brought about by Morris and his associates - stimulated a revolt against the degeneracy of handwriting. Edward Johnston, by going back to the fine mss. books of the Middle Ages for sources of good letterforms, and by reverting to the use of a straight-edge quill-pen is truly the "Father" of modern calligraphy, and his book "Lettering and



Illuminating" can be called the writers' Bible. His pupils and his pupils' pupils today have created a new form of art.

Mr. Filby showed us a photograph of what he considers a masterpiece of contemporary illumination: a scroll done by Irene Wellington and presented to Queen Elizabeth on her Coronation. It is a pity that the beauty of this and other colored and gilded work could not be properly seen on the slides, but it was easy to admire the exquisite writing and the well-planned layout of the very long and complicated text of the scroll.

Examples of the work of Johnston's students, Graily Hewitt, Eric Gill, Irene Base and Ernst Detterer, who came to Chicago to carry on the Johnston tradition there, showed that calligraphy is indeed "the art of making beautiful letters and arranging them beautifully." The art extends, of course, not only to letters written by hand, but to those carved on wood and chiseled in stone. Will Carter, in England, and in this country, the late John Howard Benson, Father Edward M. Catich and Arnold Bank are among the masters of inscriptions as well as writing. A slide which illustrated perfectly the way in which letters alone and their proper placement can illustrate an idea and arouse an emotional response showed the words "Our Flying Navy in Action," written by Ray DaBoll in a crisp italic that actually seemed to soar. Miss Frances M. Moore, who was in the audience, was a pupil of Graily Hewitt. She has contributed immensely to the interest in handwriting in this country by sponsoring suitable steel nibs (Mitchell) and the excellent Osmiroid fountain-pen, as well as by her manuals on writing with the broad-edged pen and her pioneer work in teaching italic at the Chapin School,

here in New York.

We saw slides of many fine pieces of American calligraphy, such as that of Byron J. MacDonald who did the lettering on the cover of Mr. Filby's book, mentioned above. Mr. MacDonald had extraordinary facility in dashing off informal notes to his friends, beautifully laid-out and lettered. One of his favorite twists is to write out a personal letter or a poem so that it forms a circle, a cross or other geometric shape, conveying a charming play of pattern and color apart from the message of the text.

Besides the growing use today of formal calligraphy as an adjunct to type in the design and decoration of books, book-jackets, magazines, cases for records, book-plates, advertising, TV and motion picture headings, there is also a greatly increasing interest in the adoption of italic handwriting with a broad-edged pen for personal writing. In this field Mr. Richard King, who was also in the audience, is a leader, enthusiastically organizing exhibits all over the country. Paul Standard in the East, Lloyd Reynolds in the West are superb teachers as well as gifted practitioners of italic. Fred Eager teaches it in the public school in Caledonia, N. Y.; Mary Janes, one of our members who was present, does the same with outstanding success at the Chapin School. Slides showing the startling progress of children who, after only a few weeks study, produce professional-looking pages of italic writing, prove the immense advantage of this form of writing over the old Palmer or business hand.

Ed. note:

Mrs. Perkins, out of modesty, failed to mention that Mr. Filby showed a slide of one page of her illuminated manuscript, "Selections from the Book of Proverbs." He stated that she was one of the two outstanding illuminators in the United States, and he remarked on her exquisite laying on of gold.

#### FRENCH BINDING EXHIBITION / Polly Lada-Mocarski

There will be an exhibition of French contemporary Bindings at the Museum of Contemporary Crafts in New York City from January 17, 1964 to February 23, 1964. The bindings were assembled with the help of La Société de la Reliure Originale in Paris, eight of whose binders will be exhibiting - Bonet, Bonfils, de Coster & Dumas, Crette, Leroux, Martin, Mercher and Stahly. Four young binders, who were prize winners in a recent exhibition for less important (and less expensive) bindings were also asked to exhibit - Antona, Devauchelle, Lobstein and Mathieu. In all there will be about 140 bindings on display - all but very few of which were executed within the last six years. A great many are being done specially for this exhibition - making the showing truly contemporary.

Shown with the bindings will be a selection of illustrations from some of the books, some significant pages of typography such as title pages and pages of text, working drawings of some of the binding designs and some of the original copper plates and wood blocks from which the illustrations were struck - all this to give an idea of how the content of these books determined the creative design of the binding.

This exhibition is the first of its kind ever

to be shown in the United States - unique in that the bindings are all strictly contemporary. The craftsmanship in every book, without exception, is superlative.

There will be a catalogue in both French and English with very full descriptions of the books which will interest all binders, librarians, collectors - anyone interested in the book. These will be available at the exhibition, or may be obtained by writing to the Museum of Contemporary Crafts at 29 West 53rd Street, New York, N. Y.

EDITORIAL / Laura S. Young

MRS. LAMONT'S RESIGNATION

Mrs. Mary Lou Lamont, our able Sec.-Treas. for two and a half years, moved in November to Tuscon, Arizona, and reluctantly tendered her resignation to the Executive Committee.

Mrs. Lamont was both capable and interested, and worked many extra hours in the Guild's behalf in the compilation of our mailing list and in our various publicity undertakings.

Our appreciation and thanks go along with our best wishes for the Lamonts' success in their new venture.

The Executive Committee is empowered by our By-laws to fill vacancies on the Committee, and this post has been filled by Mrs. Mary Coryn. Mrs. Coryn has been an active and interested member of the Guild for several years and has assumed her new duties with enthusiasm and efficiency. She brings to the Committee, for the first time, representation from the bookbinding group at the Craft Students' League in New York.

EXHIBITION COMMITTEE / C. Vernon Johnson

TRAVELLING EXHIBITION

We sincerely hope that we will receive a good response to our recent request that members prepare a new work for presentation to a jury. Also that you will allow your work to be sent out on indefinite loan. As this issue of the

Journal goes to press, the rejections outnumber the acceptances. Perhaps this is because it takes longer to decide on what one will prepare. We trust that this is the case, because with our expanded membership we should certainly be able to assemble a show which will make the name of the Guild widely known.

LIBRARY COMMITTEE / Paul N. Banks and Philomena Houlihan

REVIEW / Catharine Fournier

CALLIGRAPHY & HANDWRITING IN AMERICA, 1710-1962.

Catalogue of an exhibition shown at the Peabody Institute Library, Baltimore, Md., November 1961-January 1962. Illustrated, Compiled by P. W. Filby, Assistant Director, Peabody Institute Library. Italimuse, Inc., Caledonia, N. Y., 1963. Wrappers. \$6.00

In the Fall of 1961 the Peabody Institute Library in Baltimore opened an exhibition called "Calligraphy and Handwriting in America." This exhibition was a sequel to a 1959 show of calligraphy and illumination, three-quarters of which was British work, the remaining items being from a small number of leading American exponents of the craft. The earlier exhibition was of such interest and attracted such a large number of visitors that the planning of an all-American show was a natural outcome. Both shows were conceived, planned and mounted by P. W. Filby, Assistant Director of the Peabody Institute Library. A well organized but mimeographed and unillustrated catalogue of the American exhibition was out of print before the

exhibition closed. It was apparent that a printed and illustrated version would not only be a more suitable record of an important cultural event, but would be of lasting historical value. Under the direction of Mr. Filby and the editorship of Mrs. Dorothy Rolph, the definitive catalogue was published in the Fall of 1963.

The exhibition was divided into two parts, the first of which consisted of original and published material dating from 1710 to 1957, the second part comprising work of contemporary American calligraphers. This division has been followed in the catalogue. The mere listing of the early American material is fascinating to the reader; the analytical comments appended to many entries are not only scholarly but eminently readable. There are, for instance, colorful notes on "Pennsylvania Dutch" Fraktur, and on the writing systems of Spencer, Zaner, and Palmer. Of special interest in this section is a biographical note on Ernst Frederick Detterer, who was a pioneer in America of the calligraphic revival initiated in England by Edward Johnston. Illustrations of three pieces written by him are welcome samples of his too infrequently seen work. Also included in this section are illustrations of an informal letter written by W. A. Dwiggins, and of a slate panel with beautiful incised letters by John Howard Benson.

The contemporary part of the catalogue gives listings, biographical notes, and illustrations of the work of many present-day American practitioners, most of whom will be familiar to people interested in graphic arts. However, to this reviewer it will be an enduring mystery why other outstanding contemporary American calligraphers were not represented in the Baltimore show. It would be in-

vidious to name the missing, but it was the viewer's loss that no examples of their work were seen, and their absence will to some extent affect the historical value of the show's catalogue.

Designed by Fred Eager and composed by the Stinehour Press, Lunenburg, Vt., this handsome book was printed by the Meriden Gravure Company, Meriden, Conn., who also specially photographed the material illustrated. The calligraphy on the pictorial wrapper is by Byron J. Macdonald; the title page and headings are by Raymond F. DaBoll. The catalogue opens with a graceful introduction by P. W. Filby, followed by a list of lenders of exhibits. Its concluding section contains a note on italic writing for school use, with a list of schools where italic is taught, and specimens of students' writing. It also includes a list of recommended American publications on calligraphy and italic handwriting, a list of handwriting and calligraphy societies, and an index.

#### MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE / Philomena Houlihan

Membership Changes, May 1 - Dec. 1, 1963

New Members: Mr. Cunha, Mr. Carlson, Mrs. Casson, Mrs. Fitzmaurice, Mr. French, Mr. Goodwin, Mr. Landon, Miss Manola, Mr. Rasmussen, and Mr. Thompson. Their addresses will be found in the revised membership list in this issue of the Journal.

Resignations: Miss Press, Mr. Schoberlein, and Dr. Vogel.



PROGRAM COMMITTEE / Mary C. Schlosser

#### THE YEAR'S PROGRAM

October 29, 1963 / Informal meeting at AIGA Headquarters -- Refreshments

February 15, 1964 / Visit to the Princeton University Library, Graphic Arts division, to view calligraphy and fine bindings with Mr. Gillett G. Griffin, curator.

March, 1964 / Visit to the hand paper manufacturing facilities of Douglass Howell in Westbury, Long Island.

April, 1964 / Visit to the collection of Lessing J. Rosenwald, Alverthorpe Gallery, Jenkintown, Pennsylvania.

April 28, 1964 / Annual meeting.

May, 1964 / Visit to the Grolier Club Special Exhibition: Thomas James Cobden-Sanderson - Bindings with Designs and Patterns for the Doves Bindery, from the collection of Mr. Norman H. Strouse.

PUBLICITY COMMITTEE / Paul N. Banks

#### Corrigendum

Due to a typographical error the sentence discussing the IIC Abstracts on page 15 of the Journal, vol. I no. 3, was somewhat misleading. The third from the last sentence on the page should read:

"Perhaps their most useful service is their semi-annual publication entitled Abstracts of the Technical Literature on Archaeology and

the Fine Arts, which describes articles on materials, conservation, restoration, authentication and forgery, etc., from the entire world."

SUPPLY COMMITTEE / Carolyn Horton

## SHEET WORK MATERIAL

In Volume I Number 2 of the Guild of Book Workers Journal I began a discussion of the quality of the materials used in the various processes of binding. In that article I discussed the quality of the paper on which the book was printed. In this second article I will discuss the materials used in the repair and resewing of the book.

Working in an extra bindery where books of all periods of book history are brought in for repair or rebinding, one has many opportunities to observe the aging process of books. In examining a book bound before 1800, one notices that the old thread is usually sound. The paper of the book is also usually sound and there has been no acid transfer between paper and thread. However the cords on which the book was sewn are often either broken or very brittle. Leather thongs are almost always rotten and rawhide thongs may be sound between the signatures but are often broken at the hinge. In the process of taking the book apart one may also observe some other materials which have not lasted. Many protection sheets which were tipped in to prevent ink from illustrations from off-setting have yellowed and have actually damaged the pages they were intended to protect. Many books have plates on heavy paper. These were often tipped on to the book pages. They will often be found to be completely detached or to have torn the page to which

they are tipped. Sometimes heavy plates are attached to guards of poor quality. The paper of the pages may be brittle, yellowed in from the edges, or the paper may be limp and fuzzy.

Page tears may have been mended with stiff paper patches the sharp edges of which have caused the mended page to break at the repair edge. Self adhesive plastic tape may have been used, causing discoloration of the paper, or the adhesive may have oozed at the edges, causing the pages to stick together.

The techniques of proper sheet work have been well described in many of the standard textbooks. Precise information about longer lasting materials, and where these may be purchased has not been easy to find. Sydney M. Cockerell's "The Repairing of Books" gives an excellent list of manufacturers and suppliers of materials and tools but lists only English sources. Members of the Guild of Book Workers receive a complete supply list which is kept up to date by frequent appendices. Much research has been done in recent years on the causes of decay of materials. Much more research is being done at the present time and we will do our best to call the attention of Guild members to published reports of this work as it becomes available. For the moment we can only try to take advantage of everything that is now known and profit by our observations of the lasting qualities of materials.

Observations of the great durability of unbleached linen thread lead to the recommendation that we use unbleached linen cords and tapes for all books that we re sew. We find unbleached linen cord available in rope form. (1) It is still sold by ships' chandlers. The strands of the rope can be unraveled and as many strands as needed combined to make our cords. Unbleached linen tape is available in England

(2) at a reasonable price. Unbleached linen thread is available from most bookbinding supply houses. Some brands appear to have been bleached and to lack strength. Hayes Irish Linen Thread is still unbleached. Books with very thin signatures may be re sewed with nylon thread. Thread should be waxed before sewing to reduce the wear and tear of pulling through the signatures.

Protection sheets which have yellowed should be removed if possible. They have served their purpose. Generally ink does not continue to offset after the first year. If a protection sheet is yellowed and cannot be removed because the title of the illustration is printed on it, barrier sheets should be placed on either side of it to protect the book. These should be made of thin paper with some sizing. An unsized sheet allows acid to travel through it and deteriorate the sheet beyond. A thin 100% rag onion skin paper, Shizuoka #0 (3) or Mitsumata (4) are possible choices. All plates should be guarded on acid-free flexible paper. Repair of the back folds should be done with thinner equally pure and flexible papers. Shizuoka (3), Kitaka (3), Sekishu (3), Misumata (4), Seicho (4), and Eijyo (4) are good choices. A safe adhesive is pure wheat flour paste (5). A few drops of glycerin added to the paste will help keep the repair flexible. Also the paste should be used rather thin to prevent brittleness.

Yellowing pages should be de-acidified and laminated with cellulose acetate (6). Paper which seems weak but is not yellowing at the edges can be purified and actually strengthened by immersion in cold water. The water removes a great deal of the acid and also swells and redistributes the fibres. Methods of paper de-acidification which may be done

by the binder in his shop are now being studied and will be reported in the Journal when the work is completed.

Page tears can be safely repaired with wheat flour or rice starch paste and Japanese mending tissues (3 & 4). Self adhesive plastic tape can be removed with toluene and hexane. Quick page repair can be safely done with Dennison's Transparent Mending Tape, which can be removed at any time and which over the years has never been observed to discolor the paper to which it was applied.

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#### FOOTNOTES

- (1) Manhattan Marine & Electric Company, 116 Chambers Street, New York, N. Y. Ask for unsized unbleached linen rope.
- (2) Russell Bookcrafts, Hitchen, Herts. England sold in one quarter inch width only.
- (3) Andrews-Nelson-Whitehead Inc., 7 Laight Street New York, N. Y.
- (4) Aiko's Art Materials Import, 714 N. Wabash Avenue, Chicago 11, Illinois.
- (5) #6 Wheat Paste, Samuel Schweitzer Co., 666 W. Lake Street, Chicago 6, Illinois.
- (6) For names of laminators write the supply chairman.

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#### MARILYN DAVIS

Miss Marilyn Davis, one of our members, has recently moved to England. She is working in typographic design for an agency in Coventry. She writes that she will be willing to make purchases or attempt to locate specific items on a commission basis for Guild members. The details as to how she will handle this, we do not know. If anyone is interested, may we suggest that you write directly to:

Miss Marilyn Glenn Davis  
10, Westminster Road  
Coventry  
Warwickshire  
England

This glossary is the result of study and observations made during my recent residence in Paris. The definitions and treatment of the leathers apply primarily to current French practices.

MOROCCO General term for goat skins. The grain varies from tannage, from finishing and from country of origin. "Morocco" should be preceded by adjective denoting country of origin or salient characteristics.

CAPE MOROCCO Goat from the Cape of Good Hope exclusively. Grain very evenly spaced and deeply marked. Used for the finest bindings. When there is much decoration on the binding (onlays and tooling) the grain is "crushed" (flattened) to give a smooth surface. Strong, heavy skin. Takes gold and blind tooling well.

NATIVE MOROCCO or NIGER MOROCCO Goat from Northern Nigeria or from Morocco. Grain flat and irregular but of very pleasing texture. Strong, heavy skin. Takes gold and blind tooling well.

LEVANT MOROCCO Goat from east coast of the Mediterranean. Grain very similar to Cape Morocco but the animal is usually smaller, making the skin a bit lighter. Grain just as pleasing as Cape Morocco and as durable. Takes gold and blind tooling well.

CHAGRIN or SHAGREEN Real Chagrin, goat from east India. Grain very delicate and closely knit of tiny pinpoints. Not as pleasing as looser grains. Goats or sheep from other countries can be processed, either by hand, by embossing or when spraying with pigment of color, to make the grain resemble the east India goat grain. Light and thin skin. Natural skins take gold and blind tooling well. Processed skins are apt to make difficulties. Sometimes confused with Shagreen which is sharkskin.

CALF Skins, from many countries, with a very smooth surface, grain practically invisible. The grain varies slightly according to tannage and treatment. Skins, vegetable tanned and worked by hand show the grain more than "box" calf (see below) and are strong and durable and very pleasing. Takes gold and blind tooling well.

"BOX" CALF Box is a trade name and refers, today, to calf skin chrome tanned (unlike vegetable tanned) and colored by applying aniline pigment to the surface only. This results in a very flat, even, polished surface with grain invisible. Chrome tanning is very strong and durable, but makes the skin difficult to work and can only be pasted with a polyvinyl paste (the usual one for all leathers being of flour). It is excellent for decoration (onlays, etc.) as the colors are stable and will not fade. Very difficult to tool.

EMBOSSSED CALF Calf skin can be embossed (with a hot, engraved, metal plate) to resemble any more grained leather such as Cape Morocco. This type of skin is only an imitation.



**PARCHMENT AND VELLUM** Skin of a goat, sheep or lamb treated to leave only the inner (under the surface and strongest part) skin and with a perfectly smooth, whitish and dull polished finish. According to its use it can be made thick or thin - thick for binding and thin for writing. It is very durable but very susceptible to temperature change which produces buckling (wrinkling) thus making it unfit to receive any but gold tooled, painted or ink decoration - and even these might be disturbed by excessive buckling.

**SHEEP** Skins, from many countries, with a smooth surface, similar to calf. The grain is porous looking and the skin light weight. In the past it was well tanned and durable but to-day is not a durable leather and never used for fine bindings. Takes gold and blind tooling well.

**PIG** Skins, from many countries, with a smooth, flat, small grain with tiny points, in groups of three, that is characteristic to pig skin. It is a light, thin skin but very durable and of pleasing aspect. It is also bleached white (alum tawed) and is very attractive. Takes gold and blind tooling well.

**MISCELLANEOUS** There are other skins such as reptile, fish, etc., which are sometimes used - however, principally for decoration such as on-lays, etc.