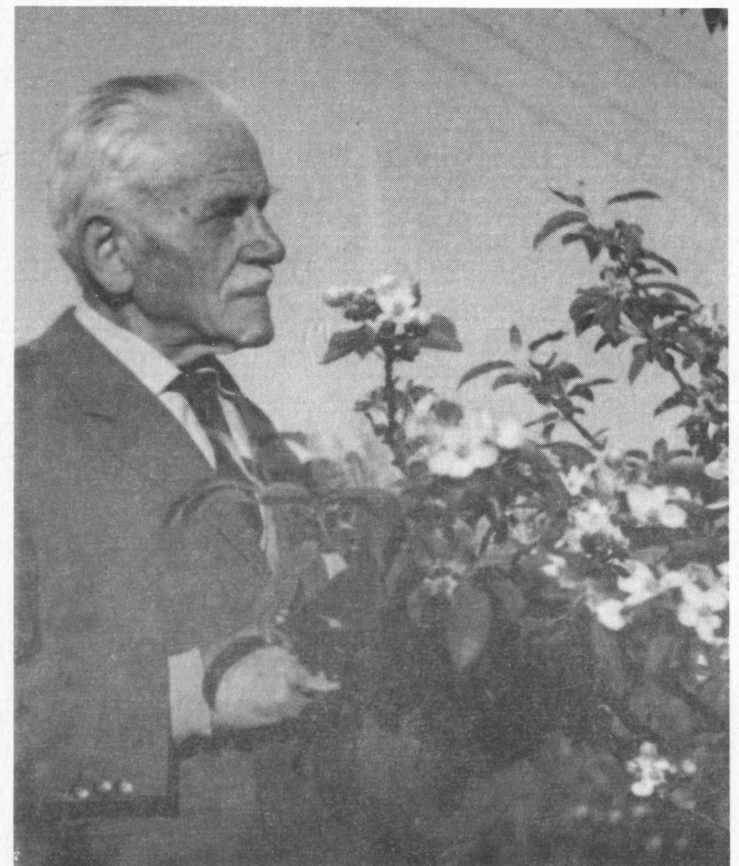


## GUILD OF BOOK WORKERS JOURNAL

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JOURNAL OF THE GUILD OF BOOK WORKERS

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Fall 1964

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The photograph on the cover is of  
Mr. Peter Franck. See pp. 5 and 11.

## THIS YEAR'S PROGRAMS

October 27, 1964 / Informal meeting at AIGA Headquarters -- Refreshments.

January 12, 1965 / Informal talk on book design by Mr. Marshall Lee, chief book designer of H. Wolff Book Manufacturing Company.

January 26, 1965 / Visit to the Craft Students League Open House to see the bindery and exhibitions of student work.

February , 1965 / Visit to the Print Collection of the Museum of Modern Art to see the Stern Collection of modern illustrated books in their fine bindings and cases.

March 30, 1965 / Informal talk on the history of American hand binding by Miss Hannah D. French of Wellesley College, Wellesley, Massachusetts.

April 1965 / Annual Meeting

April 27, 1965 / Illustrated lecture and demonstration by Mr. Marvin Newman, calligrapher, on letterforms and their history.

## CHANGE IN POLICY

The members of the Executive Committee have in turn devoted the time and effort required to put together and edit the various issues of the Journal. To date the name of the person assuming this responsibility has not appeared. As the stature of the Journal increases the effort required increases in proportion, and it seems reasonable that the editor should receive recognition for his or her efforts in the Guild's behalf.

Beginning with this issue the name of the editor will appear at the head of the page which lists the "Contents."

For your information and in an attempt to give credit where credit is due the previous issues were edited as follows:

Vol. I, no. 1	Paul N. Banks
" no. 2	Laura S. Young
" no. 3	Mary Lou Lamont
Vol. II, no. 1	Vernon Johnson
" no. 2	Mary Schlosser
" no. 3	Mary Coryn and Laura S. Young (sub- stituting for Philomena Houlihan).



Was Glänzt, ist für den Augenblick geboren,  
Das Echte Bleibt der Nachwelt unverloren. Goethe

What glistens is born for the moment,  
The genuine will be the heritage of the future.

This quotation of Goethe's is to be found on the opening page of Peter Franck's little monograph, "The Lost Link in the Technique of Bookbinding." It could well be the credo by which this man has lived his life as a binder. One instinctively senses that here is a man of great integrity. One knows that with him there is no short cut to the end result. I know that had I seen Peter Franck at work in his prime, I would have seen a man who followed every step in binding with meticulous care and perfection. There would have been no shoddy material, no shoddy work. There would have been only perfect materials and only perfect results.

If I drew a word picture of Peter Franck for you, I would describe a slight man, with a small white mustache and the bluest, blue eyes I have ever seen. These blue eyes give off a Santa Claus twinkle which adds to his courtly, old-world charm. In the winter time one sees him in comfortable tweeds with a wool muffler, and atop his head a slightly rakish Tyrolean hat. Under his arm he may carry a well-worn, bulging brief case. Out of this comes all kinds of treasures, with which he is so generous; tools, bits and pieces of wonderful old paper, vellum, linen such as can no longer be had. Back into this Aladdin brief case we put jars of paste, pieces of binder's board, cloth, maybe a jar of watermelon rind pickles, and other goodies we trade back and forth. Lexington, Kentucky, is singularly fortunate to have Peter Franck as a resident.

Peter Franck was born on May 31, 1883, one of nine children, in Alsenbruck Langmeil in the Rheinpfalz.

At the age of thirteen, Peter was apprenticed for three years to his uncle who operated a bindery in Landau. The fourth year he worked without pay in a hymnal factory to learn gold stamping. Peter, who yearned for more knowledge and experience in his craft, spent the next five years in binderies in Wiesbaden, Zurich, Innsbruck, Interlaken and Munich. From 1905 until 1907 he did his stint in the army and was fortunate to be able to "keep his hand in", binding army records. Being an adventuresome lad, Peter decided to try his fortune in America. On October 19, 1907, he left Germany bound for New York. "You know I didn't arrive until some time in November," he says reflectively. "Not like it is today." He went to Mansfield, Ohio, where some of his relatives lived. Longing to get back into binding, Peter cast around for some place that could use his talents. Before leaving Germany he had heard of the Roycroft Shop in East Aurora, New York. Early in 1908 Peter wrote to Mrs. Hubbard at the Roycroft Shop, stating his qualifications. She hired the young man, by return mail, sight unseen. She must have been a wise woman. This was a good move for him. At the Roycroft Shop he was to know Louis Kinder, a kindly, mature German binder. In Peter's words, "he was an individualist of sterling character with a keen desire to help fellow workers who had not had the opportunity that had been his in the study of his beloved craft." Kinder was also an experienced paper marbler and this must certainly have influenced the young man. In later years when Peter had his own bindery he marbled all of his own papers for his good work. The ones I saw were very lovely and tasteful, and beautiful with leathers he selected for them. Also at Roycroft were several other people who were to figure prominently in Peter's future. Dr. Dard Hunter, who became a lifelong friend and patron and Sterling Lord with whom he later became associated in business.

Of the binders at Roycroft, Peter Franck and Louis Kinder became the acknowledged leaders. During his three years there, he turned out many fine bindings.

The two young binders, Franck and Lord, became close companions. They shared the qualities of "integrity and nobility of purpose." In 1911 Sterling Lord went to the Caxton Printers in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. In 1912 he persuaded Peter to join him. The Caxton Printers prospered until they suffered a disastrous fire; following this the firm was purchased by the two young men. They set themselves up in Pittsfield as the Oakwood Binders. The young men had considerable success so they moved their venture to more commodious quarters in the old Pittsfield Sun Building. They leased a large showroom in the Pittsfield Shopping Center. Here they showed and sold their bindings. They also sold Rookwood, Newcomb and Paul Revere pottery and other fine art products. This partnership lasted until the end of World War I. The Oakwood Binders was sold to the Canaan Press, Pittsfield. Peter moved on to begin work in the bindery of the New York Public Library and later with Stikeman and Company. In 1920 he returned to his native Germany for several years. During this stay he was employed by the famous Bremer Press bindery in Munich. It was during this stay that he received the coveted Master Diploma in Binding. It was during this time that Peter met and married Mrs. Franck who was to be such a helpmate and inspiration to him. Mrs. Franck had studied design, and in later years, in their Sherman studio, she designed a number of books which Peter executed in his fine style. After their return to New York he again was employed by Stikeman and Company and later by the Blackwell-Bennett Bindery. In 1925 Peter went to the printing house of William Edwin Rudge at Mt. Vernon, New York. There he spent five years. He was most desirous of having his own workshop, so in 1932 he set up his own establishment in Sherman, Connecticut. This was a tastefully designed home and studio combined. Here he and Mrs. Franck worked, and their two daughters were raised. In 1932 he received one of the highest honors in the binding world. He was chosen a member of the Meister der Einbandkunst. It was during this period that Peter's fin-



est work was done. He had joined the Guild of Book Workers in 1929 and in 1932 began exhibiting his work. He was doing restoration work on manuscripts and rare bindings for the Library of Congress, Morgan Library, museums and universities. He executed a full vellum binding for one of the five copies of the Book of Common Prayer printed on vellum by Daniel Updike. Peter is an acknowledged master in the handling of vellum, as you will see when you read Miss Palmer's translation of his treatise on this technique. Mrs. Franck did the beautiful pen lettering to be seen on many of these vellum bindings. Mr. Franck showed me a four volume set of books done in red leather and half vellum which he bound some twenty years ago. These are breathtakingly beautiful today, and show no sign of warping. Dr. Dard Hunter had several copies of each of his private press books bound in full vellum by Mr. Franck. Mr. Franck tells me that one of each of these is held by the Dard Hunter Museum at the Paper Chemistry Institute in Appleton, Wisconsin.

He designed a most clever slip case for the Colophon, published by the Pynson Printers. He and Mrs. Franck did the stupendous job of making one thousand of these completely by hand. These were done over a five year period. As Mr. Franck described these to me they must certainly be exquisite treasures. These are fully described and illustrated in Bookbinding and Book Production, December, 1940, page 32. He executed many fine bindings for Mr. Adler of the Pynson Printers.

Beautiful examples of his work are to be seen at the Hunt Botanical Library. Guild members who took the trip to the Lessing J. Rosenwald Collection on April 18, 1964, had the opportunity of seeing many fine bindings by Peter Franck. It would be a duplication to describe them again when Mr. Andrews reports them so well in GBW Journal of Spring 1964. Mr. Franck showed me a picture of a binding in this collection, of which he spoke with wistful nostalgia. It was Brandt's Ship of Fools, Basle, 1494. Mr. Andrews stated, "Lacking covers, it was rebound by

Peter Franck and the resulting combination of old oak boards, brown calf back, and silver clasps captures without slavishly imitating, the style and spirit of the day."

Another binding he speaks of with pride is one he did for Philip Duschnes. This is a Kelmscott Press, complete Chaucer. I quote the catalogue, "Folio, full vellum, uncut, with vellum overleaf on covers, gilt lettering, six raised bands, with exceptionally fine marble-like veining, by Peter Franck." Incidentally, the price of the above is listed at \$1,250.00.

One of Peter Franck's greatest contributions to the hand binding fraternity was the discovery of a three hundred year old method of sewing books, which he named "arch sewing." This was a technique used in the bindings of Theodoricus Spreibuch during the middle of the 17th century. Mr. Franck contends that without a knowledge of this method, the art of hand binding is incomplete. In 1941 he published a monograph on this method and called it, "A Lost Link in the Technique of Hand Bookbinding." The little book was privately printed in an edition of 150 copies and handbound by Peter in his own hand marbled cloth overboards. The book was later reprinted in German and is cased in an unusual olive colored paper that appears to be a type of paste paper. Mr. Franck graciously presented me with a copy of the German edition. Gerhard Gerlach says in Print, spring number, 1942, "I, as a fellow book binder, congratulate Mr. Franck on his little book, 'A Lost Link in the Technique of Hand Bookbinding.' It is not the discovery itself which is so important, but the the fact that he explains how this particular volume was bound and why it lasted so long, even without covers. If such careful work could be taken with all worthwhile books of today, the year 2242 would see some of our present books. We hope they will."

After Mrs. Franck's death in 1953, Peter continued his bindery for five more years until January, 1958. Since that time he has made several trips back to Germany and Switzerland and now has finally reconcil-

ed himself to making his home here in the Blue Grass Country. Here he contents himself by dabbling a little in binding, sharing his binding know-how and playing a beautiful zither, another art of which he is an accomplished master.

Dr. Dard Hunter describes Peter Franck so sensitively, it is well to end this piece with his words. "To Peter Franck the binding of books has been more than a source of livelihood--it has been the main-spring of existence itself. He has always striven to create bindings sound in their technical perfection and beautiful in their conception. In the acquisition of one of his fine bindings the book collector purchases an integral part of the artist's own personality, for he imparts to his work a marked degree of proficiency and appropriateness of materials and design that are the product of conscientious thoroughness and patience born of idealism. Mr. Franck possesses the rare, intangible attributes that are so essential in lasting craftsmanship; after fifty years of binding books it may well be stated that Peter Franck ranks high among the foremost bookbinders of the world."

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Vellum Binding / Peter Franck

Translated from the German by Betsy Palmer

In 1911, when I went back for the first time to revisit the country where I was born, my interest in vellum binding was brought to an enthusiastic pitch by seeing a bookbinding exhibit at the Crafts Museum in Kaiserlautern. Johann Rudel, a craft teacher and later professor of crafts, had exhibited, along with other leather work, a number of very beautiful batiked vellum bindings.

I came from what was at that time the best hand bindery in the United States, Elbert Hubbard's "The Roycroft Shop." Louis Kinder was the Director and I had been employed there for three years. At that time I was more than a little mistrustful of vellum as a binding material. At Roycroft it was used only for half vellum bindings which the Director of the workshop for the most part finished himself.

Shortly before my return to the United States I wrote Mr. Rudel of my great interest in his work and asked whether I might visit him at his home in Elberfeld. He received me cordially on a Sunday afternoon. He then explained to me the whole batik process from start to finish, the application of the mordant, the successive use of these mordants, their chemical action, the use of a second color on top after parts of the design had been covered over with a wax or shellac. I was permitted to visit his own library which contained many of his own bindings in leather and vellum and I had to marvel again at Rudel's great precision in detail. How happy I would have been to buy one of these master-bindings, even though they were not for sale. I was able, however, to buy a little notebook. It is light gray and orange with dark gray bands and hand gilding. It is today as elegant and fresh as ever and a dear reminder of the unpretentious man, Johann Rudel.

Nine years later, in 1920, I went back to Germany and worked with Frieda Thiersch at the Bremer Press,

who bound a number of volumes from each limited edition in full vellum. The vellum work was done by a young bookbinder and two assistants. There was a special hand gilder for the finishing.

In the following comments, I have limited myself to the differences in the technique of vellum bindings which might deviate from the technical books of Cockereil, Luers and Wiese, but which were used at the Bremer Press. This is particularly in regard to the preparation of the vellum and the covering-in process.

Balanced against the given character of this durable, stubborn, but still noblest of materials, are the difficulties that one comes up against in working with it. In our own bindery, 1930-1958, no effort was spared in solving the problems peculiar to vellum. Satisfactory solutions were found and applied in regard to making up the boards and lining them, and in particular to the last lining before the final finishing of the binding.

Binding with vellum, as with other materials, is mainly a matter of orderly progression from the simplest step. The first step consists of tipping to the innerside of the first and last signatures a thin vellum or thick Japanese paper reinforcement strip. This reinforcement protects the last signatures of the book and, after the book is sewn, its free edge is pasted to the end paper signatures to provide a good flexible connection there. Reinforcement in the center of the signatures should not be necessary with good paper. The end paper signatures should be made out of "text paper" or a similar good hand made paper. These are made up of three folds of paper plus a fourth of inferior but tough quality which will be tipped onto the outside as a protection sheet after the end paper signatures are otherwise completed. The two outer sheets of the three should be lined together so that in the finished book the first and last fly-leaves will be double thickness. After this mounting is dry, the signature should be opened and reinforced with a piece of thin linen or batiste about 1½ inches wide. For the sake of flexibility,

this is put on while the signature is half open. In order not to let this batiste strip show through, and as a lining, a piece of unsized news stock or bond is pasted on, flush with the batiste. After a few minutes' pressure, the protection fold can be tipped on the front and the whole set in press overnight to dry.

Heavy weight papers, stiff and hard to handle, such as are usually supplied with modern French book prints for endpapers, are best made up with a zigzag or accordian pleat made out of stout Japanese vellum paper. This applies also for vellum endsheets that are supplied by the printer of the book.

All special books, whether printed on paper or vellum should be evened up, signature by signature, on the board shears or by hand if necessary in the absence of shears. If it is only a matter of straightening the "deckle" somewhat, a clean sandpaper file will do--with a size board pattern on each side. This implies that the margins are left intact and the book is in its final size and ready to be sewed up. Only modern works should have the top edge gilt and not even then when the paper has a deckled edge on all sides and has been especially molded and finished by hand for the edition, as on Dr. Dard Hunter's books. Parenthetically, one must be warned in pressing to pay attention to the height of the printing punch, for example the Kelmscot Press "Chaucer", where the print and wood-cut illustrations are very deeply impressed. In this case, sufficient hand-made paper stubs must be added before or during the sewing to equalize the height of the punch.

The sewing on wide vellum strips is in the manner of sewing on raised bands. To state it simply, the needle comes out at the far side of the tape and re-enters on the near side, the thread doubling on the inside, as you proceed. This can only be done with vellum tapes. After the sewing is completed and the ends of the tapes pulled through the protection fold, a piece of thin bristol the thickness of the tapes should be cut to the size of the book with

cut-outs for the tapes to rest in, as a protective measure while the book is being forwarded and covered.

After glueing the spine up and rounding it lightly, the book should be set in the backing press and given a shallow shoulder. In order for it to hold this shape, the spine is best lined in the following manner while the book is still in the press: Between the bands, paste a piece of thin linen that extends out over both sides of the spine. At the head and tail the linen should stop just short of the kettle-stitch. Then a piece of goatskin, cut to the length and exact width of the spine and pared on the sides, is pasted down but leaving enough loose at the head and tail for the head-bands to be worked without hindrance the next day. When these have been completed, the leather ends can be pasted down too.

After this leather lining has dried and the unevennesses have been sanded out, a piece of thin jute or bristol should be cut the length and width of the spine and the edges sanded. It can be narrowly tipped with glue to the sides first, to be tight. Then the linen overhang should be brought up and glued down, first on one side and then on the other, so that a tube is formed. This then in its turn is covered by a piece of batiste sandwiched between two pieces of thin paper. A strong hollow tube is created in this manner which I deem to be very important for vellum books.

The boards were previously glued together and set in the press to dry until the final cutting and fitting. For the best work in vellum, as in leather, we used only English board. Until the last war, it was hand made, but today, as far as I know, it is no longer available. It was of unsurpassed quality, so that, used correctly, warping was eliminated. Other good board with grain but lined with jute or bristol "Manila tag" is also satisfactory for this purpose, except black tar which should not be used for vellum.

Two boards of equal thickness should be glued together, glueing both pieces. After they have been pressed for some time, a piece of jute or bristol should be glued onto each side with this difference: on the inside of the boards a strip about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches wide along the back edge should be left unglued. Later, when attaching the boards, this "unglued" strip that is left open will receive the then narrowed stub of the protective waste sheet, on which the reinforced paper strip previously used for securing the tube was brought over. Cold paste can be used for glueing the left open "split" in attaching the boards. Paper covered tins are inserted before putting the book in the press. Technically speaking, this manner of hanging in turns out to be the "French groove". There are other and simpler ways that a binder can choose, but there is none stronger, particularly for large vellum bindings. The ends of the sewing tapes are thus anchored in the same step, the middle of the three strips having first been pulled through the groove.

I must warn that for a successful cover, aluminum or other metal should not be used as the material is foreign and impractical. When the volume comes out of the press and is otherwise finished, the body of the book should have a protective paper "chemise" wrapped around it, and where there is a gilded top edge, a little extra protection piece that extends to the headband should be added. After that, the board edges and corners should be smoothed. A second bristol lining should be attached to the hollow tube and left about  $\frac{1}{8}$  of an inch longer at the head and tail than the first lining in order to support and form the headcap during covering in. It is understood that the binder has already made a hand sewn headband and left it about  $\frac{1}{8}$  of an inch lower than the height of the squares to allow for the thickness of the headcap. The vellum sewing tapes can now be built up with strips of leather if so desired. After this, one is ready for the major task--covering in.

The bookbinder who has had little experience



with vellum should not start with large books. Should he try it anyway, he can expect difficulties and disappointments. In an earlier job, for instance, the only workspace available for me was by a south window. The afternoon sun came into the heated room and it was only with great difficulty that the work already begun could be completed and the lined materials be saved from premature drying and warping. I mention this not to intimidate the binder but just to give him a helpful warning.

Nothing replaces experience. I should like to advise that when covering in large vellum volumes it is always good to have an assistant nearby.

In my experience, the vellum should be lined with paper, but neither the boards nor the backside of the vellum need to be painted white. A good, lightly sized paper without watermarks or laid lines should be used. Arnold handmade wove used to work excellently for large volumes and kept the moisture longer; opaque bond papers are also suitable. The paste should be fresh, heavy, not too thick nor too thin, and not lumpy. The paper should be well pasted twice, so that it will remain moist and workable longer. The brush marks should be removed either by skinning the sheet or going over it carefully with the brush. The pasted sheet is then laid out on a handy wood-pulp board, the vellum laid on the sheet, rubbed down, covered with a second wood-pulp board, and pressed as quickly as possible. It is not possible to do this job without a large standing press for large sizes.

After seven to ten minutes, during which one can attend to further preparations such as good hot glue, tools, temperatures, and so forth, the lined piece is taken out of the press and lightly marked up on the backside with pencil. On these markings for the spine and groove widths, the sheet is then lightly creased back with the right hand (not with a folder). The spine and the grooves of the book can be glued ahead of time and allowed to dry to increase the adhesion. Then when the spine and the groove have been glued

again, keeping the boards free of glue, the book is laid on the markings and well rubbed down with a folder, spine first, under a wide strip of light colored cloth. Then the grooves are sharply but carefully rubbed in under the cloth. With the book wrapped in paper and with the height of the brass edges of the case boards previously adjusted if necessary to the thickness of the covers by padding them with thin cardboard or bristol, the book should be given a quick nip in the press, with the brass edges evenly in the grooves. The false bands, if any, can then be formed with a folder and band nippers.

Next, the loose vellum sides are carefully laid back, the boards glued, and the sides put down, rubbing them well through a sheet of paper with special attention to the beveled edges. Now the edges of the still flexible vellum can be folded over in preparation for turning in. The book should go back in the press under paper and pressing boards for another half hour, after which the boards are carefully but definitely pushed forward, holding the book block down tight, and the groove once more sharply rubbed in under linen. If a Yapp edge on the fore-edge is in the offing, the appropriate cuts are made on the corners. The turn-ins top and bottom are taken on next and having dried out somewhat, must be dampened on the outside with a sponge and warm water. The turn-ins are glued. A little paste is added at the head cap to make the vellum more pliable. Somewhat painstaking modelling and working of the vellum will be necessary to form the headcap over the bristol spine lining which was left extending  $1/8$  of an inch. The turn-in at the joint, where the headcap joins the shoulder, is best accomplished with a thin stainless steel folder or line marker, which pushes the turn-in in, and a thin bone folder which pushes lightly under and back, while the thumb and forefinger of the left hand support the headcap. A large folder is necessary to turn the vellum head-cap over; a light little backing hammer is

also useful to help round it over.

About the technique of the Yapp fore-edge, I have little to say as it is well described in the textbooks. I have from time to time put a strip of white or cream colored buckram, cut on the bias, into the Yapp edge and doubled over the corners which must be prepared in advance. The bookbinder who wishes to experiment with it should try it once beforehand. The lacing of the vellum tapes through the groove and the last lining are generally left until the titling and the gilding are finished. The lacing of the vellum strips through the groove is a delicate operation that must be carried out with great care. A strip of jute or bristol is cut to the exact size of the book board. A pattern is made of the exact position of the tapes and the center strip indicated exactly, as to width, before the tapes are separated into three parts each on a cutting tin slipped under them. A small square, well pressed down (kept in position) and a very sharp pointed knife are needed. The board pattern is then transferred to the outside of the cover and held in position with a covered weight and the marks for the cuts, lightly indicated with a pencil. The ridgecut must be marked and made slightly under the ridge, ca.  $1/32''$  and the corresponding cut for taking the lace back in at the low crease line of the groove. In making the cuts, insert a tin to protect the book. A small, double edge, pointed knife is used. The end of the center vellum strip is trimmed to a point with scissors, then threaded into a small darning needle to lace through, in and out. Do not pull the laces too tight to avoid strain. After both sides, front and back laces are done, the ends of the tapes are glued and neatly placed together, rubbed down and given a nip in press with a tin inserted--each side done individually. With paper-wrapped tins the book is then put in press until the glued tapes are well set. When it is taken out, the ends of the tapes are pared and smoothed with a paring knife.

Now I come to an important part of my discussion, paramount for the practical success of vellum as a

binding material of advantage to the bookbinder as well as to the librarian and the book collector--the lining and balancing of the cover. If the book is large, it is necessary to line the cover with a lined piece of vellum of the same quality that was used on the outside. One can use for this purpose the less attractive pieces or hides. Many colleagues might find this advice rather extravagant, particularly because the vellum lining is not visible on the finished book, but actually, when the bookbinder takes so much time and pains to create a special binding, this extra expense and effort is well worthwhile.

When the tapes have been laced through the grooves and glued down, a board pattern is cut for trimming out the turn-ins of the vellum. The book is put on a flannel covered block for this work. The pattern is laid correctly on the inside of the board, and weighing it down, the turn-in is cut with a sharp, pointed knife. The somewhat larger piece of vellum that has already been lined with paper is now cut the same size as the board pattern, glued, and placed in the trimmed out area, in which it should fit exactly. After rubbing it down under a piece of paper, a zinc wrapped in paper or a stiff piece of pressboard is laid inside and the book put in the press under moderate pressure for three or four hours, or, better yet, overnight.

The book is then stood open with the inner side of the cover toward the warm side of the room to allow the cover to warp in slightly, in case it has not already done so under the light pressing. The cover must already have this slight warp before pasting down the board paper because in this final step the vellum lining will be covered up. The temperature changes work more directly and stronger on the outside vellum than on the inner lining which is under a board paper. A small warping, especially with large volumes, must always be expected due to the nature of this highly hygroscopic material, but I am convinced that the best way to counter this tendency is through the use of vellum in the above manner and that a warp-free vellum binding can thereby

be achieved. One should leave every vellum binding in the process as long as possible so that the material is well dried out. With works printed on vellum, vellum endsheets are used and if leather joints are made, sometimes, the inside of the board cover gets a vellum lined doublure. No changes need be made otherwise in the method of binding. One can make exception to the prescribed method with small sized books by systematically lining the boards with strong drawing paper, first with the grain and then against it until the goal is reached. I am referring here to small editions. For the single volume, it is worthwhile to line with vellum.

About 25 years ago, our workshop received a small edition of 55 volumes from a hand press. The price permitted only a simple full vellum cover of small octavo size. The boards were glued onto the completely dried, lined vellum, and remained in the press until they were ready to be turned in. Even after much dampening and softening, the turning in remained an unusually hard task. Many linings with strong brown paper were necessary in order to remove the warp from the covers before hanging in. An example of this edition in my library has remained elegant and flat. It would have been considerably easier in this job also to use the vellum lining, but I had not discovered this technique then and came first upon the idea two years later. With this new method, it is advantageous to finish the cover and to turn it in as fast as possible, and on the next day to line with vellum in order that the turn-ins do not become too stiff. The title on this edition job was gold stamped on a press. When public or private libraries have old vellum bindings that are not properly balanced, they are more trouble than pleasure to the owner. The outsides of these bindings are not very handsome when the corners lift up in all directions, destroying the brilliance of the cover and diminishing the use of the book. Such work came every now and then into our workshop for correction and was cured and made useable, but such repair takes time and would not be necessary if the

vellum had been correctly handled by the binder.

In most cases the knowledgeable book binder can do the book and the owner a service by taking the warp out of the cover when it is possible without damage. He must above all know, however, that all important historical and bibliographical material must be retained with the book.

Gilding on vellum is fundamentally not harder than on leather, requiring however, greater attention to the degree of dampness, knowledge of the chosen sizing, and exact control of the temperature of the tool. The pressure must be sure, not too short but rather lingering a bit to obtain a better impression and surface. Before the discovery of the Parisian Fixor, I used egg white as the sizing. I prepared the volumes to be gilded then as follows: degreased the vellum with grain alcohol to which a little water had been added, sponged it with lukewarm water and put in the initial impression with a lukewarm tool. This impression I then brushed with a paste wash, and when that was dry I applied two layers of egg white. The paste wash, followed by the egg white, helps to keep the moisture in the vellum; nevertheless, the final impression with a lukewarm tool should follow as soon as the surface is dry. Later on, I used a combination of egg white and shellac in the proportions prescribed by L. H. Kinder: 10 parts egg white to 6 parts shellac, the latter being stirred into the former. In this case, vinegar should not be added to the egg white or the preparation will curdle.

This preparation made the gilding much easier as the tool could be used somewhat warmer than lukewarm, in fact up to a light sizzle. The mixture must be made fresh daily, the shellac stored separately in a bottle. With the later introduction of Fixor much was simplified for the binder and the gilder. It is very suitable for vellum and I suggest as a further improvement, a mixture of Fixor and egg white to which a drop of glycerin has been added.

A time saving trick, which many gilders may not

yet know, and which can be used for leather as well as vellum, comes from Mr. Monteney, an English-American binder and finisher from Chicago. It concerns the second gilding. After the first gilding has been completed and cleaned out, the gilding can be washed over lightly and quickly with water and a second gilding done without resizing so long as it is done within an hour or so after the first gilding. The gold then is excellent with sharp outlines and no trace of the sizing. The first layer, however, must have been applied generously.

It is not possible in this article to go into all the details. This article, like a textbook, can do no more than present the theory of vellum binding and gilding in part. Only practise and experience can bring success.

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(This article originally appeared in the Allgemeiner Anzeiger für Buchbindereien LXXIII No. 8 (August, 1960), pp. 434-436 under the title "Der Pergamentband." Permission for its translation and publication in the Journal has been graciously given by the editor, Max Hettler.)

EDITORIAL / Laura S. Young

This issue of the Journal marks the beginning of its third year of successful publication. Started on an experimental basis as a replacement for the numerous notices and reports formerly sent to the membership, it has weathered its probationary period. With few exceptions it has been enthusiastically received both by our members and by a growing list of institutional subscribers--an audience never reached by our previous miscellany of mimeographed sheets. Mailing pieces have been greatly reduced but our activities have been better and more completely reported than in any other period of the Guild's history.

Mr. Peter Franck's article in this issue gives the Guild an appropriate opportunity to honor, in its modest way, an outstanding craftsman whose career spans more than half a century. It is fitting that the biographical sketch of Mr. Franck initiates what is hoped will be a continuing series on America's hand book craftsmen; and the introduction of this series brings us a step further toward accomplishing the objectives set for the Journal in its first number.

It is the feeling of the Executive Committee that this series is a worthwhile undertaking for two important reasons. It will pay tribute to many dedicated and able craftsmen who have worked a lifetime with little or no public recognition; and in time it will be a valuable contribution to the history of America's cultural pursuits.

It will take time to organize such an ambitious project and until a plan of procedure is worked out these sketches will, in all probability, not appear in each issue of the Journal, nor will they follow any orderly pattern. Criteria for selecting the subjects must be determined; restrictions, if any, on the periods in which the craftsmen



worked must be decided; and authors who are able and willing to devote the time and effort to producing these sketches must be located.

Any nominations for our "Hall of Fame," any suggestions as to exclusiveness or inclusiveness in the series regarding both subjects and dates, and the services of any volunteer authors will all be gratefully received.

The value of such a series will be in direct proportion to its comprehensiveness. Historians have not been numerous in this area and craftsmen are seldom publicity seekers, both of which make the plan more challenging and more difficult. In this connection our gratitude should be expressed to Miss Hannah French of Wellesley, Mass. who has devoted a great deal of time to research in this field, and is doubtless the leading authority on early American binders.

It is expectable that the Guild, as an organization, and its individual members should be interested in the lives and work of America's hand book craftsmen; and it is hoped that many of you will desire to contribute some time and effort toward the success of this venture. In addition to adding a chapter to the cultural history of our country, we will, in truth, be aiding in the preservation of our collective heritage.

EXHIBITION COMMITTEE / C. Vernon Johnson

The Executive Committee had planned to have an exhibition in the spring of 1965. We had intended to use the Small Gallery at AIGA Headquarters. Unfortunately for us, the activities in connection with the celebration of AIGA's fiftieth anniversary became so voluminous that there were no open dates for the GBW. We now contemplate having a show in the late autumn or early winter and we will reserve space in the very near future and perhaps be announcing the date of the show in the next edition of the Journal.

The Library Committee plans to include in its column in the Journal bibliographic references to articles appearing in various periodicals which may be of interest to hand book craftsmen. Work is being done both retrospectively and currently on this project. The widespread use of Xerox machines should make it both easy and inexpensive for our members to obtain copies of articles of particular interest, thereby relieving the Guild of the expense involved in purchasing and mailing reprints.

We are grateful to Mr. Claude H. Jensen of Old Saybrook, Conn., for his time and effort in compiling the following bibliography from the complete file of Craft Horizons.

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Adams, Alice. "Douglass Howell--the Composition of Paper." (Sept.-Oct., 1962), 26-29.

Bonet, Paul. "Decoration of Bindings." (Autumn, 1950), 15-17.

"Boxes Replace Bindings for Books." A collection of limited editions encased by Gerhard Gerlach. (Oct., 1953), 11-15.

Brugalla, Emilio. "Bookbinders Search for New Design." (Oct., 1954), 28-31.

Cain, Julien. "French Art of the Book." (Autumn, 1949), 9-11.

Cockerell, Sidney M. "A Hand Bindery." (Nov., 1951), 22-25.

----- . "Marbling Paper." (June, 1952), 32-35.

- Diehl, Edith. "Hand Bookbinding." (Spring, 1949),  
4-7.
- Ellsworth, Charles. "Hand Bookbinding in Sweden."  
(Feb., 1953), 13-15.
- Halper, Albert. "Douglass Howell's Handmade  
Papers." (June, 1953), 13-17.
- Johnson, Pauline. "Decorative Covers." (Aug.,  
1954), 20-23.
- Karlikow, Abe. "Bookbinding by Alice and Georges  
Leroux." (March-Apr., 1962), 32-35.
- Lada-Mocarski, Polly. "Preface to Book Binding."  
(Nov., 1948), 4-5.
- , "The Spencer Collection." (Spring,  
1950), 11-13.
- , "New French Onlay." (Jan., 1958),  
38-39.
- , "Modern French Book Art." (Jan.-Feb.,  
1964), 36-41.
- , and Karlikow, A. "Conversation with  
Pierre Martin--Master Binder." (May-June,  
1961), 14-17.
- , and Lyon, Mary. "Bookbinding--the Art of  
Mary Reynolds." (Jan.-Feb., 1961), 10-13.
- Ochida, Yoshiko. "Bookbinding by Florence Walter."  
(July-Aug., 1964), 28-30.
- Pommer, Richard. "Gerhard Gerlach, Bookbinder."  
(Oct., 1952), 23-25.

Slivka, Rose. "For an American Book Craft." (Jan.-  
Feb., 1961), 8-9.

Tribolet, Harold W. "Aspects of Hand Bookbinding."  
(Autumn, 1949), 12-14.

#### MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE / Philomena Houlihan

Membership changes March, 1964-December, 1964

New Members: Mrs. Harriet L. Cohen, Mrs. Juliette McL. A. Cowen, Miss Anne Hertz, Mr. David B. Ingram, Miss Miesje Jolley, and Miss Virginia Sanford. Their addresses will be found in the revised membership list in this issue of the Journal.

Resignations: Mrs. Julia B. Engle and Mr. Noel C. Stevenson.

Deceased: Mr. Samuel W. Webb.

## PROGRAM COMMITTEE / Mary C. Schlosser

### AN INFORMAL MEETING

The first program of the 1964-65 season was held on Tuesday, October 27th at 7:30 P.M. in the form of an informal get-together at AIGA Headquarters, where 29 members and their guests took turns telling of their recent activities and sharing interesting information they had collected over the summer.

Mr. Lawton P. G. Peckham had been abroad and brought an interesting selection of decorated papers from Paris to show us. They were made by Mme. Claude Delpierre of 72 Rue Bonaparte, Paris 6e, and included marble papers in traditional designs as well as more modern patterns, some utilizing unusual papers as a background. An outstanding feature of the papers is their subtle and agreeable color combinations. According to Mr. Peckham, Mme. Delpierre is happy to supply papers to order.

A most interesting and worthwhile activity was brought to our attention by Mrs. Louise James who told of her work for the Lighthouse (New York Association for the Blind), binding special Braille books. Making bindings for unique Braille volumes is a part of this project, while making loose-leaf covers for text books is another important aspect. By using loose-leaf covers, it is possible to revise or up-date texts without discarding the whole work; or else it makes it possible to take the text apart and permit several people to work simultaneously at copying a volume. Mrs. James is looking for volunteers who could help in this most important work which is done at the Lighthouse on Mondays and Tuesdays. Mrs. James introduced her guest, Miss Katharine Nash, who is a fellow-worker on the Braille binding projects, and we were all most interested to see samples of this work which they had brought to show us.

Another guest whom we were happy to welcome was Miss Connie Kilgare.

Present at her first meeting as a new member of the Guild was Miss Miesje Jolley. Miss Jolley has been studying sculpture at the Rhode Island School of Design, where she also took a course in hand binding. She is now working in Mrs. Young's shop and in her spare time doing some sculpting and interior decorating on her new apartment.

Miss Frances Manola reported that she has undertaken several new projects to round out her interest in calligraphy. She is now working part-time in an art gallery (where her italic hand gets good practice making titles on mats) and is learning the round hand for a new job. She is also studying bookbinding at the Craft Students League and plans to make her own silk-screened end papers.

Another new member attending her first meeting of the Guild was Mrs. Ethel Jean Alpert. Mrs. Alpert is a calligrapher who hopes to pursue her studies in the field with Paul Standard.

After our experiences last spring when the noted English binder, Roger Powell, visited this country and lectured to the GBW, everyone was especially interested to hear from Mrs. Inez Pennybacker who had returned from six months in England where she had been working with Mr. Powell and his partner, Peter Waters. It was interesting to learn that Mr. Waters' wife, Sheila, is an outstanding calligrapher in her own right and is active as a book designer. Mrs. Pennybacker reported having seen many interesting exhibits of the book arts as well as meeting and talking to many of the leading men in the field, among them Mr. William Langwell and the Cockerells. Apparently, a working day with Mr. Powell in Froxfield lasts from 9:00 A.M. until 7:00 P.M., which should be a cause for some thought from all who wish to excel in binding or calligraphy.

We were indeed happy to welcome still another new member, Mrs. Ruth Tayler, who has studied at the Craft Students League and with Mrs. Stanescu. She

called to our attention the handsome Greek books on exhibition at the World's Fair.

Another member present was Miss N. Bradford, one of Mrs. Young's students, and a binder who has the unusual distinction of having cut her own brass alphabet for tooling.

Among the fascinating things brought to show at the meeting was a very large vellum box, made in Mrs. Carolyn Horton's shop by Mr. Sergio Ceccarini, and requiring 25 sq. ft. of vellum. It was the fifth box of this type which he had made to hold a series of prints for an artist, and looking at it, we could easily believe that it took all of the strength he could muster to apply the skins properly over such a large area.

Miss Betsy Palmer, who continues to work with Mrs. Horton, reminded us of her interest in finding a way to bring together more binders from all parts of the country who may never have heard of the Guild and may be working in isolation. She is drafting a possible letter to libraries and book dealers who might be able to provide information about such persons in their area.

Several handsome bindings were on hand for our inspection from Mr. Duncan Andrews' collection of books on precious stones. As we learned so well on our visit to Mr. Rosenwald's Gallery last spring, it is not necessary to collect bindings for themselves to find oneself the owner of interesting bindings. Here were a signed and dated (C H \* H 1 5 \* 7 4) blind tooled German pigskin binding for De Occultis Naturae Miraculis by Leo Lemnius, a 17th century Venetian vellum binding on Il Tesoro Delle Gioie by Cleandro Arnobio, a later full crimson levant French binding of great richness by Huser, and an elaborately tooled Zaehnsdorf binding of 1908 on a special volume on the cutting and history of the Cullinan Diamond.

As guests of another new member, Miss Anne Hertz, who is a book designer aspiring to become also a calligrapher, were Mr. and Mrs. Howard Burns, also book designers.

Mr. Harold Goodwin reported that during a four month sojourn in Europe he had had many opportunities for contact with book binding and related fields. He, too, was in Froxfield visiting Mr. Powell and Mr. Waters, saw an excellent binding exhibition at the British Museum and was much intrigued with the old bindings he saw in the Archives Museum in Vienna. Mr. Goodwin will pursue his study of binding again this winter in Mrs. Young's shop.

Another foreign traveler was Mrs. Enid Perkins who has spent two months in Colombia, South America, where she became interested in the restoration of a Spanish colonial chapel. As a result, she was inscribing and illuminating a history of the chapel to be hung there, and very pleased to have found a beautiful gilt 15th century Spanish frame for it.

Rounding out the circle of reports was Mrs. Maggy Fisher who continues to work with Mrs. Horton, where she has been mainly concerned with the long term conservation program of the Genizah fragments at the Jewish Theological Seminary.

Other members who participated, albeit somewhat less loquaciously, in our pleasantly sociable evening, were our president, Mrs. Young who led the meeting, Mrs. Coryn, Mrs. Greenfield, Miss Janes, Mr. Jensen, Mr. Johnson, Mrs. Kaufman, Mr. and Mrs. Stein, and your reporting Program Chairman, Mrs. Schlosser.



PUBLICITY COMMITTEE / Grady E. Jensen

During the summer your new Publicity Chairman had both the opportunity and obligation of going through the Committee files inherited from Paul Banks. This collection of varied, interesting and historical material has now been refiled either by subject matter or date, depending on its nature, and a start has been made on a cross-indexing card file.

In the Spring issue of the Journal Mr. Banks mentioned that some 20 libraries around the country are now subscribing to the Journal. Since then we have obtained a membership list of the Association of Research Libraries. There are 74 libraries in this group, many if not all of which have a rare book department. We intend to poll these regarding (1) their possible interest in the GBW or the Journal and (2) fine binders whom they may know, but who are unknown to us.

The June 9, 1964, The New York Times carried a story entitled "White House Calligraphers Busy" and in the September 22nd issue reported at some length on the Morgan Library exhibit mentioned above. On the subject of newspapers and other published stories and articles, please be sure to send along copies of these for our files.

Earlier this fall GBW members were notified by postal card of the exhibit of The Book of Hours of Catherine of Cleves, at the Pierpont Morgan Library. The catalogue of the exhibit of this 500-year old Dutch illuminated manuscript is still available for sale. The cost is \$5.00, postpaid, for the hard cover edition, and \$2.75 plus 25 cents postage for the paperback edition. These may be ordered directly from the Morgan Library, 33 East 36th Street, New York, New York.

In July and September, very satisfactory stories about our President and her work appeared in the Dan-

ville, Virginia, Register and the Roanoke, Virginia, Times.

This autumn Mr. & Mrs. Cunha spent several months in Europe visiting Rare Book Rooms. We hope to have a report of their observations in the next issue of the Journal.

In October Harold Tribolet published an article entitled "Trends in Preservation" in Library Trends, XIII No. 2, pp. 208-214.

In December Mrs. Carolyn Horton and Miss Betsy Palmer made a trip to Charleston, S.C. to treat a valuable private ornithological collection and to act as consultants on the conservation and restoration of the collections at the Charleston Library Society. While there they visited the spacious and splendidly appointed bindery at the Carolina Art Association. This bindery was founded by our member, Mrs. Juliette Staats. Five students attend morning classes five days a week. The teacher is another Guild member, Mrs. Fleda Myers.

Mr. Harold Tribolet and Mrs. Carolyn Horton will again be teaching their course on the restoration and conservation of rare books and manuscripts at the Seminars on American Culture which are presented annually at Cooperstown, New York by the New York State Historical Association. The course will be given every afternoon from July 12th through July 17th. This course was first offered at Cooperstown in July, 1962. The directors of the N.Y.S.H.A. expected no more than a handful of registrants. Seventy-six librarians, binders, book collectors and curators registered. The next year there was an even larger registration and the class was moved to a larger hall. GBW Vice-President at Large, Mr. Patterson, reported on the 1962 Seminar in the Fall, 1962 Journal, I, No. 1, p. 9. For further information about this year's program write to the New York State Historical Association at Cooperstown, N.Y.

### *Bookbinding at Williamsburg*

Our spring vacation trip this year included a visit to Williamsburg, Virginia, where, since 1923, the restoration and replacement of many handsome 18<sup>th</sup> century Colonial buildings has been taking place. On Duke of Gloucester Street, which sees mostly pedestrian traffic and an occasional horse-drawn carriage bearing sightseers, there is a somewhat small, white painted shingle and clapboard building, identified by a swinging sign above the front door lettered "Printing Office" and surmounted by the painted figure of a Franklin style hand press. But visible within a bay window overhanging the red brick sidewalk are many and varied hand tools that indicate that bookbinding also is carried on inside.

Since the building is small and the visitors frequently numerous, a one-way circulation is requested. This takes one down a series of outside brick steps, flanked by plantings of old-fashioned flowers. At the bottom a door is open into the printery and a workman, dressed in slightly ink-dabbed Colonial costume of long-sleeved muslin shirt, knee breeches and long, white stockings, pulls impressions on a hand press for the visitors to see.

What I was more interested in seeing was at the top of the inside stairway — the bindery. A not very large room to begin with, space was shared by a literature counter that did extra duty as a post office. Behind the workbench on the left stood a portly workman and a

younger one, both talking to interested visitors and pointing out two or three heavy wooden presses, skins of tan calf and red goat, authentic old wooden candlesticks, many brass gilding tools, and bindings on which the same tools had been used to ornament them.

When the older of the workmen was momentarily free, I introduced myself and asked if he might be Mr. Samford. (I had hitherto heard and read of him.) He affirmed that he was, and from a shelf took out a Guild catalog and turned to my entries in it. He introduced his apprentice, Eugene Crane, and from then on, for an hour at least, we talked binding.

Mr. Samford told of the original bindery, together with several other buildings nearby, having been completely destroyed by fire about 1890, and when restoration began in the 20's many metal tools, such as shears and dividers, were recovered from the ashes of the foundation, as well as the brass parts of gilding tools and rolls. Reproductions of these tools are used now on bindings made in the shop. Copied recently from an old piece was a huge all-wood standing press, at the moment holding several finished leather bindings. At my curiosity about the wooden candle holders he smiled and said they do use electric lights when there is need. And the charcoal burner such as the early gilders used to heat their tools on actually is fitted with an electric hot plate.

Because the working space is so limited, materials and supplies such as paper, leather, paste and coverboard, are kept in the loft above the bindery.

Many books in various stages of construction were

piled at one end of the work bench. In an antique bookcase across the room, completed books stood on the shelves for viewing.

After a most interesting conversation with master and apprentice, I was about to leave when my attention was called to a small pamphlet on the reading materials counter — *The Bookbinder in 18th Century Williamsburg* — at 50 cents a copy. This booklet was the result of Mr. Samford's study of the craft work of early America. It is a delightful little book with many illustrations, and may be had by writing to

Mr. C. Clement Samford  
Old Printing Office  
Colonial Williamsburg  
Virginia.

Thomas W. Patterson

## COMMENTS FROM READERS

In a letter to Mrs. Coryn from Roger Powell shortly after the publication of Vol. II, no. 3 of the Journal, he says: "Thank you very much indeed. And thanks too for all the honour bestowed on me in the text, and not least for the photograph on the cover which has met with marked approval among my family and friends. It all pleased my Father (whose 97th birthday we celebrated recently) very much; my first introduction to bookbinding was at his hands over 50 years ago.

"Peggy Ullman's account of my talk in the Morgan Library covers a very large part of what I said -- perhaps too much? But I should like to offer alternative reading of two sections: p. 33, line 6. 'The method of repair/binding (1895 and perhaps 1932) followed the usual practice at the time, in rebinding paper-leaved books. These may sometimes suit paper-leaved books, but never suit vellum-leaved books.' The comparison with repairing paper-backs must have arisen from my carelessly chosen words.

"The other bit is also p. 33, 9th line from the bottom: 'To bind this mass of leaves in one volume would have resulted in a book of intolerable thickness, so for this and other reasons--in particular that only one quarter of the Gospels would be used at a time--each Gospel was bound in a separate volume.'

...

"My best wishes to you and all the friends I made in my first brief glimpse of New York and the little strip of the East from New Haven to Washington! I did enjoy myself, and am grateful indeed to the members of the Guild for all the kindnesses and hospitality. We shall be very pleased to see any of you who come to England."

Mr. Andrews received the following letter from Mr. Franck:

"I enjoyed reading your article on the recent visit of the Guild of Book Worker members to the Alverthorpe Gallery at Jenkintown. It was amusing to note Mr. Rosenwald's comment that I'd sworn that the Common Prayer folio would be my last vellum binding. I don't recall the statement, but am happy to say that the difficulties of working with vellum did not deter me from continuing to do more vellum bindings later.

"However I would like to offer a correction to the statement that the 'gold cover device' was of Rosenwald design. The design and execution of the whole binding was my own."

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In a letter accompanying Mrs. Crump's article on Mr. Franck she says:

"It is a great joy to shoulder just a little of the load of the Executive Committee by helping with the Journal. It is a very small payment for how much the Journal means to those of us who live away from the New York area."

NECROLOGY / Philomena Houlihan

Samuel W. Webb died on August 22, 1964. He was a resident of Manhasset, N.Y., and had become a member of the Guild in January, 1961. Since 1924 Mr. Webb was employed by the Canfield Paper Company in New York. His wide knowledge of paper and paper-making led to his interest and enthusiasm for the somewhat neglected study of the history and technique of marbling papers to which he applied himself during his leisure hours. One of the highlights of the Guild's activities was a most interesting lecture-demonstration he gave to members and their guests at the General Theological Seminary in February of 1963. On January 30, 1964, an equally fascinating lecture-demonstration was given at the American Craftsmen's Council. Guests were permitted to try their hand at marbling. Mr. Webb also lectured out of town and contributed articles to magazines. Book Production magazine for July, 1961, published his "The Technique of Marbling" with illustrations of Mr. Webb showing the process, and samples of his papers were included in the article. The American Artist for February, 1962, published his "Paper Marbling--A True Abstraction." This article was also well illustrated and included samples of his work. In March, 1962, Mr. Webb had gathered together some of the finest examples of his marbling and presented them to the Cooper Union Museum for the Arts of Decoration where they have been on permanent exhibit. Mr. Webb's friends and relatives treasure the cards he so skillfully made of his marbled papers.