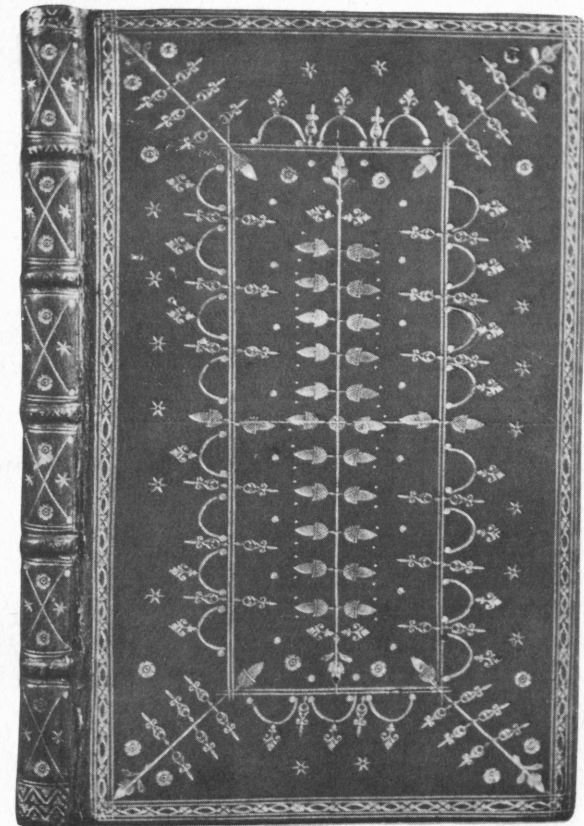


## GUILD OF BOOK WORKERS JOURNAL

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# JOURNAL OF THE GUILD OF BOOK WORKERS

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(Editor this issue: Mary E. Greenfield)

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The Cover: A Parks Williamsburg binding (1736), THE CHARTER, AND STATUTES, OF THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY, IN VIRGINIA. Red morocco, gold tooled in the Scottish herringbone design.

(Reprinted by permission of the Earl Gregg Swem Library, The College of William and Mary in Virginia.)

VOLUNTEER WORKER AT THE BIBLIOTECA NAZIONALE IN  
FLORENCE / Ruth Stein

At the end of June I presented myself as a volunteer worker at the Biblioteca Nazionale in Florence, in spite of the fact that I had just received a letter stating that it was highly doubtful whether volunteer help would be needed, since it was now the policy to train Italian workers. These did indeed constitute the great majority. Some were students, many were workers who had been sent to help by their union. However there was also a generous and international sprinkling of volunteers, such as a Dutch student who soon switched from cleaning books to cleaning statues at the Casa di Michelangelo, a Finn who understood only Finnish and Swedish, a number of young Americans and many English.

On arrival, I was escorted by a member of the British team past endless stacks of newspapers to a large room devoted to collating and pulling, given a white overall and various utensils such as a bone folder, knife, pencil and eraser, and put to work. Here the dry books were sent after having been photographed and were first checked for missing pages or sections; the fly leaves, title pages, inserted plates and maps were numbered and also marked with the catalogue number, or, where that was missing with the photograph number. At the same time some of the most superficial mud was removed by gentle scraping or chipping, as it had been found that this could be done with a minimal risk to the paper and facilitated the later washing operation. The danger of damaging the fibers during this process had to be balanced against the risk of letting the mud soak into the paper at the later stage. This, I gathered, was a greater dilemma in the case of prints than of books, because the fine lines were extremely vulnerable. In most books the mud had collected around the edges and on the margins but only relatively rarely did it cover the printed page.

After this first step was completed the books were rechecked by a supervisor (in fact this was done after each stage of the work on a book) and were handed to the next long table where they were taken apart. The cords, headbands, covers, even faded page markers,

were carefully preserved in envelopes as, of course, were all page fragments.

In the corners of this room special problems were dealt with: in one a young Englishman was engaged in the almost impossible task of trying to reassemble into its original order a book which consisted to a great extent of loose unnumbered pages of botanical drawings. I was told that some books had become disordered, their sections mixed with those belonging to others, when, a few days after the flood, a volunteer arranged those that had dried in the power house by size rather than content. Another section of this room was devoted to the slow and painstaking work of separating pages stuck together by a coating of mud.

After the books had been processed here they were taken downstairs, where many of them were washed to remove the remaining mud and to get out the stains and reduce the discolorations of different provenance: mold, yellowed size, and glue. (I only saw one case of a stain that appeared to be oily.) After a few days I also descended to these regions at Peter Waters' suggestion and spent the next two weeks from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. with an hour off for lunch--I had decided that I would keep the same hours as a paid worker but I must admit that I shirked work on Saturday mornings--busily washing everything that came my way. This washing was done in heated stainless steel tanks filled with a diluted topane solution. A wooden board was put on the surface, held in position by steel brackets. The book was placed on this, section by section, and each page brushed lightly with a brush held at an angle and pulled towards the outside. (On delicate paper one even had to avoid brushing across the grain.) During this operation the pages had to be kept very wet either by constant sprinkling or by gently rocking the board since the friction then was less than on only dampened paper. Some books required no brushing but only thorough rinsing in the solution to wash out the excess size. I was told that it had been found that most paper even now was being sized more than was necessary, and in fact many of the Florentine books were not going to be resized after having been washed. Of course the wet pages had to be turned with great care as the paper had lost most of its strength. In some

cases the paper was so soft that it was necessary to interleave the pages with silicone paper prior to handling. Every book in some way presented different problems. On some a kind of size had been used that made the paper almost impermeable, these had to be soaked in an alcohol bath to reduce the surface tension before they could be treated in the tank.

On occasion I enjoyed reading passages from the books I was working on. Unfortunately the accepted practise, which I dared not change, was to start washing at the last section and proceed towards the first, piling and squaring them as one went, against a corner of the tank, and so I was forced to read backwards. Among other things I came across an old German prose version of Romeo and Juliet which unintentionally succeeded in being pure comedy. Another source of amusement was a travel guide dating probably from the middle of the 18th Century which besides describing places of interest throughout Europe, also gave historical anecdotes (some of rather doubtful veracity), accounts of curious customs, and other tidbits of information. I learned from it that St. Tropez was even then considered "paradise for women, purgatory for men, and hell for donkeys," and was informed that a stone dropped into certain mountain lakes will cause a thunderstorm. When I reached the introduction I read that this was the fifth edition from which all errors of the previous ones had been eliminated.

Throughout the time that I worked there I was impressed by the friendliness and helpfulness of everyone around me. As soon as my tank started resembling the Arno in colour and I was forced to drain it, my neighbour would put down whatever he was doing and bring me heavy pails of topene to refill it. Another pleasant memory is of the great melodiousness with which my Italian coworkers whistled as they worked, choosing to my surprise almost always classical music--Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms and of course many Verdi arias. Possibly they felt this more in keeping with the general atmosphere: only older books were being handled here; the modern ones were easier to replace than to restore.

The installation of the equipment for book repair and rebinding recently described at a Guild meeting by Mrs. Patri, had not yet been completed during my stay.

in Florence. However some paper repair work was under way at the time in a room devoted to the restoration of prints, and since I wished to learn the basic principles I spent the last few days in this section. Here an Australian couple were in charge. They planned to set up a combination workshop and experimental station but found it a slow process. By the time I left some of the equipment they had ordered was arriving (among other things a hair dryer and an elaborate gadget which could be used for spraying a protective coating on segments of the print), but could not yet be put to use, since the electrical outlets which had been installed after much begging had not yet been connected. The language barrier was of course also a source of great difficulties. I remember somebody spending hours trying to find out the standard sizes of paper and board.

On the whole however, I left with an impression of great efficiency, meticulous planning and superb organisation on the part of the British team led by Peter Waters. I have the greatest admiration for what they have accomplished and for their methods in setting about this tremendous task.

#### VOLUNTEER WORKER AT THE BIBLIOTECA NAZIONALE IN FLORENCE / Rosalind Meyer

On Monday, August 7th, I left my little Albergo, the Signoria on Via Della Terma, walked along the Lungarno where the peaceful Arno dribbled along, past many small shops, displaying bright, beautiful new merchandise. The shops were spotless, but high on the outer walls of the buildings were stubborn marks made by the dirt and oil which indicated the height to which the raging Arno had risen that gloomy day of November 1966. Not all the debris had been cleared from in front of the buildings which I passed. Through the broken windows could be seen a lovely chandelier with bits of curtain rags, small twigs, and straw mixed with the crystal drops. From the basements came the dank, damp odor of wood and of stone not thoroughly dried out. Along the base of many of the

buildings holes had been drilled or blocks removed to help the drying process.

I arrived at the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale and was met by Mr. Peter Waters, from England who is in charge of the Book Restoration Project. We walked, it seemed miles, through long stately halls with portable shelving and thousands of books, magazines, and newspapers, wrapped in cellophane, each item of which had been disinfected in ethylene oxide gas vacuum tanks, by men wearing gas masks. I was taken to Sala Del Rinascimento now called Sala #40. The Sala is a large air conditioned comfortable room, in the new addition of the Biblioteca, where the first steps connected with the restoration of the volumes begin.

Directly after the disaster many ways were used to help dry out the sodden books. Blotting paper, absorbent papers, kleenex, powder, and sawdust were used. In many cases it turned the books into solid bricks. It was these bricks that I help turn back into books. The pride of the Biblioteca consisted of the Magliabechi collection of first editions of 16th to 18th centuries. These books had been moved to the basement and first floor of the Biblioteca to protect them from the bombings of the last war. As they had never been returned to their earlier positions on the higher floors they suffered the greatest damage. Mr. Patrizio Passerini was the director of Sala #40. Mr. Raffaello Pasquini, a most skilled, kindly gentleman acted as general foreman taking care of tools and equipment. He also acted as the general restorer advising Sala #40.

Each book that we received was accompanied with two cards, one in Italian and the other in English. Each book had been photographed, and numbered. The books that were given to me had three !!! which meant "fore volta attenzione," or need much careful attention. One of the first tasks was to try to find the catalogue number. If the book was in the brick condition, we used a solution made with Dowicide No. 1 or Topane (both ortho-phenyl-phenol) and alcohol. This helped to dissolve the mud and made it possible to find the catalogue number. Then this solution was applied to the head, tail, and fore edge of the book which helped dissolve the mud, powder, etc., after



which we tried to find a means with a bone folder or steel-edged tool to separate the sheets, after which we inserted the tool and started to lift the sheets apart. This was done to each sheet in the book. At times we used the dry method, which consisted in trying to separate the sheets without the use of the Topane. In many cases the sheets were crushed together with mud. Where the pages were in such a condition and tiny bits came off, each tiny piece was placed in an envelope, marked with the photograph number and catalogue number and page number. The next process was turned over to a section which did the work of pulling the book apart.

The paper and print used in the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries were more amenable to restoration processes and could undergo rougher handling because of the quality of the paper and ink used. During my three weeks work, I helped with 23 volumes, the scripts being in Latin, Greek, German, French, and Italian. The earliest volume was dated 1560 and the sizes of the books I handled ranged from 3" x 4" to 20" x 15".

The Italian workers in the various processes of restoration are under two-year contracts. They are mostly men and women unemployed because of the flood. After about 6 months training they will be given an examination to pass into a higher pay schedule. The workers learning the processes will teach others. The Italians are excellent craftsmen and should, with the help of CRIA and all of the countries that have contributed in goods and money, make Florence a center for the restoration of all art works.

We worked from 8:30 to 1:30 with a half hour morning break and then from 2:30 to 5:30. The work was very exacting and used up much energy. It would not have been possible to work without the air conditioner and fans.

There were three Guild of Book Workers at the time I was in the Biblioteca, Mrs. Carolyn Horton of New York, Mrs. Patri of California, and myself of Wisconsin. We were each so busy that we had little time or energy left to sit and talk.

On leaving the Biblioteca I looked up at the stately building and high up on the left side of the

entrance, in a protected niche, is a statue of Dante and the words

Questa Sara' Luce Nova  
This May Be A New Light.

I thought of the many devoted workers, the many new chemicals, the new technological processes, the new skills being put to such an heroic piece of work. All of this is being put to use to return the books to the shelves for the scholars. This may be the new light.

I left Florence on August 30th arriving back in time to take up my work at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee.

#### THE HOUSE OF THE BOOK, PUERTO RICO / Hilda Edelman

La Casa del Libro--every member of the Guild of Bookworkers lives and/or works in one, no doubt. However, there is one particular one that was a delightful discovery for me, so happily formed in a country still struggling for its economic place in the sun.

This past summer I travelled to Puerto Rico with my doctor husband. While he visited the University's School of Tropical Medicine, I went on, up the hill and around the corner, to Old San Juan.

There, a few steps from a small, ancient church which faces the ocean, I found, to my amazement, a museum dedicated to the book. The street, Calle de Christo, is paved, romantically and practically, with adoquines, the blue-grey glazed stones carried as ballast by the Spanish galleons. The museum itself is housed in an 18th Century Spanish house, built during the presidency of George Washington. The lovely carved fanlights and the old beams were retained during the restoration as well as two charming tiled patios, now filled with greenery.

The rain fell gently on the palms there as I walked through the three airy, white-washed exhibition rooms. The current exhibition was on calligraphy. The selections were excellent, beautifully displayed, and included many fine twentieth century items--several commissioned for this show. Two of particular excellence

were by Marie Angel and Herman Zapf, the last a recent visitor to La Casa.

The director of the museum is David Jackson McWilliams, a gracious and articulate scholar, who moonlights as a professor of English at the University of Puerto Rico and also directs an a capella chorus there. Those with more than a casual interest in his treasures are treated with rare generosity--cases are opened for closer scrutiny. The library and stacks, with their controlled temperature and humidity, are on display at present. The museum owns 6,000 items, including 300 incunabula.

La Casa del Libro was founded through the efforts of the late Elmer Adler, of the Pynson Press and The Colophon, "to stimulate improvement in local printing and to enlighten the public about the graphic arts."

The museum is now negotiating to purchase and rehabilitate an adjoining building in which they hope to offer a program of workshops.

The only disappointment I felt during my visit was that there was no record of the exhibit, neither catalog nor mimeographed sheet. Perhaps the future workshop may be able to provide these.

A yearly membership is available in the Amigos de Calle Christo 255 for \$10.00.

The building is open from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily except Sundays.

FROM SEA TO SEA / Jean Burnham

A college reunion at Boston and the Rare Book Conference of the American Library Association at Stanford University brought me from one end of the country to the other last summer. Although I wished to call on more binders than I did during this busman's holiday, every visit was a unique and enjoyable experience.

Capt. George M. Cunha, Conservator at the Boston Athenaeum enthusiastically shared his chemical knowledge. He and his wife are both gracious hosts--a memorable visit.

This year the Rare Book Conference discussed

appraisal, disposal and exhibition techniques. An outstanding William Morris and Kelmscott press exhibit, including stained glass and wall paper (but no Morris chair!) greeted us at the Terry Bender Rare Book Room at the Stanford University Library. Since I had not been in San Francisco for many years, it was a great treat to appreciate its unique beauty and its many cultural opportunities. Reflecting the charm of the city were the binders I visited. Mrs. Peter Fahey's pupils show unusually imaginative and creative ability. I wish I could have stayed for lessons! Mrs. Stella Patri, high in her eyrie, restores old volumes with painstaking precision. I was not surprised to learn that she was asked to help out in Florence. Miss Grace Margaret Webster though not too active as a binder at the moment showed me how one could have a "bindery" at home. A modest young man Paul Mucci bids fair to be outstanding in the not distant future.

I regretted not being able to talk with Mr. Duncan Olmsted, who was here in New York at the time. What I wished more than anything was that there could be more dialogue between the binders of both coasts. The West Coast binders have very much to contribute.

Mrs. Margaret Lecky in Los Angeles, in spite of having just moved the week before, found time to show me her beautiful new house, studio and lovely bindings. This was a great pleasure and much appreciated.

In Chicago, George Baer, in his bindery at the Cuneo Press showed me his superb and outstanding work. I was happy to hear that he has had the opportunity to contribute his talents in Florence, too. Paul Banks, Conservator at the Newberry Library was most generous of his time. He's an outstanding young man in the conservation field and has represented the U.S. in Florence for CRIA (Committee for the Relief of Italian Art).

Mr. Harold Tribolet, who was working on the proof sheets of Carolyn Horton's manual on book repair when I first arrived, spent more of his busy time than he should have in a conversation which was most interesting for me. We talked about restoration and Florence, for as many of you know, he has been the leader in the U.S. effort (through CRIA) to help ravaged Florence save her books. I came away with the feeling that the old concept of binders with their secrets was giving

way to a universal sharing of methods, much to the benefit of all.

## BOOK REVIEWS

Samford, C. Clement, and Hemphill, John M. Bookbinding in Colonial Virginia. Williamsburg, Virginia: Colonial Williamsburg, 1966. (Williamsburg Research Studies), 185 pp., 15 pl. \$4.00. Reviewed by Hannah D. French.\*

Fourteen years is a long time to wait for this study of bookbinding in Colonial Williamsburg which now appears in paperback as the eighth of the Williamsburg Research Studies. It was prepared in 1953 for use within Williamsburg by Clement Samford, bookbinder, and by John Hemphill II, then Research Associate in American Colonial History at Williamsburg, now professor of history of the Southwest, at Memphis. Its importance as the first of the Studies to deal with a craft and as the first presentation of bookbinding limited to one locality in colonial America cannot be overestimated.

Although the study is entitled Bookbinding in Colonial Virginia it is concerned almost wholly with the binding activities of the Williamsburg printing office, successively under William Parks, William Hunter, Joseph Royle, William Rind, and Puride and Dixon. These activities are extended at either end, from the earlier career of Parks at Annapolis to the death in Richmond in 1799 of Thomas Brend, bookbinder formerly of Annapolis and Williamsburg. The bibliography indicates the thoroughness with which the two authors worked, listing some forty-five primary sources, two thirds of them manuscripts.

The three chapters of text cover the beginnings of bookbinding in Maryland and Virginia, with mention of John Hill, formerly a bookbinder at the University of Oxford, resident in Virginia from about 1620. (It is

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\*Miss French is the Research Librarian, Wellesley College Library.

ironical that this binder's origin is clearly stated though it is unlikely that he produced bindings in Virginia while John Sanders undoubtedly worked at binding in Boston from 1637 when he set up shop but remains completely obscure as to his origin.) The second chapter continues the story of bookbinding in Williamsburg and Virginia after the death of William Parks in 1750 to 1799 while the third consists of an analysis of books believed to have been bound in Annapolis, Williamsburg, and Richmond, 1727-1799. These are followed by four appendices giving references to bookbinding in the Hunter Daybook, 1750-52, and in the Royle Daybook, 1764-66, a list of eighteen imprints which were examined in a total of more than one hundred copies in original bindings, and finally, a key to sixteen rolls.

A frontispiece and fourteen illustrations are very important for the authors' presentation. It is, therefore, greatly to be deplored that they are so badly placed; that there are no references in the text to plate numbers; that they are not in chronological order; and that they are separated by some 94 pages from the key to the rolls at the back of the book. However, the most serious drawback to the illustrations is the failure to indicate original size. The mixture of rubbings and photographs of folios, quartos and octavos provides no basis for the comparison of tools that the serious student will wish to make. Furthermore the rolls in appendix four are given in drawings presumably because rubbings could not be secured with sufficient clarity and several of them do not give the complete design. Roll number 14 is mistakenly attributed to the John Carter Brown Library which has the 1736 Charter whereas this edition of 1758 belongs to Princeton. Incidentally, there is a copy of the 1736 Charter in the Bodleian at Oxford identical with that at the John Carter Brown Library as shown in the rubbing sent to me.

All the books considered have Annapolis or Virginia imprints save one: Daniel Horsmanden's A Journal of the Conspiracy...for Burning the City of New York, printed in New York in 1744 (plate 6). This is accepted as a Williamsburg binding on the basis of comparison of tools on this book and the William and Mary Charter of 1736 (frontispiece). Though the authors

cite my suggestion made years ago that the two books might have been done by an unidentified Scottish binder in William Parks's employ they do not present any candidate for consideration. Surely Robert Stevenson and Edward Cumins/Cummings in the Royle Daybook must have been Scots. About Stevenson they have nothing to say though Hunter bought binding tools from his estate in 1750, the year of William Parks's death.

Since the study closes with the citation in Miss Sowerby's Catalogue of the Library of Thomas Jefferson of Jefferson's collection of Virginia Laws (plate 13) rebound by Thomas Brend in 1799 it might have been interesting to have included two volumes bound for Jefferson when he was a very young man reading law in Williamsburg, billed in the Royle Daybook to Jefferson under date of October 3, 1764. Rastall's Collection of Statutes and the more elaborate Satyricon, "morocco gilt" are also listed by Miss Sowerby and are to be found on the shelves of the Library of Congress with its Jefferson Collection.

Regardless of its faults this publication is an extremely valuable addition to the scant literature concerning bookbinding in early America. Regional studies of this kind are urgently needed. In his Foreword Edward M. Riley, Director of Research at Williamsburg, points the way to another, in his desire "to find a precise connection between Archibald Simpson, bookbinder of Dorchester County, Maryland, and William Parks." A study of Maryland is needed.

Horton, Carolyn. Cleaning and Preserving Bindings and Related Materials. Chicago: American Library Association, 1967. 96 pp. Illus. \$3.50. Reviewed by Lewis M. Stark.\*

The Library Technology Program of the American Library Association has for some time been planning a series of pamphlets on Conservation of Library Materials. The first publication in this series is Cleaning and Preserving Bindings and Related Materials, by Mrs. Carolyn Horton, of New York. Mrs. Horton, an expert hand bookbinder, has had extensive experience in the

\*Mr. Stark is the Chief, Rare Book Division, The New York Public Library.

repair and conservation of books, including assistance in the vast restoration projects in Florentine libraries, following the disastrous flood of November 4, 1966.

Mrs. Horton's pamphlet provides librarians and collectors with an admirably concise and yet detailed discussion of the problems involved, and the steps to be taken, in the conservation of bindings. As she points out in her preface, her approach to the problem is "from the viewpoint of the librarian or collector, untrained in binding and restoration, and working with untrained assistants." She has, therefore, "tried to eliminate all operations requiring bookbinding skills and [has] suggested at appropriate points what further work, if desired, should be sent to the professional restorers."

Aside from these exceptions, Mrs. Horton's treatise provides excellent guidelines for the necessary steps to be taken in the preservation and repair of book collections, large or small. The text is illustrated by Aldren A. Watson with numerous outline drawings of the parts of a handbound book and the various methods of handling, cleaning and making repairs to leather, cloth and vellum bindings. Appended are four very useful lists: a glossary of technical terms; "Supplies and Equipment" (as used by Mrs. Horton, "or known by her to be in general use and to perform in an acceptable manner"); "Sources of Supply;" and a "Selected Bibliography."

An advisory committee for the projected series is headed by Harold W. Tribolet, manager of the Department of Extra Binding, The Lakeside Press, Chicago. Mr. Tribolet, in a "Series Preface," expresses the hope "that this pamphlet will prove useful to librarians, conservators, and private collectors throughout the world." There is no doubt that this hope will be realized in the case of Mrs. Horton's pamphlet, and if later publications in the series are equally authoritative, the final manual will be of lasting value and importance.



### What is Hand Bookbinding?

The simplest and most obvious answer to the above question is: "the binding of a book by hand." This immediately, however, poses another question: "what constitutes a binding?"

Many hand binders are firm in their belief that a book is not "bound" unless it is sewn on cords, which are laced into the boards, and the whole book covered in leather using the tight-back construction technique. This limited use of the word "bound" stems I presume from past centuries when all books were hand bound and most binders followed these practices.

Today the situation is quite different. Many techniques are used both in the class room and the workshop which are outside the scope of this restrictive definition. If this definition is to prevail books produced by other hand methods cannot be considered "bound," though they conform to Webster's definition of a binding, and to the generally accepted meaning of the word by the publishing industry.

For the sake of clarity it would seem to me that the time is long over-due for someone to give this early type of binding a suitable qualifying name. We use quite readily the terms case binding, Bradel binding, split-board binding, bonnet binding, library binding, etc., but "the binding" has no descriptive name. Is it really so superior that it can justifiably continue to exist without a qualifying name? While it admittedly represents sound construction in the best sense, it is not necessarily the answer to all the problems that the hand binder is confronted with today. What is good for one job might prove to be the wrong thing for another. This is a matter for the teacher and the student, or the professional and his client to work out. Flexibility and the willingness to adjust to prevailing circumstances are important factors in the success of any small endeavour today.

Along with thinking up a name for "the first born" in bookbinding techniques, the Guild might well consider starting a movement to standardize bookbinding

terminology; first within this country and later internationally. This would seem quite in keeping with the present trend toward a more scientific approach to the field as a whole.

We can offer no prize for a winning name, but do give some thought to the ideas and suggestions expressed in this article and send on to us your opinions and comments.

LIBRARY / Mary E. Greenfield

The Library has received the following publications from members and friends, for which we are indeed grateful.

From Polly Lada-Mocarski:

Halbey, Hans A. and Londenberg, Kurt. Foreword by Herbert, Baron Buttlar. Kurt Londenberg Bucheinbande. Offenbach am Main: Society of Friends of the Klingspor-Museums, 1965. 95 pp. 45 plates.

/ From William Klein:

Sachs, Hyman. The Invention of Printing. New York: The Arts Cooperative Service, Inc., n.d. 19 mimeographed pages.

Perkins, Ruth. Watermarks. New York: The Arts Cooperative Service, Inc., n.d. 5 mimeographed pp. Line drawings.

Patrick, Sara L. The Saw Kerf Book. New York: The Arts Cooperative Service, Inc., n.d. 6 mimeographed pp. Line drawings.

House, Florence E. and Stanley, Florence M. Paper Making. New York: The Arts Cooperative Service, Inc., 2 mimeographed pp. 1 line drawing.

From Harold Tribolet:

Tribolet, Harold. "Restoration in Florence." Chicago: R. R. Donnelley & Sons, Co., n.d., together with "Florence Rises from the Flood," National Geographic Magazine. Washington, D.C.: (National Geographic Society), Vol. 132, No. 1, 1967. 60 pp. Numerous illus.

From the 'American Library Association:  
Horton, Carolyn. Cleaning and Preserving Bindings and  
Related Materials. Chicago: American Library As-  
sociation, 1967. 96 pp. Illus.

PROGRAM / Mary C. Schlosser

#### THIS YEAR'S PROGRAMS

October 17, 1967 / Informal meeting at AIGA Head-  
quarters, with special guest, Mrs. Stella Patri --  
Refreshments.  
January 18, 1968 / Special viewing of the exhibition,  
"The Glazier Collection: Illuminated Manuscripts  
and Printed Books," at the Morgan Library.  
April 27, 1968 / Visit to the mills of the Strathmore  
Paper Company, manufacturers of quality papers, in  
Springfield, Massachusetts.  
May 25, 1968 / Visit to the Meriden Gravure Company,  
fine printers, in Meriden, Connecticut.  
June 1968 / Annual Meeting.

#### AN INFORMAL MEETING

The Guild's first program for the 1967-68 season  
was held at AIGA headquarters at 7:30 P.M. on October  
17th. As usual for our opening meeting we planned to  
have an informal round-robin of reports from the mem-  
bers on what they had done over the summer, with the  
added special report of our member from California,  
Mrs. Stella Patri, who was on her way from Florence to  
her home in San Francisco.

By force of circumstance our program turned out to  
be both a success -- in what we did hear -- and a dis-  
appointment in what we were unable to hear. I quote  
Mrs. Young's remarks on this occasion: "We regret that  
the available space at AIGA headquarters was very much  
restricted by the hanging of their current show; the  
air-conditioning unit was turned off because we felt

that the speakers could not possibly be heard above it; the necessary seating arrangement was not conducive to informal and impromptu remarks. We have learned over the years that members seated in a comfortable chair will tell us what they have been doing; if, however, in order to be heard they must stand up and face an audience, as it were, they are most reluctant to participate.

"In view of our announcement, we would be most unhappy to think that a number of you had come to the meeting in expectation of describing a new discovery or technique, or on the other hand seeking advice in solving some problem, and were not given the opportunity to speak.

"It was our intention to make these things possible but circumstances beyond our control changed the picture. Would you be good enough to let us know if the meeting was a disappointment or frustration to you? If one member had something that he or she wanted to say and was not given the opportunity to do so, we will plan a similar meeting at the earliest possible date."

We were delighted to have one of our West Coast members, Mrs. Patri, with us to tell of the progress of the restoration work in Florence where she had been for several months, using her talents as bookbinder and bi-linguist in teaching unskilled Florentines how to do paper repair. To our good fortune, Mrs. Carolyn Horton had taken a number of slides of this work while in and out of Florence in the last months and we were able to see the activities which Mrs. Patri described. We owe many thanks to Mrs. Horton for the trouble she went to in bringing all the necessary equipment, as well as her pictures, to the meeting. Mrs. Patri's account of her experiences follows on page 22.

#### CAPTAIN CUNHA REPORTS ON LANGWELL'S VPD TECHNIQUE

We were also pleased to have Captain George M. Cunha with us from Boston where he is the Conservator of the Library of the Boston Athenaeum. Captain Cunha told us about a new technique for deacidifying books which he has been testing, and which he feels will be of great help in future conservation work.

This technique is called the Langwell Vapour Phase Deacidification (VPD) technique for paper and does not require taking a book apart as does the Barrow method. Mr. Langwell, who developed this process, is a British chemist who has done work in the area of book conservation and published an article describing this new method in the Journal of the Society of Archivists, Vol. III, No. 3, April, 1966. His process involves the use of a gaseous alkaline, cyclohexylamine carbonate (CHC) which is absorbed on sheets of paper, these sheets then being interleaved in the book to be treated. After a few weeks, the chemical has permeated the book and neutralized its acidity.

Captain Cunha brought along samples of this VPD paper as well as sachets which could be used in boxed materials, and also tablets. Based on his observations, he is enthusiastic about the use of the VPD technique, and expects to publish the results of his tests shortly. I quote below his remarks on using this technique:

"Vapour Phase Deacidification Compound used is a dry white powder which slowly evaporates to give a penetrating alkaline vapour, leaving practically no residue. It is supplied for interleaving in the form of sheets of paper 10" x 8" impregnated with VPD. Some of the experimental papers may be marked with a Green Blue indicator which will turn yellow when the VPD has completely evaporated. If hung up in the open air this will take place in 6-24 hours, therefore the papers should be kept in the special envelopes in which they are supplied. When interleaved in books, complete evaporation will take from one to two weeks according to the porosity of the book paper.

The following suggestions will serve as a rough guide to the practical application of these papers.

1. The VPD papers should be slightly larger than the pages of the book to be deacidified. Pieces of VPD paper may be held together with adhesive tape to use up off-cuts.

2. One paper should be inserted at each of pages 50, 150, 250, 300 and so on until within the last 50 pages of the book.

3. The book may now be replaced on its shelf and kept well closed.

4. There should be no need to remove the papers after exhaustion but if desired the progress of deacidification can be tested after a fortnight at normal temperatures and the papers removed.

5. Books may be tested for residual acidity using the special brom cresol green ink (BCG) available from Process Materials Corporation (see under 9) applied from a felt tipped pen or rubber stamp to the end papers of the book or wherever the mark will not be obtrusive.

6. Deacidification cannot go too far with VPD Compound. Excess will escape into the air in time. No excess of alkali will therefore remain in the paper to take care of subsequent absorption of acid.

7. VPD Compound used as described above should cause no noticeable change in the appearance of papers except for certain cheap papers containing large proportions of mechanical wood pulp; these may turn slightly brown - a change that would occur naturally during normal storage.

8. Dense paper such as coated art paper may act as a barrier and slow down the diffusion of VPD vapour. If several plates are collected at one part of the book, it should be treated as two books for VPD.

9. VPD materials will soon be available from Process Materials Corporation, 53-01 11th Street, Long Island City, New York 11101.

After thanking our out-of-town guests for their remarks, Mrs. Young adjourned the meeting to the refreshment table. Members and guests attending included: Rainey Aldrich, Mrs. Burnham, Irma Butlemore of Kingman, Kansas, Mrs. Coryn, Capt. and Mrs. Cunha, Jerilyn Davis, Hilda Edelman, Deborah Evetts, Mrs. Fisher, Dorothy K. Greenwald, Elaine Hass, Mr. Harrow, Sylvia Hilton, Sahei Hohri, Mrs. Horton, Rita Huordo, Miss Janes, James Kirker, Mrs. Lada-Mocarski, Miss Lockhart, Miss Manola, Mr. and Mrs. Mortimer, Alan Miller, Mrs. Newell, Mrs. Patri, Prof. and Mrs. Peckham, Mrs. Perkins, Mr. Popenoe, Mrs. Schlosser, Genevieve W. Senber, Mr. and Mrs. Stein, Mrs. Strouse, Mrs. Tayler, Mr. de Vriendt, Mr. Welsh, and Mrs. Young.

The restoration program at the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale was under the guidance of Peter Waters, a very able young man with a background of bookbinding knowledge acquired from the leading bookbinders of England. He teaches at the Royal Academy in London and has been granted a leave to organize the restoration center in Florence. His standards in the craft are the highest and these same standards are the rule in the mending program. There were many fine English hand bookbinders and teachers from workshops and from the British Museum who were involved in developing this program. Either Peter Waters, Dorothy Cumpstey or Anthony Cains is to be at the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale until the program is established.

The first part of the program began in December, 1966, at Forte Belvedere with Peter Waters, Dorothy Cumpstey and Anthony Cains. They outlined a procedure of what should be done to the books after they had been dried--examining, photographing, collating, pulling, washing and resizing where needed, and storing. The second part consisted of mending, guarding, pressing, marking up and sewing. This is where I worked during the three months I was in Florence the summer of 1967.

At first the work had been done at Forte Belvedere and at the power station, the only places available after the flood of November, 1966. I worked at Forte Belvedere during the month of January, 1967. Now in July all was concentrated within the Biblioteca. Where in January the equipment had been make-shift, now all was well designed and new. There were beautiful stainless steel sinks of the right height and dimensions, with floating boards upon which the sections were laid and the mud brushed off. There is a department where chemicals are tested and formulas mixed--Topane, soluble nylon, solutions for deacidification and different adhesives--and where the tissue to be used in the heat-set mending is treated. Six large cabinets of stainless steel have electrically controlled temperature. Large trays of wood frame and nylon mesh fitting into a rack on wheels can be rolled into the cabinets. Upon the mesh are placed sections of the washed and

still wet books which are dried in the cabinets. The desks for the repairing of paper are marvelous and every need has been thought of. They have tilt-tops covered with plate glass and in the center of each is a recessed well with frosted glass and electric light which can be switched on as needed. There is storage space on each side consisting of shelves and drawers for paper, tissue, tools and the book being mended. Each desk has a lamp with a flexible neck. Behind the workers is a counter containing more storage space with presses sunk into the top so that the platen is level with the top of the counter. The worker has only to slide the boards into the press without lifting.

My assignment at the Biblioteca Nazionale was to teach unskilled workers the mending of paper. The method designated has been used by Peter Waters and other restorers for about 10 years. It was thought that this method would speed up the mending of the thousands of books damaged in the flood and needing repair and rebinding.

It consists of coating a lens tissue, manufactured by Barcham Green, with Texicote, a PVA emulsion adhesive. This adhesive is diluted with water and painted or brushed on a heavy sheet of plate glass. The tissue is laid on the glass, gently pressed down with a pad of cotton wherever air bubbles have formed or where the tissue is not adhering to the glass, and left to dry. Before being peeled off the glass, the tissue is lightly rubbed with refined white wax and sprinkled or sprayed with calcium carbonate. The calcium carbonate is rubbed into the wax.

The tissue is now ready for use. It can be used to back a whole leaf or cut into narrow strips and used to mend tears along the edges or across sheets. Pinking shears are used in cutting the tissue so that no harsh straight line is made and the tissue will blend more harmoniously with the paper. The tissue is applied to the paper being mended with the touch of a small electrically heated tacking iron, then put into a press equipped with a heated platen. A mend made in this manner is hardly discernible. Weak spots and flaws in the paper can be strengthened by small pieces of tissue.

When I first arrived, there was some delay before



the training could begin. Some equipment was being held up at the frontier, tools were unavailable in Italy and the desks were not finished. A temporary workshop was set up with tables made of metal legs and plywood tops. There were only two electrical outlets in the room so this necessitated a mass of wires that were hazardous. We started with five young women, who had been either washing or pulling the books, and were recruited for this work. The language problem was difficult, such as explaining technical terms, the "flexibility of a mend," the grain of hand-made paper as against machine made paper. But the young women learned, some more quickly than others, and will become excellent repairers.

The first five were to go downstairs to the permanent mending room after a week of training, then another five were to start. But the desks which had been promised were not ready so we had to double up and share tools. It was a bit hectic for a while, but finally the day arrived when we all moved downstairs. When I left there were 27 men and women who were mending and doing remarkably well. By that time they had learned to operate the heat-setting presses, how to guard or "strip," and had a few lessons in sewing. When the bindery is ready they will all learn sewing, backing and covering.

Never have so many books been damaged at one time. It was a wonderful experience to have taken part in their restoration.

#### PUBLICITY AND NEWS NOTES / Grady E. Jensen

William J. Barrow, internationally recognized authority on preservation of paper and restoration of documents, died in August, 1967, in Richmond, Virginia. He was 62.

The September 4-11, 1967 issue of Bookman's Weekly reported that an entirely new method of making paper was recently patented by a Danish inventor, Karl Krøyer. Instead of the conventional pulp and water process, cheap cellulose fiber is electrostatically "positioned"

and "profiled" into a "paper" that "can be used for almost anything from building blocks to bridal dresses."

Our President, Laura S. Young, is listed in the recently published 5th edition of Who's Who of American Women.

The Storm Bindery (Sedona, Arizona), operated by Colton and GBW member Nancy Storm, last fall mounted an exhibition in the local public library. In addition to binding tools and materials, the exhibition included a series of illustrations of fine bindings from the 12th to the 20th centuries.

The July 7, 1967 issue of Publishers' Weekly included an article on "Flex Binding: Its Uses in Hand Bookbinding" by GBW member Polly Lada-Mocarski.

Highlights of the 1967 auction season were the sale of the third and fourth portions of Major J. R. Abbey's library, at Sotheby's, in June and November respectively. GBW Exhibition Chairman Duncan Andrews has reviewed these two sales for the Journal, and his comments are immediately following.

#### ABBEY LIBRARY SALE / Duncan Andrews

To even hint at the richness of the library of Major J. R. Abbey, which was sold at Sotheby's, London, in four portions from June, 1965, to November, 1967, would require many pages indeed. Fortunately, four substantial, well-illustrated catalogues have preserved the record of one of the great collections of this, or any other, day.

While the Abbey sale did not (as has been reported) set a record for an auction sale of printed books--its 2532 lots bringing just over \$1 million, compared to the 1911-12 Hoe sale (\$1.9 million) and the 1929 sale of Jerome Kern's library (\$1.7 million)--its sustained high quality and depth give it a special prominence among great sales of the past. It is especially interesting to note that Major Abbey's library is of relatively recent vintage, having gotten its start in 1933.

To have gathered together such a collection in a comparatively short time is a considerable achievement;

the more so when one realizes that the books sold represent only a portion of Major Abbey's total library, as he has retained his collections of medieval and Renaissance manuscripts, and of modern illustrated books and bindings.

The dates of the Abbey books range from the fifteenth to nineteenth centuries. They range from important incunabula (a vellum Justinian, Mainz, 1477) to a notable collection of seven books bound for Jean Grolier, including the only five-volume set in private hands. Virtually every binder of note is represented, as are several binders whose work is known only from unique items in the collection. Color plate books, private presses, and an extensive group of books on binding, printing, bibliography and similar subjects form additional parts of the Abbey collection.

Among the highlights of this sale, with prices realized were: a manuscript Apocalypse in an 1150 A.D. Romanesque binding (\$25,200--the top price of the sale); an Aldine Aristotle bound in Paris c.1560 by Grolier's last binder (\$21,280); Moliere's Oeuvres, 1734 in contemporary blue morocco (\$19,600); Le Monument de Costume, 1775, with plates after Moreau le jeune, in contemporary binding (\$14,000). Of special interest to binders might be noted: the five-volume St. John Chrysostom Opera, bound c.1550 in different designs for Jean Grolier (\$15,400); a 1551 Justinian bound in painted calf for the "English Grolier," Thomas Wotton (\$364); a 1567 Bible superbly bound in contemporary French needlework (\$4,760); an extraordinary 16th century round binding, apparently the only round binding known (\$4,480); an Italian Epistolae of 1505 with wood-cut paper covers (\$3,640); a 1544 New Testament, bound by Padeloup (\$420); a Roger Payne binding with the binder's invoice (\$728); Morris' Art and Socialism, bound by T. J. Cobden-Sanderson for his wife (\$1,400).

And, for the less affluent, Studies of the Bibliographical Society 1892-1942 (\$2.80).