

GUILD OF BOOK WORKERS JOURNAL

Volume XXIV Number 2 Spring 1986





Hope Weil's Bookplate - Designed by Kenneth Hobson

This journal is dedicated to the memory of Hope Weil and to all the other women who have contributed so generously with their talent and dedication to the Guild of Book Workers and to the art and craft of the book.

GUILD OF BOOK WORKERS JOURNAL

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The Cover: Hope Weil talking to school children in Bedford Village, New York.

Editor for this issue: Virginia Wisniewski-Klett

Articles and reports by members and non-members are welcome for consideration. The views and opinions expressed in this Journal are those of the respective authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Guild.

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HOPE G. WEIL / Laura S. Young

The death of Hope Weil on May 24, 1986 left a void in the field of hand bookbinding that will be difficult, if not impossible, to fill. Her career spanned more than six decades during which time she was an active binder and an ardent supporter of all endeavors in behalf of bookbinding. She was a serious and skilled binder with a flair for design and produced many fine bindings with imagination and meticulous workmanship; she was an enthusiastic and dedicated teacher who had a large following of devoted and loyal students, many of whom became highly skilled in the craft; she was a patron and collector who had no peer; and her generosity as a benefactor both of her time and her means were without an equal. She will be sorely missed by her many friends, and the field as a whole will be poorer without her.

Hope was born in Atlantic City, New Jersey, daughter of Joel and Edythe Snellenburg Gerson, on July 9, 1900. Except for the time she spent in school away from home—first, a convent in Paris, then in the Vosges Mountains in northeast France, and later in Tarrytown, New York—she lived in Philadel-phia, Pennsylvania until her marriage to Walter L. Weil on January 9, 1919 in New York City. They lived in the city until they pruchased "Hope's Farm" in Bedford Village, New York, in 1931. After that they maintained residences in both places.

She was a graduate of the Knox School in Tarrytown, New York, and attended Wellesley College in Massachusetts for a year and a half, leaving to get married. They had two daughters, Hope, Jr. (Mrs. Benjamin F. Levene, Jr.) and Faith (Mrs. Henry J. Rugo).

Hope was small in stature but big in vivacity and enthusiasm for what she was doing. She was an enthusiastic gardener, and did a great deal of work in the planting of shrubs and flowers on her farm. She was an excellent marksman. Years after she had given up shooting with any degree of regularity, she picked up a gun and casually shot a rabbit on the lawn some hundred yards away, "straight through the head." An early ambition of hers was to be a circus rider, and "she sat a horse with rare grace." She was at one time the only woman member of the famous Seven o'clock Riders in Central Park, in New York City.

She was always immaculately groomed, and almost as well-known for her extensive collection of designer hats as she was for her collection of bindings.

She was a very well organized person who lived a planned and orderly life. She seldom cancelled a plan, and I never heard of her being late for an engagement. Consequently she didn't particularly appreciate people who were chronically late.



Plate 1

After her daughters were born Hope tried her hand at photography, but soon found that her interest in books and reading made bookbinding a more appealing career to pursue.

Her bookbinding studies began in 1923 with Edith Diehl with whom she studied for three years. She then went to Paris and worked for three months with a private teacher. Sometime later she continued her studies for a short time in London. In 1935, shortly after Gerhard and Kathryn Gerlach opened their studio in New York, she became, first a student of theirs and, later on, an associate. She worked with Gerhard in the bookbinding class at Columbia University for one semester, just before the class was discontinued for the duration of World War II. In 1945 they opened The Bookbinding Workshop; this partnership was of rather short duration. Hope, however, continued her association with them in New York until the Gerlachs moved their workshop to Chappaqua, N.Y. in 1955. Her daughter, Hope Jr., says of her mother, "Gerhard Gerlach was the most important figure in her bookbinding career."

Earlier Hope shared a studio at 509 Madison Ave., New York, with Ethel Wise. When that studio was given up she opened a studio in her apartment at 300 West End Avenue, and it moved with her to E. 37th Street, and later to E. 67th Street. In the late thirties she set aside space for a bindery in her house "at the Farm," as she called it. From then until her death she worked and taught in both the city and the country.

On Jan. 12, 1939 Hope joined the Guild of Book Workers. She was an active and loyal member throughout her career. In 1940 she was elected to the Executive Committee; and in 1942 she was elected Secretary-Treasurer, the Guild's chief executive officer at that time.

As Secretary-Treasurer she concluded her first annual report to the membership with this comment: "The activities of the past year tend to show wide interest all over the country and indeed beyond it in our craft, and the extent to which we can enlist that interest if and when we choose to bring bookbinding before the public."

At the annual meeting Feb. 19, 1946 Hope tendered her resignation as Secretary-Treasurer "due to pressure of many activities and upon orders of her doctor." She carried the Guild through the years of the Second World War when most peoples' primary interest was the war effort, and at a time when practically all usual sources of supplies had closed down.

Christine Hamilton, whom Hope succeeded in office had this to say: "Almost unaided Hope Weil kept the Guild afloat. She even succeeded in achieving a very interesting exhibition at America House where all the processes of Bookbinding were displayed. This at a time when our very civilization was threatened. For her faith in the value of our craft I wish to thank her in behalf of all Guild members and of myself." In 1948 when the Guild seemed to have reached something of a low ebb Hope and several other Guild members, all of whom were also members of the American Institute of Graphic Arts, were instrumental in bringing about the Guild's affiliation with the Institute.

The Guild was then restructured providing for officers with specific duties and committee chairmen with portfolios. Hope served as chairman of the following committees; Publicity, 1953–56; Exhibition, 1956–58 and 1960–62; and Vice-president-Membership 1958–59. In or out of office she was always willing to lend a hand.

Hope believed strongly, as she expressed in her first annual report after taking office, that there was a tremendous potential interest in hand bookbinding if it were properly brought to the public's attention. She consistently worked at this during her entire career. Following are some of the talks, demonstrations and exhibitions that she participated in.

October 27–November 1, 1941 the Women's National Exposition of Arts & Industries held a series of demonstrations entitled "Steady Hands, Steady Nerves," at the Grand Central Palace in New York. Hope was asked to demonstrate some of the steps in bookbinding. The title of these demonstrations reminds me of a remark she jokingly made to me some forty years later: "I can hold a martini with a very steady hand, but as soon as I pick up a finishing tool my hand begins to shake."



Plate 2

In May 1944 she spoke on WQXR, the New York Times radio station, in connection with a Guild show that was then mounted at America House.

The Weils moved from 300 West End Avenue to 156 E. 37th Street in New York in 1940 or 1941. Here Hope had a beautiful penthouse studio which had a commanding view of Manhattan to the north, south and east. An incident which always evoked amusement occurred one winter evening shortly after the United States entered the Second World War. It is reproduced here as written by her daughter Hope, Jr.

"It was a busy winter day in 1942 for pupils at Hope's bindery. Lights were on for tooling, the sewing frame was out and glue heating in the pot. The elevator, which rose directly into the hall of the penthouse apartment, opened and two men entered, their hands on their hips. "Who," they wanted to know, "is in charge?" Hope introduced herself, Bridie the maid who was serving coffee, and four pupils, at work at the long tables. "We're FBI," they announced, showing credentials, and said they wanted to know what was going on in the room. Hope showed them the work in process and what a finished binding looked like. After they had had a lecture on fine handbindings and a cup of coffee they explained why they had come.

Flashing lights, assumed to be signals to enemy submarines off New York harbor, had been observed by tenants in a neighboring apartment house, and they had called the FBI. The men watched for a while and then gave the explanation. What people really had seen were the lights on the work benches appearing and disappearing as busy bookbinders walked in front of them to pick up tools or move to the cutter and press.

It was a landmark day in Hope's bindery when the FBI came looking for spies."

This is another example of Hope's never missing an opportunity to proselyte in behalf of bookbinding.

During World War II she was one of a small group of binders who went over to Holloran Hospital on Staten Island (a veteran's hospital) and entertained the patients with simplified binding. The group was equipped with an ingeniously designed and constructed "lap-board bindery" (the original designed and constructed by Gerhard Gerlach), which could be used both by bed patients and those in wheelchairs. Enough material was pre-cut to size so that one signature books, memo pads and possibly small albums could be made rather quickly. It was sort of a kindergarten exercise, but it seemed to provide some diversion and relieve some boredom.

At the Guild's annual meeting on April 28, 1959 it was announced that Hope had represented bookbinding and led a discussion group at the third annual conference of the American Craftsman's Council held at Silver Bay, Lake George, New York. The topic of the meeting was "Study Relating to Media Needs of Craftsmen."

In 1973 she was interviewed by one of the New York TV stations and this was telecast at 6 p.m. on Sunday March 4. Jeanne Lewisohn, one of Hope's long-time students, gave a "viewing" supper in honor of Hope and the occasion.

She participated in a number of demonstrations held during the run of some of the Guild's larger exhibitions. Hope and her daughter, Hope Levene, whom she often referred to as one of her best students, collaborated in staging joint exhibitions and demonstrations at a number of places including the Hammond Museum, North Salem, New York (April 1973); Mt. Kisco Public Library, New York (May 15, 1977); The Bedford Public Schools, New York; Sterling Library, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut; America House and the Museum of Contemporary Crafts in New York City.

As near as I can determine from searching through forty-five years of Guild material Hope exhibited in every Guild show from 1940—the first after she joined—through the 75th Anniversary exhibition in 1981. A newspaper account of the Guild show at the Decorator's Club in New York in March 1940 said "Mrs. Weil shows great versatility in design."

For a number of years the Guild exhibition reports listed only the names of the exhibitors or the total number of books and/or exhibitors and no titles, so it is virtually impossible to determine with any degree of accuracy the number of volumes exhibited by any one member. In nine of the Guild shows between 1949 and 1981 for which the titles exhibited are recorded Hope exhibited a total of twenty books. The books that she submitted to major Guild shows were always bindings that had been produced since the previous exhibition or had not been previously exhibited.

In addition to the major Guild shows she was invited to participate in the binding competition of Rhinehart & Co.'s River Series in 1946. This group of books received favorable comments wherever it was seen in its travels all over the country. She was one of the exhibitors at the Grolier Club on October 8, 1951 on the occasion of the AIGA's reception in honor of the Guild. Five of her bindings were on display at Lucien Goldschmidt, Inc. 1117 Madison Avenue, New York City, November 15–December 9, 1972 in an exhibit of Fine Modern Bindings.

She, along with her students Hope Levene, Jeanne Lewisohn, Susie Schrag and Robert Shepherd, had a show in the case provided for the Guild at AIGA headquarters which ran for the months of January and February in 1975. And again in August–October the same year she and Polly Lada-Mocarski assembled an exhibition demonstrating the tools and techniques for gold and blind tooling on leather, also in the case at AIGA.

The two shows that highlighted her career were her own: one at the Grolier Club in 1979 and the other at Princeton University in 1981. Accounts of these follow.

In 1979 Hope was invited to put on her own show in the small gallery on the second floor of the Grolier Club in New York, of which she was a member. The show ran from December 4 to 22, and on December 12 the Guild was invited to a reception in her honor. She chose to make it what might be called a three-part show, and for distribution during the run of the show she wrote the following:

"These bindings, chosen from a collection accumulated over a period of fifty years, represent, in a way, the story of my life as a bookbinder and collector.

As my appreciation of fine bindings grew, so did my desire to acquire books by binders whom I met and whose work I admired. Of these some were world-renowned, some were young artists whom I wanted to encourage. Besides the selection of their works shown here, some of my own are included: bindings that had previously been chosen for other exhibitions both in the U.S.A. and abroad—in Brussels and around the world under the auspices of the State Department. Whether the binder or I chose the book to be bound, one consideration was always that the paper on which it was printed be such as to last as long as the binding.

The other part of this show—eighteen bindings of SPACES—is a different story. For years I had thought about preserving the poems of my friend Eleanor Wolff in book form. So, in 1972, I published them. Now I have fulfilled another long-held wish: to have one book interpreted and executed by a number of different binders—as it turned out, all of them friends, whom I here want to thank. And what better book to choose than SPACES, which was dedicated to me. I now dedicate this part of the show to Eleanor Wolff."

For the month of May in 1981 she was invited to have her own show by the Curator of the Graphic Arts Collection of the Princeton University Library. It was held in a beautiful gallery on the second floor of the Firestone Library. Here again it was a three part show—her own work, that of her students and bindings from her collection of 20th century bindings. An account of the show written by Dale Roylance, Curator, appeared in The Princeton University Library Chronicle, Vol XLIII, No. 1, Autumn 1981. It is reproduced here.

TWENTIETH-CENTURY BOOKBINDING

"The Graphic Arts spring exhibition, "Creative Bookbinding, an Exhibit to Honor Hope G. Weil, Bookbinder, Teacher, and Collector," opened on the first of May and continued through commencement. The glass cases of the Graphics Arts Gallery were filled with 114 fine design bindings, including over 30 original works by Hope Weil, many examples of the work of her students—several of whom have become working professionals in their own right—and a rich representation from the Weil collection by nearly every major artistic binder of our time.

The nature of the binding art, which includes the use of the most beautiful multicolored leathers, marbled and decorative papers, and the gold and silver of decorative stamping, created a spendid effect throughout the exhibit, affirming the beauty and suitability of art allied with the book.

The exhibit began with several maquette drawings and early work, dating as early as 1921, created by Hope Weil. Other bindings, ranging over six decades of work, reflected decorative influences from art deco to abstract. Her influence as teacher and patron was also dramatically presented in the exhibit by 19 binding variations on the theme of one book of poetry. The book *Spaces* by a lifelong friend of Hope Weil, Eleanor L. Wolff, has been given 19 widely different interpretations by important binders commissioned by Hope Weil to create their impressions of the text. All evoke in binders' terms the "spaces" of the poems.

The wide artistic expression possible with creative binding was evident throughout the exhibition. The precise classic lines of the German master Gerhard Gerlach, the elegant moiré patterns of Paul Bonet, the adroit collage effects in pared leather by Deborah Evetts and Jamie Kamph, the surreal representations of Philip Smith and Gerard Charrierè, all demonstrated a great variety of extraordinary effects achieved within the rigorous discipline of difficult materials and a demanding craft.

The special interest of this exhibit to binders and others interested in the art of the book brought a multitude of visitors to the Graphics Arts Gallery on the second floor of the Library. The most remarkable testament, however, was to Hope Weil herself. An extraordinary number of friends of every age made extensive journeys to Princeton to see this display of Hope Weil's remarkable influence as creative binder, teacher, and collector.



Dale Roylance Curator of Graphic Arts

Plate 3

A reception was held on opening day, May 1. In her usual generous way she provided transportation from New York to Princeton for some dozen of her city friends, entertained us for dinner at the Princeton Faculty Club and returned us to New York. On the way home Hope expressed great pleasure in this recognition, and the feeling that it represented the culmination of her long career. She was not well at the time; in fact she knew that she was faced with an operation within the next few weeks. Her spirits, however, were high and she held up beautifully during what must have been tiring hours both physically and emotionally.

Hope's collection of Twentieth Century bindings was reputedly the finest and largest in this country. She was always animated and excited when she received a new acquisition. In addition to exhibiting her collection and making it available to groups of interested binders, she loved to sit down quietly with one or two friends and study in detail every technique used, and to explain if she knew—or surmise, the thoughts that prompted the design. She loved this collection and each new binding soon became an "old friend." She received just a few days before her death what was perhaps the last binding that she commissioned—a copy of Leo Bronstein's "Five Variations on the Theme of Japanese Painting," edited by Eleanor Wolff. Hope's choice of this volulme was another tribute to her dear and long-time friend, the author of SPACES.

She was always interested in anyone who was interested in bookbinding, and she was particularly hospitable to newcomers to the field and newcomers to New York. She often commissioned work of some kind just to "tide the binder over" a difficult financial period. Few binders who visited her left empty-handed, they nearly always had some binding related item as a memento of the visit. She was always happy when she felt that she was increasing the interest in or furthering the cause of bookbinding.

One of my most prized possessions is a handsome French press, a gift from Hope, that stands proudly in my living room here in Virginia. It serves as a daily reminder—though not needed as such—of her generosity and her valued friendship.

Hope's family was always supportive and proud of her accomplishments in the field. Her daughter, Hope Levene, and the husband, Scott Arnold, of her granddaughter Faith Levene are binders, so binding continues in the Weil family into the third generation.

She is survived by her two daughters, six grandchildren and six greatgrandchildren.

There are many references in the literature today to the renaissance of bookbinding, especially by younger people who have recently entered the field. Prior to their interest it, quite naturally, did not exist in their minds.

Bookbinding, however, has been practiced for several centuries, and has weathered its stormy periods. Its presumed rebirth is not something that has sprung up over-night like mushrooms in the forest after a rainy spell. In this country it is, rather, the result of the gaining of momentum that was initially generated half-century ago and carried on by a small group of dedicated binders who gave generously of their time and money when needed to further its growth, often with little recognition or encouragement. Hope Weil was one of this group, and the popularity or "flourishing" that bookbinding is enjoying today is in part a fitting memorial to her.

In closing, I would like to acknowledge with thanks the help that I have received from Hope Levene and Eleanor Wolff in supplying me with both information and material, without which it would have been impossible for me to write this article.

THREE GENERATIONS OF THE WEIL FAMILY

Laura S. Young, hand bookbinder, conservator/restorer and teacher in New York City for thirty-five years; President of GBW for nineteen years; author of "Bookbinding and Conservation by Hand: a Working Guide." N.Y. Bowker, 1981; and a friend of Hope Weil's for some forty years. (Now retired)

^{1.} Hope Weil [©] Joel Gordon 1981

^{2.} Hope Weil and daughter Hope Levene.

^{3.} Hope Weil and granddaughter Faith Levene.

TRIBUTES TO HOPE G. WEIL / Colleagues and Students

Following are some personal tributes to Hope. The contributors to the "tributes" were selected in an attempt to cover a wide range in time. They are arranged alphabetically to avoid any suggestion of relative importance.

Deborah Evetts (colleague)

The loss of Hope Weil will be deeply felt by many in the binding community. She was an outstanding binder, tireless teacher and an enthusiastic collector.

She often encouraged young binders by giving them a commission or by purchasing a binding and she delighted in their later successes. She was always ready to give help and advice whenever anyone turned to her.

In the 20 years that I knew her I never heard her speak unkindly about anyone, and, once she had befriended you, her kindness, generosity and love were wonderful to experience, and I, for one, will miss her more than I can say.

Kathryn (Posy) Gerlach (colleague)

Hope was one of the most enthusiastic book binders I ever met. She did much to keep the interest going in Hand Binding and furthered it through ordering bindings from other bookbinders. Her collection must be a remarkable one of the present day hand binders. She was also a most accurate binder and bound many beautiful books. May she long be remembered.

Carolyn Horton (colleague)

A person as beautiful and elegant as Hope might have been expected to be at least a little self-satisfied or vain, but Hope was unassuming, modest and straightforward. Given the circumstances of her life, her interest in bookbinding might have led her to become a dilettante, but instead she became a skilled and dedicated craftsman. She appreciated both the art and craft of binding as a binder, as a collector and as a patron of binders. It was fortunate for all of us that she was in a position to inspire and help others in this field. Hope was a dear and loving friend and I miss her very much.

Jamie Kamph (student)

Hope Weil was for all a beautiful, vivacious, outspoken, and elegant woman. But for me she will always be a standard of excellence. No detail escaped her. It is with her eyes that I try to see my work, every day and every book. She gave me a life as a bookbinder. There could be no greater gift.

Polly Lada-Mocarski (colleague)

Letter to Hope Weil, written the week before her death.

Dearest Hope:

It was lovely to talk to you on the telephone last week [the week before her death] and continue our long, long conversation on our favorite topic—bookbinding—which goes back to the 1930's—is it possible? . . . Even then [1930] your binding skills and your generosity in helping binders was working its magic. There is hardly anyone in this country who has ever done so much for our great craft and art and helped binders establish themselves, both spiritually and financially, as you. You must be happy to see the great strides the art and craft of the book have made in the last 50 years. A great part of all this is due to your encouragement, enthusiasm and generosity.

Thank you, dearest Hope, for being my friend all these years. You have been a great inspiration to me personally and to all binders. I miss you so terribly. There is no one who can ever take your place—but I and so many others will carry on in your footsteps, encouraged by your wonderful example. With deep affection,

Jeanne Lewisohn (student)

I started as Hope's student in 1946 when she was teaching at the Geralch's studio on E. 31st Street. For forty years we worked together at least once a week, sometimes more often, and we shared not only bookbinding interests but family problems and personal feelings as well. There was hardly an occasion or activity in both our lives that we didn't consult about and share.

One of Hope's driving forces was her passionate love of bookbinding and her desire to impart that love to others. She was a wonderful teacher—demanding but always gentle and patient—and her enthusiasm for the craft spilled over. She was, in fact, singly responsible for my whole way of life these past forty years. Hope was my role model, my closest friend, my surrogate mother. What more can I say?

Dorothy Rostov (student)

Hope Weil, physically a tiny person, was, nevertheless, a woman of stature, of elegance, dignity and charm. She had an innate sense of the dramatic, a denial of the humdrum and ordinary and, above all, a love of excellence and beauty. She was an individual who maintained her unique individuality without distancing herself from others . . . a quality which, to me, endeared her as a gentlewoman and friend.

Suzanne Schrag (student)

Letter to a beginner.

Dear Novice:

What a wonderful idea to take up bookbinding! As you start practicing your craft you will find out that there is much more to it than how to cut, paste, fold, collate, hammer, measure, skive, learn the quality and direction of paper, board and leather, design and decorate with many different tools. Perhaps if you are as fortunate as I was, you will have a teacher who by his or her genuine love of books opens for you a whole spectrum of life. The bookbinding craft as taught by my teacher, Hope Weil, in her charming bindery, meant for me much more than progress in my chosen craft: Hope Weil's radiant and generous personality, revealing itself in each bookbinding lesson, taught me attitudes towards life that continue to sustain and enrich me.

May you, my dear young friend be equally rewarded for having chosen the bookbinding craft! Most sincerely yours,

Robert Shepherd (student)

Hope Weil became my teacher in January, 1971. She remained my teacher for ten years, and a dear friend until her death.

I will always be grateful to her, not only for what she taught me about the art and craft of bookbinding, but also about the art and craft of Life . . . and living.

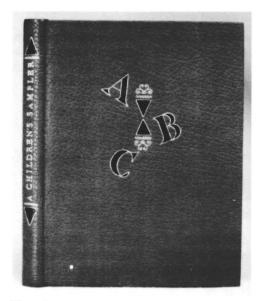
She was unique. I miss her very much.

THE BINDINGS OF HOPE G. WEIL

These books were all shown in Guild exhibitions with the exception of those shown in Hope's exhibition held at the Grolier Club in New York in 1979. They are arranged chronologically according to the date exhibited, along with the place of exhibition.

Picture no.

- The Distaff Side. A Children's Sampler. Red Levant; onlays of black calf; gold tooled.
 1959. Staten Island Institute of Arts & Sciences. N.Y.
- Frost, Robert. West-Running Brook. Green Oasis goat; gold tooled.
 1961. Museum of Contemporary Crafts. N.Y.
- Hart, Bret.
 Pigmented reptile; onlayed title in green Oasis goat.
 1966. Donnell Library Center. N.Y.
- Willy, Colette. *La Vagabonde*. Paris, 1923. Green calf; onlays of red, black and cream Oasis goat; gold tooled. 1971. Gerlach Memorial Exhibition, Grolier Club. N.Y.
- Phillips, Stephen. Armageddon. London, 1915. Gray Oasis goat; gold tooled.
 1975. GBW case, American Institute of Graphic Arts. N.Y.
- Carroll, Lewis. *Through the Looking Glass*. N.Y., 1930. Alice's Adventures in Wonderland. N.Y., 1932.
 Blue sealskin; onlays of black, tan, rust, yellow, cream and brown Oasis goat; gold and blind tooled. 1979. Grolier Club. N.Y.
- Montesquieu. *The Persian Letters*. N.Y., 1929. Rust Oasis goat; onlays of cream and green Oasis goat; gold tooled. 1979. Grolier Club, N.Y.
- Tharaud, Jerome . Jean. La Nuit de Fès. Paris, 1930. Tan pigskin; onlays of brown, blue and gray morocco; blind tooled. 1979. Grolier Club. N.Y.
- Wolff, Eleanor. *Spaces.* N.Y., 1972.
 Black Oasis goat; onlays of white, yellow, pink and red calf; gold tooled. 1979. Grolier Club. N.Y. Photo by Sarah P. Schlosser





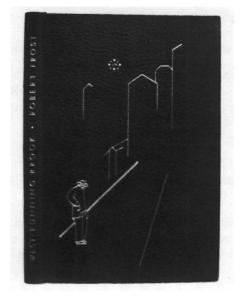
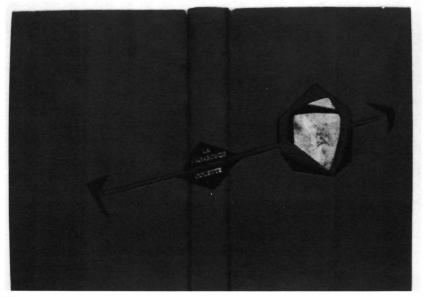


Plate 2

Plate 3





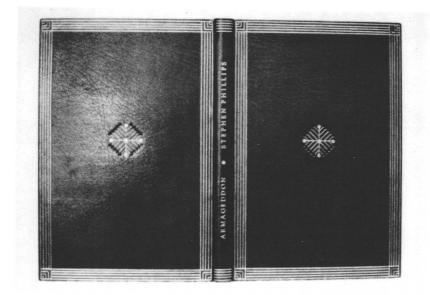


Plate 5

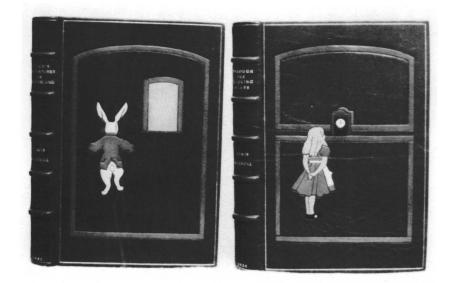


Plate 6

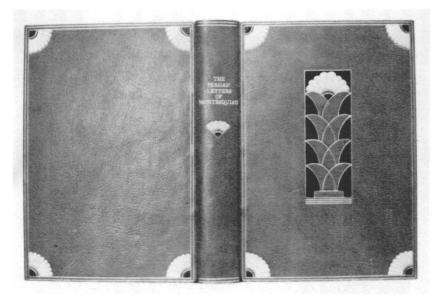


Plate 7

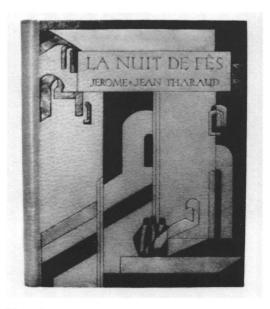
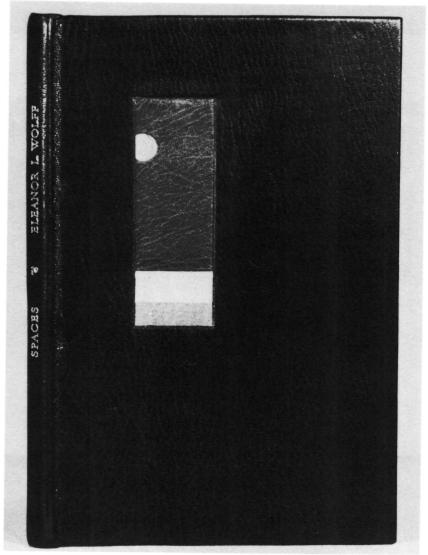


Plate 8





THE ANATOMY OF A DATED BOSTON BINDING: JONATHAN EDWARDS' RELIGIOUS AFFECTIONS / Jane Greenfield

Author: Jonathan Edwards, A.M.

Title: A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections

Printers: S. Kneeland and T. Green

Date of publication: 1746

Date of binding: Before August, 1747 An inscription on a flyleaf with part of the three circle watermark and spatterings of the edge color reads, "Given by a good friend, August, 1747, Benajah Case."

Provenance: Benajah Case, Jhon [?] Mile, 1787, J [?] M. Stone, New Haven, Abigail Treat Holt, Carroll Meeks

Owner: Wilson Kimnach

Condition when given to me for restoration:

Two blank leaves, not conjugate, remained in front. Part of the last page of the index and all the end leaves in back were wanting. Although the sewing was almost intact, a former owner had covered the spine and part of the boards with a clear adhesive that looked like epoxy and the book was almost impossible to open. The boards were detached and most of the spine leather and the headbands were wanting. The book had been heavily used.

Support:

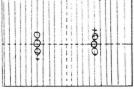
The paper is of excellent quality, crisp and comparatively white. The sheets were small. Their present size is $387 \times 258 \text{ mm} (15\frac{14''}{x} \times 10\frac{18''}{x})$.

The most common watermark, frequently used in France and Italy until the middle of the XVIIIth century, is three circles surmounted by a cross, with a crescent in the top circle, initials in the central one and often an ornament such as a flower in the third. The number of different initials suggest a large paper mill.



Three circle watermark

In many cases there are two of this mark on the same sheet, their direction reversed and with different initials in each.



Placement of watermarks

In addition to variants on the three circle mark there are numerous countermarks—crowned fleurs-de-lys, IHS, a Maltese cross, and in one case a sheet almost entirely covered with heraldic watermarks and presumably the paper maker's or mill's name, "Picardo," in each corner.



Countermarks

According to Heawood, paper with the three circle mark came largely from Genoa, and he lists the name "Picardo" as Genoese. Paper merchants collected their supplies from scattered sources, and imports to England from France and Italy were particularly heavy in the first half of the XVIIIth century so the paper may have travelled by way of England.

Printing:

Samuel Kneeland and Timothy Green were Jonathan Edwards' principal printers. Both were prominent in early American printing, T. Green being a member of the Green dynasty that was well nigh ubiquitous in American printing for over a hundred and eighty years. They were partners in Boston, with a press in Prison Lane (now Court Street), from 1727 to 1752, and mostly published religious works. Samuel Kneeland's son was a bookbinder and binderies were usually attached to booksellers' shops (Kneeland and Green were also booksellers).

Religious Affections was printed four up, with two sheets used to make up each gathering, one being inserted within the other. The book while seemingly an octavo, is, in fact, a quarto quired in 8s. This can be seen from the direction of the chain lines, the position of the watermarks, and the fact that the chain lines do not line up as they would do (only ascertainable when the book is apart) if the gatherings were printed octavo on a single sheet. Gaskell says that quartos quired in 6s or 8s were common in the XVth century but rare thereafter. This does, however, have the advantage of tying up less type at one time which may have been a consideration with Kneeland and Green.

The ink, which was good and black, could have been imported or, more probably, bought from their neighbors in Prison Lane, Rogers and Fowle. (Gamaliel Rogers apprenticed with Bartholomew Green, the Elder, and Daniel Fowle with Samuel Kneeland. What a small world it was, to be sure.)

The book was printed in Caslon, and Caslon ornaments were used with imagination and style. The use of the question mark and the orbit symbol to justify the lines of ornament is worth noting.

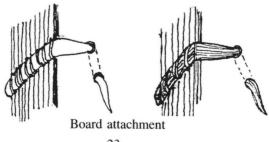
Collation: Format: 4° quired 8s. A4, B-Y8, Z4, §*§4.

Binding:

The materials for binding were available locally: "Scaboard," a contraction of scaleboard, thin oak or birch boards also used by printers for justifying, linen thread and sheepskin.

The book was sewn "3 on," that is, one length of thread was used for every three gatherings. This means that it was sewn with eight lengths of thread only. This seemingly weak sewing lasted well for over two hundred years.

The sewing was unbleached, S twist thread on five vegetable fiber cords, two cut off at the edges of the spine, the other three laced into thin scaboard. The grain of the wood was horizontal which, according to Willman Spawn, was usual in Boston, and the boards had been lined with paper before the sewing supports were laced in.

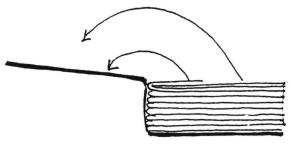


The spine was neither rounded nor backed but presumably was glued before the edges were trimmed. The edges are now a reddish brown but spatters at the foot of the title page show that they were originally a brilliant vermilion.

The headbands were wanting but coloring and the lack of it along the spine on the head and tail edges suggest that the book had them, possibly natural color, or two colors alternating, and beaded like those on a slightly later (1758) Kneeland imprint.

The book is covered in strong, brown sheepskin, blind-tooled with a double central panel with fleurons at the outer corners in a single line border. The edges of the boards are also blind-tooled and there were single lines on the spine, on either side of the cords. There was no trace of a label on the fragments of spine leather that remained.

There is a stub of paper underneath the pastedown, covering nearly half of the inside of the boards. The endleaves were probably sewn with the book and the wide stub and one leaf put down on each board.



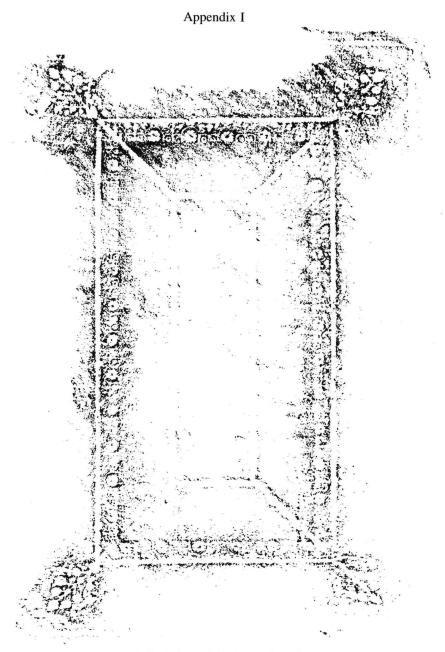
Stub and pastedown

The book was well designed, well printed and bound, and must have been bright and attractive when new.

Treatment:

The book has been washed and deacidified and the pages repaired with Japanese tissue. It has been resewn using, the original sewing pattern, and rebacked with a photocopy of the final leaf bound in.

Jane Greenfield, hand bookbinder and conservator, planned and set up the Conservation Department for the Yale University Libraries and was its head until retirement in 1983. Presently she is advisor on Rare Book conservation to the Yale University Libraries and Lecturer on bookbinding in the School of Art. She continues to do research on early book structure.



A Rubbing of the Front Board

TREATISE

Concerning

Religious Affections,

In Three PARTS;

PART I. Concerning the Nature of the Affections, and their Importance in Religion.

PART II. Shewing what are no certain Signs that religious Affections are gracious, or that they are not.

PART III. Shewing what are diffinguishing Signs of truly gracious and boly Affections.

1.

By Jonathan Edwards, A.M.

And Paftor of the first Church in Northampton.

Levit. ix. ult. and x. 1, 2. And there came a Fire out from before the Lord, ----- upon the Altar; -----ubich suben all the People faw, they flouted and fell on their Faces. And Nadab and Abihu ----- offered Arange Fire before the Lord, which be commanded them not: And there went out a Fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord.

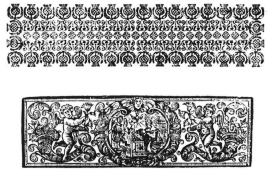
Cant. ii. 12, 13. The Flowers appear on the Earth, the Time of the Singing of Birds is come, and the Voice of the Turtle is heard in our Land; the Fig-tree putteth forth her green Figs, and the Vines with the tender Grape, give a good Smell. Ver. 15. Take us the Foxes, the little Foxes, which fpoil the Vines; for our Vines have tender Grapes.

N: R 0 S Т 0 Printed for S. KNEELAND and T. GREEN in Queenstreet, over against the Prison. 1746. 1...

The Title Page

Appendix II











Caslon Ornaments

Appendix II

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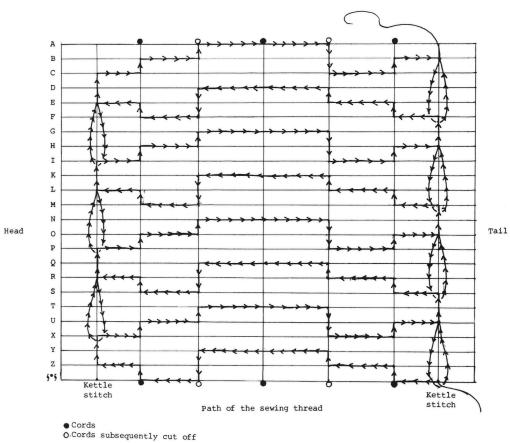


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Caslon Ornaments

Path of the Sewing Thread



29

Appendix III

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THE GUILD OF WOMEN-BINDERS / Ainslie C. Waller

The Arts and Crafts Movement

The formation of the Arts and Crafts movement in the latter decades of the nineteenth century can be seen as a direct reaction against the machine age. Mechanization came to be seen as a negative force, restrictive to both artist and artisan, and was held responsible for the decay of English culture, security and traditions. The pioneers of the movement were directed towards a social end—to establish a society in which all men would enjoy the freedom to be creative. Societies for mutual aid and prosecution of common objects were formed; one of the better known being Ruskin's St. George's Guild. William Morris founded 'The Firm' in 1861, which was devoted to the decorative arts. The Century Guild started in 1882, reflected in its manifesto the creed of Ruskin and Morris. The Guild of Handicrafts was founded by C. R. Ashbee in 1888. The Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society was composed of members from widely differing backgrounds, using a variety of craft methods, selling work and obtaining commissions through exhibitions.

The involvement of women in the Arts and Crafts movement has been divided by Anthea Callen, in her book on the subject (see bibliography), into four main categories: the working-class or peasant women who were organized and employed in the revival of traditional rural crafts; the aristocratic, upperand middle-class women who were philanthropically engaged in the organization of rural craft revivals; destitute gentlewomen forced to make an independent livelihood from art-work; and the elite inner circle of educated middleclass women, often related by birth or marriage to the key male figures within the vanguard of the movement.

The group of Women Binders who federated themselves into a Guild in 1898, can be considered as offering satisfactory answers to three contemporary problems—

firstly: by complying with the Victorian ideals of womanhood these women were engaged in a craft that could be considered as an extension of traditional female skills;

secondly: by providing suitable employment for women, a need which was increasingly evident after mid-century;

and thirdly: by promoting a revival in fine hand-binding, a view consistent with the aspirations of the Arts and Crafts movement.

In order to establish how successfully they fulfilled these stipulations it is necessary to look briefly at women and bookbinding during this period.

Women had traditionally played an active part in many areas of book production. By the mid-nineteenth century, however, their involvement was restricted to the financially and artistically less rewarding aspects of the trades. At this time the only means for women to enter the printing trades was by setting up their own presses (for example, The Victoria Press and The Ladies' Printing Press). In bookbinding many women were hampered by their lack of training as several classes held at Art and Design colleges would not permit females to attend, due to their unskilled amateur status.* A contemporary writer Lewis F. Day was critical of the Central School of Arts and Crafts, writing, in *The Art Journal, 1897*:

The London County Council seems to stand too painfully in awe of the trades unions to do the good work it might do with the funds at its disposal.

Although Mr. Day was not specifically referring to women he did mention that the amateur is excluded, thereby limiting the extension of craft techniques. His real criticism was of industry:

'Distribution of labour' has, in great part, to account for the present unsatisfactory condition of things; and if, for example, trades like silversmithing are to be brought into line with the artistic movement of the day, the first thing to be done is to break down the trade barriers, dividing them into half-a-dozen sections, each of which knows nothing of what the other is about.

The real need among workmen (though they may not know it), is that they should understand something more about their handicraft than pertains to the small section of it to which they are confined in the factory.

This view, which can be seen to apply to present-day factory production, was applied by the Arts and Crafts movement to many areas of mechanical production.

The Arts and Crafts revival of fine hand-printed books extended to a renewed interest in artistic bindings. The reaction against the loss of craftsmanship, the result of increased mechanization in the trades during the nineteenth century, and of the growing gap between artist/designer and craftsmen led to the formation of many private presses and binderies. In these workshops fine bindings were executed entirely by hand—using good quality materials and traditional methods. This was a protest against the large publishing houses, where the necessity for cheap and serviceable bindings overruled traditional considerations. Mechanical devices were used in all stages of production stapling the sections, covering the boards with cloth, and the use of embossing machines for applying lettering and designs to covers. By the end of the century however, trade bindings had greatly improved due to the attentions of prominent designers who turned their artistic skills to book design.

Bookbinding, together with embroidery and illustration, appears to have been a popular craft chosen by women in late nineteenth-century Britain. This was probably due to its association with traditional female talents and also because the process could be carried out at home, with little disruption to family life. An article by F. Miller in *The Art Journal*, 1897, emphasizes the appeal of craft revival in bookbinding to women:

^{*}By this time women were excluded from apprenticeships although many women were employed as sewers, forwarders and 'journey-women' in trade binderies. These jobs were of low status and accordingly paid a low wage.

Women have taken to the craft with much success, as the pages of THE ART JOURNAL can testify, and it certainly is a calling well within the compass of many women who, having taste and some skill in designing, will go through the apprenticeship necessary to acquire the technique.

It has already been noted that the appropriate training was not always as easy to obtain as this writer implies. One prominent Arts and Crafts bookbinder who took on students at his Doves Bindery was T. J. Cobden-Sanderson; he seems to have had no objection to women working in this sphere. His wife, Annie, worked for several years in the bindery, also Bessie Hooley; and a visiting American student, Evelyn Nordhoff, was prompted to form her own bindery when she returned to New York.

The variety and abundance of art and craft magazines in the latter decades of the nineteenth century could be cited as another reason for the promotion of art work for women. Even a brief look through limited volumes of contemporary magazines gives an indication of the popularity of bookbinding. In several articles advice is given, or criticism voiced, and the addition of good quality illustrations tend to further the idea of magazines as an instrument in preaching artistic standards for large numbers of the population. Certain magazines give detailed descriptions of which materials to use, where to buy them, and how much one should expect to pay; and give step-by-step instructions of the craft processes. These articles were no doubt helpful to isolated or novice binders.

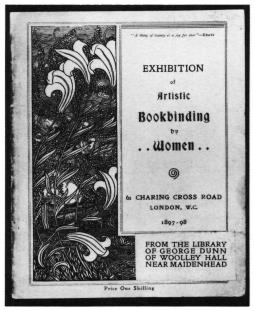


Plate 1

Having looked at the various factors which influenced women and their choice of craft in late nineteenth-century Britain, it is now necessary to consider the Guild of Women-Binders—its members and their work.

The Guild

The Guild had a small beginning. Two or three women who had formerly bound books for personal pleasure came to the conclusion that bookbinding as a profession would suit their needs. The work was light, and could be carried out at home without interfering with domestic duties. Accordingly: Other women interested in the art were communicated with, the final result being the exhibition of a large case of beautifully bound books at Earl's Court in 1897 (Plate 1); which by their originality of design and excellence of workmanship, aroused the admiration of all who saw them. (D. Courtney, *The Lady's Magazine*, Vol. I, 1901.)

Frank Karslake* was among the more interested spectators. Having an 'eye for art effects, and a knowledge of artistic bindings' due to his long and varied





^{*}Frank Karslake started Book Auction Records in 1903, and in the same year suggested the formation of the Antiquarian Booksellers Association, which came into being three years later. He was a bookseller, publisher, print-seller and fruit grower—'a curious character and one of Hampstead's celebrities.'

connections with the book world, he recognized that here was a large field for women's work. He contacted all the ladies concerned, about thirty, and arranged for another exhibition to take place during the following winter. This exhibition was an 'experiment' said Curzon Eyre in his introduction to the catalogue of the exhibition which followed it in 1989–99, but was so successfully attended and so well patronized that it was decided to form a Guild of Women-Binders. Mr. Karslake would act as agent and he made his premises in Charing Cross Road available as a central shop where the finished work could be disposed of:

At its permanent depot, 61, Charing Cross Road, week by week, all the year round, whatever is newest and best of the work finds a temporary resting-place, and a means of ready disposal. (Curzon Eyre, *Exhibition Catalogue*, 1898–99.) (Plate 2)

A bindery was established in Hampstead so that learners could be taught the art. These facilities were shared by the 'Hampstead Bindery'-the male counterpart of the Guild, and also under the management of Frank Karslake. These two groups worked alongside each other sharing retail premises, and holding joint exhibitions and sales. The bindery was 'principally used for the tuition of beginners' according to Dennis Courtney; among the staff of the workshop were Alfred de Sauty and P. A. Salvodelli who also worked for Riviere. Signor Salvodelli was in charge of the tooling department; due to working in Italy and France his knowledge and experience was extensive. The gold used, and the method employed was the same as that used by eminent Parisian binders, the result being that the 'gold-tooling can be guaranteed to be not only brilliant but also permanent.' It seems that tuition was necessary only for some of the members, others in all parts of Great Britain having 'invariably enjoyed the advantages of a training in one or other of the Schools of Art which exist in every intellectual centre.' This is possibly rather a sweeping statement, hence Frank Karslake provided facilities for training. He believed that the craft of bookbinding required 'the possession of some artistic sense, combined with very thorough practical training.' And he maintained So-called 'lessons' mean time and money thrown away. But with a year's apprenticeship to daily work, under skilled instructors, there is no reason why any woman should not become thoroughly proficient and able to earn her own living for the rest of her life.

Some women associated with the Guild were pupils of Sarah T. Prideaux (1853–1933) honoured as the first woman binder in this country, by Esther Wood in *The Studio*. Three pupils worthy of note were Katherine Adams, Elizabeth MacColl, and Miss Nathan. It is not clear that all those who exhibited would have been considered members of the Guild, but a list of many of those connected with the Guild is given at the end of this essay. The principal members were Constance Karslake, Florence and Edith de Rheims, Helen Schofield, Mrs. Frances Knight, Miss Lucking, Miss Hickling, Hilda Gaskell, Mrs. Macdonald, Gertrude Stiles, Lily Overton, Mary Downing, Murial Drif-

field, and Mrs. Traquair. A notice of their pamphlet of 1898 reads: Among the bindings on view at 61 Charing Cross Road, there will always be original examples worked by members of the

Chiswick Art Workers' Guild, Edinburgh Arts and Crafts Club, Gentlewomen's Guild of Handicrafts, Kirkby Lonsdale Handicrafts Classes, Royal School of Art Needlework, Working Ladies' Guild,

and many individual workers.

The latter included Miss Bassett and her pupils Hilda Goodhall and Minnie King, who lived in Leighton Buzzard.

The groups of women within the Guild used different styles and methods. This variety was encouraged, and advertised in their pamphlet of 1898 accordingly:

- 1. The new 'Edinburgh Binding'; a revival of the monastic bindings of the Middle Ages; embossed by hand on undressed morocco (specially suited for early printed books and Church Services).
- 2. The 'African Binding'; a new and very beautiful Venetian-red morocco from the Niger Territories, embossed in any design on a groundwork of gold dots.
- 3. Embossed Calf Bindings by the Kirkby Lonsdale Handicrafts Classes, the Leighton Buzzard Leather Class, and other Schools.
- 4. Illuminated Vellum Bindings.
- 5. Gold-tooled and inlaid Levant morocco bindings, either plain or covered with the most elaborate decoration desired.
- 6. Embroidered Bindings, in coloured silk, satin and velvet, after the manner of the work produced by the Nuns of Little Gidding and others.

By offering such a wide range of styles the Guild no doubt increased its sales. However the main appeal of the bindings was due to the standard of technical and artistic quality. The work by the women was commended for its individuality and originality; there was no question with these women of a monotonous production of timeworn patterns. Designs were individually thought out on the basis of the book's contents, and if a second copy of the book were bound, new designs were created; this method gave particular scope to talented designers, who were in a position to gain both by way of originality and good craftsmanship.

The success and popularity of their work can be seen by looking at contemporary magazine articles, press cuttings, sales figures and letters from satisfied customers. A further seal of approval was guaranteed by Royal Patronage. A letter from Windsor Castle dated 16 December 1897 confirms this:

Miss Bulteel is desired by Princess Henry of Battenberg to thank Messrs. Karslake & Co. for sending the books, and to say how very much Her Royal Highness admired the beautiful bindings.

The Queen has kept two of the books. The account is to be sent to Osborne.

A list of purchasers at the first exhibition included Her Majesty the Queen, H.R.H. The Prince of Wales, The Most Honourable Marchioness of Londonderry and many other Ladies.

An article from *The Studio*, 1899, states:

The Guild fosters certain commendable ideals, one of which is a protest against mechanical designs without significance . . . The Guild also favours leather bindings as opposed to cloth, with a view to durability. Its motto is a peculiarly significant one, 'Laws die, Books never.'

Mr. F. W. Bourdillon praised a Keats, coloured by Miss Cardew and bound by Mrs. Sym,

The colouring is as dainty as all Miss Cardew's work, and suits the decorative character of the illustrations, while the binding keeps up the character of the interior admirably. . . . I regard the turning out of such a book as this as a most delightful and hopeful sign of the reaction against the 'mechanical' ideas of Art which have been holding the field for some time, not perhaps among the artists and connoisseurs, but all through the uninstructed throng.

Mr. Courtney in an article in *The Lady's Magazine*, 1901, approves of the binding design which he considered, first and foremost, 'the special *forte* of the Guild.' He continues:

Good and artistic workmanship is to be met with elsewhere, but for beauty of decoration, simplicity of style, and absolute originality, their productions stand alone.

In describing the bindings, which in his view are reminiscent of no other binding, old or modern, and which stand alone in their simple originality, he writes:

There is no vulgarity of over-colouring, no striving after weird or *bizarre* effects. Considering all things, they are not particularly expensive,* and their possession would be a perpetual joy to the connoisseur. They certainly enable book-collectors to put into practice Ruskin's famous advice that, 'if a book is worth having at all, it is worth having well bound.'

It was intended that the members of the Guild should each be able to combine fine binding and fine decoration, but in fact it was quite usual for one member to design the binding and another to execute them. Unless a customer asked for a design to be repeated, it was usual to work to a new design for each book. Hence:

Except when ordered, no copies of old patterns are worked, but *original* designs by Members of the Guild, and all such designs are registered at Stationers' Hall, to prevent re-production. Whenever required designs will be made and submitted before the book is bound, so that the purchaser may have only what he approves of. *No charge whatever is, in any case, made for designs. (Guild of Women-Binders, 1898.)*

*Prices of books bound by the Guild varied, some as little as 8s., some as much as £40.

An affinity between cover design and text was encouraged: and the members seek to diverge from the beaten track of conventional patterns and to exploit their originality by introducing decorations which shall be characteristic of the contents of the book to be bound.

Relating the decoration of a binding to the subject matter of a book to be bound was, and remains, a controversial issue. Cyril Davenport, a leading authority on bookbinding during the period we are discussing was strongly against the idea. Indeed he went so far to say that the only real decoration should be a crest or mark of ownership. However another writer Fred Miller, in *The Art Journal*, 1897, approved of 'the spice of originality' of the modern binders, while realizing that others may not share his views, remarking that older binders might call their volumes 'such eccentricities' and wonder at the prices set on them. 'Art for Art's sake, is, to a large extent, the guiding principle of the Guild' wrote Dennis Courtney, and

by causing their bindings to symbolise, in a measure, the literature within, they carry bookbinding to something more than the mere laying on of so much leather and gilding.

By looking through the illustrations in *The Bindings of Tomorrow*, 1902, it will be seen that many of the cover designs are highly appropriate to the text within. The work produced in the 'Edinburgh style' lends itself to a close relationship between binding and subject matter; thus being suitable for early printed books, Bibles and Kelmscott editions.

Against the common practice of using inappropriate but fashionably rich bindings regardless of content, the Guild maintained a generally consistent approach. And, said Dennis Courtney,

another point is that the books themselves are carefully chosen for their literary and artistic merits; books replete with inspiration for design; and so the incongruity is avoided of commonplace volumes in decorative covers.

This last point was the subject for discussion in Fred Miller's article in *The Art Journal*, 1897,

Some bibliophiles urge that there should be some relations between the cost of the binding and the value of the book itself. My friend Mr. Thompson Yates objects to binding a 6s. edition of Tennyson in a £6 binding, but in the case of a rare or unique copy of a book such an expenditure on the binding may be justified. Mr. Saunderson, when I put this to him, said that this is a fallacy, for the value of a book does not depend upon the cost of its paper and the machineprinting, but upon its value as a work of genius. He binds a book, the best of its kind procurable, and though the poems of Keats may be purchased for a few shillings, there is no reason why you should not honour the poet by binding his works at a cost of many pounds.

It would seem that the books to be bound and sold in Charing Cross Road were selected by Frank Karslake. His connections with the book trade explain why certain titles from limited editions appear quite often—books of poetry, Shakespeare's Plays, and Jacob's selections of *Fairy Tales* were popular subjects. Works produced by Private Presses were also bound by the Guild, including some 'Special Issue Books,' which were printed on vellum using special inks, and often containing hand-coloured illustrations. Besides these

bindings, the Guild produced Presentation books, decorated boxes, blotters, bookplates and undertook to repair and clean old books.

Due to the success of the first Exhibition of 'Artistic Bindings by the Guild of Women Binders' a further exhibition was arranged for the following winter. By this time, new recruits had joined the Guild and membership stood at about sixty-seven. The Press Notices indicate that the show was met with praise and enthusiasm. In the catalogue for this exhibition a programme for the season 1898–99 was set out. This included, an Exhibition of Original Drawings by H. Granville Fell, an Exhibition of Designs for Book Covers by Women, and a Summer Exhibition of Bindings by the Guild.

In 1900 some bindings by the Guild and The Hampstead Bindery were sent to the Exhibition in Paris—'the artistic capital of the world.' It was decided to sell these at Sotheby's, and in the preface to the *Catalogue*, 10 December 1900, it was noted that the exhibits submitted to the Jury, and now being sold, had obtained the Silver Medal, which, when it was remembered that first awards usually took the form of an Honourable Mention or possibly receive a Bronze Medal, was distinctly satisfactory. Moreover

it is the generally-expressed opinion of experts that, if the exhibitors had possessed a longer record of production, a higher award would have been made for the identical exhibits.

This first Sotheby's sale of December 1900 was conducted in order that the work of the Guild might reach wider audience. Further exhibitions in Britain helped to publicize the work of the Guild, including an exhibition in Cork, and the Leeds Art and Crafts Exhibition of 1900 where Constance Karslake's binding of *Miracle Plays* by Katherine T. Hinkson won First Prize for English Bookbinding. Work was also exhibited in Glasgow and Cork, followed by a further sale at Sotheby's.

A most important guide to the work of the Guild is *The Bindings of Tomor*row, printed for the Guild at Karslake's own expense in 1902, two wellknown publishers having refused it on the grounds that 'there is no money in books or binding.' Published in an edition of 500 copies, by 1903 there were only 150 copies left, and he had already made a profit of £196. The coloured plates are excellent, and it is only to be regretted that the thirty-nine bindings shown are the work of only a dozen members of the Guild—Constance Karslake, Florence and Edith de Rheims being particularly well represented. The text is by G. Elliot Anstruther, whose introduction uncritically praises the Guild and its future—a future which was in fact to last no more than another couple of years.

The Guild produced several different bindings for this, but I have yet to see one, although I have read various descriptions. The following were sold at Sotheby's in November 1904, fetching between £3 2s. 6d. and £14 6s., the last four being designed for the St. Louis Exhibition:

- by Miss Holmes—olive-green morocco extra, inlaid design in red, blue and yellow, orange morocco doublures covered with very elaborate gold tooled and inlaid design;
- 2. by Miss Overton—olive morocco extra, inlaid Grolier design in 259 coloured pieces, dark-blue morocco doublures with 84 inlays;
- 3. by Miss Heinrich—brown morocco extra, very rich inlaid design, with 82 coloured inlays, turquoise-blue morocco doublures;
- by Miss E. de Rheims—olive-green morocco extra, covered with a design composed of about 600 impressions of a single leaf-tool, upon a surface of red, blue and green inlays, turquoise-blue morocco doublures;
- designed by Miss Bromhall, worked by Miss Dorothy Holmes—olivegreen morocco extra, entirely covered with an inlaid design, inlaid morocco doublures in two shades of green, with 92 inlaid blue flowers and 334 orange inlays;
- 6. designed by Miss Baly and worked by Miss Gowan—green morocco extra, very rich gold tooled and coloured design in 454 inlays, red morocco doublures, with olive-green, blue and maroon inlays.

The special feature of this, the final sale at Sotheby's was the series of bindings intended for the St. Louis Exhibition. Twenty-three bindings are mentioned in the Catalogue, being the work of both the Guild of Women-Binders and The Hampstead Bindery. I have found no further reference to the Guild of Women-Binders after this date, although binding did continue at the Hampstead workshop. I have found references to The Sandringham Bindery at these premises after 1904; this organization produced bindings suitable for presentation volumes,

in which good workmanship and good design are desired without incurring the cost of the highest class of work (Curzon Eyre, *Exhibition Catalogue*, 1898–99)

and was controlled by Messrs Karslake, who owned all the tools and furnished all the registered designs.

Frank Karslake

The part played by Frank Karslake in the organization of the Guild of Women-Binders is difficult to assess conclusively. It is obvious, however, that he was a prominent figure in the 'Book World,' a shrewd businessman who possessed other talents besides selling books. It is evident that while some people were skeptical of his intentions, there were many contemporary critics who admired and believed in his aims.

In January 1898, Mr. J. J. Daly delivered an address before the Members of the Booksellers' League of New York, in which he stated:

There is a constant movement in business as well as in everything else. Hence you must meet the changing conditions of the times, and be ever on the alert to win the golden opportunities of the merchant who works, thinks, and realizes that there is a mutual co-partnership between him and the public.

It might be suggested that Frank Karslake had already considered this approach and therefore when he encountered the women binders in 1897, a subsequent business relationship developed. Mr. Karslake had the retail outlet in Charing Cross Road to offer as well as his knowledge of the book-trade, while the women possessed the talents to produce 'original and beautiful designs suited to the books they decorate,' thus pre-empting Mr. Daly's advice.

The fact that Karslake's family was involved in the two groups may have been influential in view of his commitment to the schemes. Constance (his sister, or perhaps his daughter) was a very active member of the Guild. His daughters Olive and Madge were also members of the Guild, and Harold (his brother, or perhaps his son) was a member of The Hampstead Bindery.

He certainly seems to have been aware of, and open to, the fact that women needed employment. In the booklet issued by the Guild in 1898 he wrote,

It is especially hoped that women will support the effort now being made to provide a profitable occupation for those of their own sex to whom such occupation is a matter either or interest or of importance.

From what I have read, Frank Karslake appears to have been encouraging and supportive to the Guild and his attempts to promote their work was considerable. Mr. Harris, in his article in the *Antiquarian Book Monthly Review*, September 1979, wrote that

Few bookbindings have been advertised with more qualities than those of the 'Guild' and Karslake let no opportunity pass to publicise his scheme, either by sarcasm on booksellers who thought he was making a profit for himself, or by his caustic wit against those who belittled women craftsmen.

In the advertising, stress was laid on the good quality and competent workmanship of the bindings. It was hoped that the work would be purchased because it was good, and not because it was done by women. Mr. Harris was of the opinion that with his creation of The Guild of Women-Binders Frank Karslake's idealism outstripped his business acumen, and that not much profit can have been made from the ventures.

The Bindings

Being a co-operative society the books are simply stamped 'Guild of Women-Binders' or a small label has been pasted in. It is usually not possible to say which particular binder was responsible, unless her initials are tooled in, or her signature inserted at the back, or unless there is some printed evidence available. A useful method of assigning bindings is by comparison of tools with an authenticated specimen but with these bindings this does not always work. Some tools were obviously shared and the variation is not great, which is to be expected from people working at home. Styles, although they varied from group to group were not always peculiar to one person. Evidence can sometimes be obtained through contemporary magazines and, of course, by referring to *The Bindings of Tomorrow*, and the Guild's Exhibition and Sales catalogues.

At this stage it is necessary to look at their work in more detail.

The *repoussé* or incised style of binding known as MEDIAEVAL MONASTIC BINDING, revived in France in the eighties, was initially used in England by Mrs. Macdonald. She had first been inspired to experiment with bookbinding in the early 1980s, after (Plate 3)

searching out and enjoying old bindings in libraries . . . and felt that it was a beautiful art, but now fallen to be only a trade.



Plate 3

She wrote:

The embossed leather in which most of the work is done is an idea of my own, and I have taught all the others. It is most suitable for bindings. It is not cut, or raised by padding, but is quite solid leather, and is worked on the book after it is covered, with one small tool. It allows of great freedom of design; no two people work it alike.

Other women from the Edinburgh group of binders also used this method. 'Undressed' leather was used, that is, as it comes from the tanpits. When new the tone was a crude white, which over the months assumes a beautiful 'old-ivory' colour. Because of this, the style was advertised as being especially suitable for early-printed books, Kelmscott Press publications and church books. It was a popular method of working as freehand drawings could be worked directly on to the bindings. The books I have seen worked in this way have been very successful. In reproduction these bindings do not seem very appealing, and I was very surprised to find that I like the style. The leather has mellowed and the tactile qualities are particularly attractive. Because the style can include minute detail and is not restricted by the limitations of conventional tooling, features of the book can be enhanced-for instance the spine and raised cords can be worked on with one small tool without damage to the book itself. Mrs. Macdonald's In the Track of the Bookworm, by Irving Browne, is picked out by Curzon Eyre (in his introduction to the 1898-99 Exhibition) and used as an example of 'how a clever designer may gain by her originality as well as by her good workmanship.' The book deals 'with the curiosities, humours, incidents and eccentricities of book-collecting, and appropriately printed in the olden style.' The edges of the book are coloured green, itself a method from centuries ago. On the obverse is the following design: the principal figure a man in medieval garb, with leathern belt and bag around his waist, stands with one hand on a folio black-letter volume; with the other he waves away 'Love' in the form of a young girl, and 'Money' in the shape of a man offering a purse, or in Mrs. Macdonald's own words 'the bookworm refuses to part with his treasured volume either for love or money.'

The Chiswick group specialized in a style termed the NIGER BINDING. (Plate 4) This was because the leather used was a goat-skin from the Niger Territories and was dyed by a secret process by the natives, using the bark of trees, and producing a dull, rich Venetian-red colour. The bindings are tooled with patterns of gold dots, and some blind-tooling, and the edge decorated in gold patterns on a green groundwork.

The 'LONDONDERRY' BINDING was termed another new departure. These bindings consisted of the finest cream-white morocco inlaid with couloured leather, and covered with gold dots. It was so named by pemission of the Marchioness of Londonderry, a warm patroness of the Guild. (Plate 5)

Other groups produced CUT-CALF BINDINGS (Miss Sophia Smith) and EMBOSSED CALF BINDINGS (Kirkby Lonsdale). This style, likened to 'repoussé' methods in metal work, used embossed or 'beaten-up' leather. Miss Bassett, started a class in Leighton Buzzard for crippled girls, with a view to providing them with suitable paid employment. They worked on an hourly basis and



Plate 4

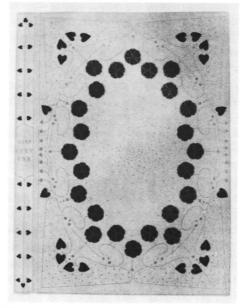


Plate 5

were paid 'according to the excellence of their work.' The method of tooling leather was much the same as that adopted by German binders, but their speciality was 'that of tinting and gilding the leather after being embossed.' (Plate 6)



Plate 6

ILLUMINATED VELLUM BINDINGS were produced by The Royal School of Art Needlework, and by Miss Lynch, the illuminations consisting of titling and inscriptions with floriated borders in the medieval manner, or with paintings of angels, animals, flowers, in the same style.

EMBROIDERED BINDINGS were made by The Working Ladies' Guild, bound in silk or satin. Miss Ramage embroidered in silk on plain cloth covers. Volumes simply bound in satin and velvet, sometimes with pearls added, and lined with silk, were also produced by The Royal School of Art Needlework. (Plate 7)

The majority of the work produced by the Guild appears to have been FULL-LEATHER BINDINGS INLAID AND TOOLED in gold or blind, with many coloured inlays. The styles range from sombre, restrained designs on a dark cover, to bold striking designs, lively and colourful. The Guild favoured hand-sewn bindings with regard to durability, and doublures were included for the same reason. (Plate 8)





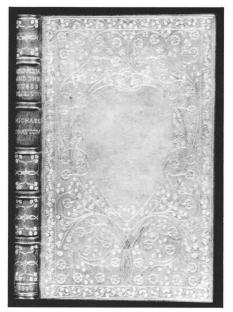


Plate 8

Sometimes individual members were selected for discussion in magazine articles. Constance Karslake appears to come in for much praise for her design capabilities. In *The Studio* Winter Number, 1899–1900, her *Beyond the Border* is considered:

The decoration is pleasantly simple and yet elf-like in its remote and elusive spirit and is well carried out, except that a title is rarely tolerable when dropped vertically down the back.

Miss MacColl's *Omar Khayyam* is criticized, in the same *Studio* article. Its cover gives

an unpleasing impression of fireworks, or balls of string tossed wildly about—an effect altogether out of keeping with the spirit of so dreamy and contemplative a poet.

However, this is seen as an exceptional instance of a design which does an injustice to the talent of the executant, who is not working on her own design but tooling a design by her brother, D. S. MacColl. Miss MacColl invented a tool—a small roll which enabled her to carry out designs with tight curves—a practice restricted by conventional tools. Accordingly, her work is linear and the design often carries over from one board across the spine and on to the other. With this approach her work appears very modern and a contrast to other Guild binders who repeated the same design for both boards, and tooled the spine in a conventional manner as a separate part of the book. (Plates 9 and 10)

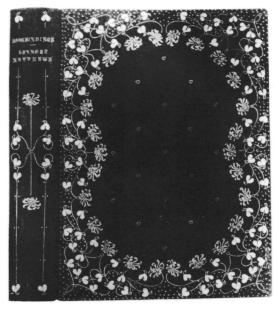


Plate 9

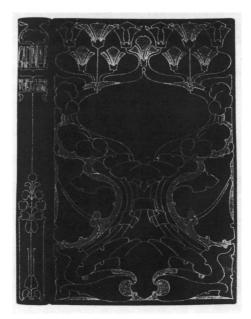


Plate 10

Success and Failure

The Guild of Women-Binders was in existence for six years. This seems to be a relatively short period, but when compared to other guilds and societies within the movement, or groups at other times during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, it can be seen as a respectable and appropriate length of time. During its existence the work of the Guild received favourable reports, hundreds of books were bound and sold and the members had become established in an artistic and social position within The Arts and Crafts movement.

After the final sale at Sotheby's in 1904, no more was heard of the Guild of Women-Binders. The reasons for this are unknown but speculations can be made based on the information available concerning other craft guilds of this period. It is possible that as the members became established and well known in their own right, the need for the Guild, offering solidarity and a financial outlet, ceased to be so important. It may have been that the venture was proving uneconomical. Although sales figures imply that the bindings were readily purchased fetching various amounts between 8s. and £40, the average price was between £2 and £4. Perhaps the expenses incurred to cover the cost of the retail outlet, the premises in Hampstead and Frank Karslake's commission were proving too high. If one considers the wages paid at this

time, at first sight the amount received for even the humblest work (8s.) compares favourably with the average weekly wage of a semi-skilled female worker (12s. 6d.). However the Guild used quality materials, time-consuming methods and often expensively produced books which therefore increased the final sale price. It is difficult to assess the amount the members paid themselves as an hourly/weekly rate, and whether or not it was a reasonable amount. Some of the women were also teachers, but because of their philanthropic interest it is unlikely that they were paid (for instance Miss Bassett). Others were financially independent and were able to survive on regular commissions. Many of the members were married or supported by their families, and therefore the need for economic success was not so great. This does not imply that the desire was not there, and indeed the creation of the Guild must be seen as a success in many ways. The women were provided with an outlet for selling their work, the chance to receive instruction, and the benefits of working within a group that provided encouragement and support. Because the membership was so widespread and few details are known about the organization of the venture, it is difficult to state how the system worked regarding sales and distribution of appropriate monies. It is probable that Frank Karslake received commissions for work which he then passed on to various members, and therefore a steady stream of demand, and therefore work, was met. My belief is that the groups of women in London were the core of the Guild, and because of their location were able to benefit fully from what was provided in terms of premises, tools and materials. It is likely that the exhibitions and the depot in Charing Cross Road formed the focal point for the members, who were able to rely on regular sales and advertising, thus enabling them to continue working at home.

The success and failure of the Guild of Women-Binders can be seen as being characteristic of the overall outcome of the Arts and Crafts Movement. Anthea Callen writes

The success of the movement was largely dependent on its widespread and enthusiastic adoption by large numbers of talented but little known artists and amateurs, many of whom were women.

She says that this fact has been largely ignored and undocumented, because in the past the history of the movement has been traditionally studied and understood within the confines of the history of its leaders. Recent research is taking a less hierarchical approach to the period and more is being discovered about the important position and function of women within the movement. New material is now providing light on these subjects helping our understanding of women's position as 'outsiders' in a patriarchial culture. In this way the Guild of Women-Binders can be viewed as being a total success. Not only were artistic qualities achieved, satisfying contemporary taste for fine hand-work but also the attempt to promote women and their work was successfully realized, despite many restricted Victorian codes and ideas concerning women. Anthea Callen continues:

This movement with often radical social aims should have contained the potential for an equally radical reassessment of the personal and practical relations between men and women.

Instead it can be seen as reactionary in its reinforcement of the traditional patriarchal structure which dominated contemporary society. Members of the Guild of Women-Binders were provided with support and encouragement afforded by like-minds with common ideals and interests, and this situation promoted a more positive identification with their craftwork. However this experience was not available to all women, even those within Arts and Crafts groups. Here their involvement was often unacknowledged by male members, and the possibilities of working on the more artistically and financially rewarding aspects of the craft were limited. Often the only way for women to achieve full artistic expression and a reasonable financial reward was by working independently. This meant social burdens as well as practical ones. For men fame and ambition were taken for granted in the pursuit of their profession, but among women it was only the more socially progressive who were able to cope with the psychological and social conflicts of stepping outside their traditionally defined feminine role.

A major criticism of the Art and Crafts Movement even among its contemporaries was that its products were not within the scope of the general public. Although this applies equally to the work of the Guild of Women-Binders, their aims were directed to other ends, namely providing an artistic and financial outlet for women's talents. This Guild is notable for many achievements, for providing a nucleus for its dispersed women members, for promoting their work, and for furthering the craft of hand-binding. As one critic wrote

The Guild has been very successful and seldom has a movement, affording such scope for women's work, met with so much genuine and encouraging praise.

Thus we find that work produced by the Guild was originally acknowledged as being of a high standard by contemporary critics. Today, examples of their work can be found in museums and libraries throughout Great Britain, and are avidly sought after by collectors of fine bindings.

Ainslie C. Waller researched the material for this article as part of a Bachelor of Arts Honors Degree. The article is reprinted with the permission of "The Private Library," a publication of the Private Libraries Association (Volume 6, Number 3, Autumn 1983). She now lives and runs her own business in York, England designing and marketing rubber stamps.

- 1. Cover of 1st Exhibition Catalogue (reduced; lettering in black and red) (Courtesy Frank Broomhead)
 - 2. Some members of the Guild of Women-Binders from the 2nd Exhibition Catalogue, 1898
 - 3. Mediaeval Monastic ('Edinburgh') binding for LeRêve (Courtesy National Library of Scotland)
 - 4. Niger ('African') binding for Songs from the Plays of Shakespeare. Designed by Constance Karslake, bound by Florience de Rheims

5. Londonderry binding for Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam. Designed by Constance Karslake, bound by Edith de Rheims

- 6. Stained Cut Calf binding for Songs from the Plays of Shakespeare. Designed by Hilda Goodall, bound by Minnie King
- 7. Embroidered binding, coloured silks and gold thread on grey satin, ina 'Morris' pattern, for The Golden Book of Coleridge bound by the Working Ladies Guild
- 8. Full-leather binding tooled in gold for Nymphidia and the Muses. (Courtesy Victoria & Albert Museum)
- 9. Full morocco binding tooled in gold for Bookbindings Old and New. Designed by Constance Karslake, bound by Florence de Rheims

10. Full morocco binding tooled in gold for Candide. Designed by George F. Craggs, bound by Francis Knight

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LIST OF BINDERS ASSOCIATED WITH THE GUILD

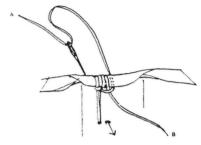
Miss Adams Miss F. E. Balfour Miss Balfour-Melville Miss Ella Bailey (binding designs) J. Barns Miss Bartholomew Miss Bassett Miss Bedell Miss Joanna Birkenruth Miss Bromhall Miss Callow Miss Gloria Cardew (colourist) Miss L. Casalis Muriel T. Clifford Mrs. Connor Miss Helene Cox Miss Dempster Miss Mary Downing Miss Muriel Driffield Miss Edwards Miss Firth Mrs. Ferguson Miss Hilda Gaskell Miss B. Giles Miss Gertrude Giles Hilda Goodhall Miss Gowan Miss Heinrich Miss Robinette Hickling Miss Dorothy Holmes Miss Mary Houston Miss Jessop Miss Jockel Constance Karslake Madge Karslake Olive Karslake Minnie King Mrs. Frances Knight

Miss Lucking Miss Agnes Lynch (illuminated bindings) Miss Elizabeth M. MacColl Mrs. Macdonald Miss Jessie MacGibbon Miss Ray MacGibbon Mrs. Douglas Maclagan The Misses Maclagen Miss Marriot Willa St George-Moore (designed embossed bindings) Miss Nathan Mrs. Nye Miss Lilian Overton Miss Jeanie E. Pagan Miss Ramage (embroidered bindings) Miss J. E. Ravaison (embroidery) Edith de Rheims Florence de Rheims Miss Helen Schofield Miss Sherrad Miss Simpson Ethel Slater M. Sophia Smith Sophia Lyndon Smith Miss Sorley **Miss Stewart** Gertrude Stiles Miss H. W. Svm Miss Thomson Mrs. Phoebe Traquair Miss Rosalie Vigers Miss Walbrand-Evans Miss Waldram Cicely Wall Miss Woolhouse

BOOK REVIEW / Pamela Spitzmueller

HEADBANDS - HOW TO WORK THEM / Jane Greenfield and Jenny Hille Edgewood Publishers, 234 Park Street, New Haven, CT 06511. 80 pp., archival quality paper, hand sewn, in a paper wrapper. \$15.00.

This slim volume (80 pages) is a welcome addition to every bookbinder's technical library. The authors have analyzed and described in detail the steps to construct 12 endbands—bead on edge, bead on spine, bead on edge and spine, French double core, Coptic, Ethiopian, double core (no bead, used on tab bindings), a German braided leather, Greek, Arme-



nian, Islamic (2 versions) and an Italian Renaissance (5 cores!). Quite an accomplishment. The degree of difficulty and frequency which one might need to use some of these endbands varies, so there is something for everyone. I for one am glad to see a description of how one might make an Armenian endband though the authors admit they are not sure this is how the Armenian binders really made them. Perhaps someone who does know will step forward. Though I may never need to make some of these endbands presented are from a wide cross-section of historical periods and cultural traditions in the family of bookbinding, the basic principles of endbanding can be culled from the text so the adventurous endbander is equipped to create new hybrids or decipher old ones.

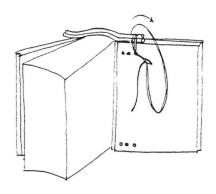


A section of general hints (which shows the authors have made many endbands and trained many beginners), lists of suggested materials for each endband, and a thorough bibliography supplement the procedures. The lively illustrations by

Greenfield and a clear text assure success if you have patience and practice. The Islamic description is the clearest I have seen written and illustrated. I've never seen the Greek, Armenian and Renaissance endbands described at all before this! I am grateful for this collaboration. We should all encourage people who have access to great collections of book structures such as those at Beinecke to carefully study, analyze and report their findings. A note of caution—many old bindings with interesting features are fragile and their secrets are best left unrevealed if there is danger of damage during examination.

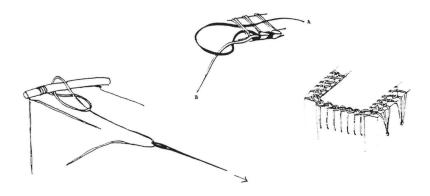
There is a contradiction in endband #2, head on spine, which needs clarification because it is such an important and useful endband in conservation work and is the best primary endband for any number of secondary sewings such as the chevron, crowning core, etc. After following the steps, my endband did look as if the "method of sewing is exactly like that of the most common present day headbands, the only difference being that the bead is

on the spine." However, it is not, to the best of my understanding, the same back bead Christopher Clarkson describes in Limp Vellum Binding as the authors assert. Clarkson describes its advantages among others as an extremely firm attachment to the text-block edge, an endband which naturally stays forward on the edge of the text-block, and a



very *firm* foundation for further decorative sewing. These properties are less evident in the Greenfield/Hille #2. Readers wishing to learn this very sound endband should move to Greenfield/Hille #3, bead on spine and edge. Instead of following all the steps, use only steps 1 to 5 and repeat which make the back bead with the critical Clarkson back loop.

The text-block is printed on acid-free flexible paper and hand-sewn with chain stitch and no adhesive so it stays open while you concentrate on the endbanding. It is all wrapped in a cover of endband inspired decorations.



The Guild of Book Workers, Inc., 521 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10175, a nonprofit organization, publishes for its membership the biannual *Journal*, a quarterly *Newsletter*, and up-to-date lists of supply sources and study opportunities. Its members are also invited to participate in tours, exhibitions, workshops, and lectures sponsored by the Guild. Dues cover the fiscal year July 1 through June 30, and are tax-deductible. Checks and money orders should be made payable in US dollars.

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New England Regional Chapter	\$10.00 additional
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