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The Guild of Book Workers is a national organization representing the hand book crafts. There are regional chapters in New England, New York, the Delaware Valley, Washington DC, the Midwest, California, the Rocky Mountains, Texas, the Northwest and the Southeast.

Membership is open to all interested persons and includes a print copy of this Newsletter, among many other benefits. To become a member, please visit the Guild of Book Workers website:

www.guildofbookworkers.org

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Contents

Letter from the President	2
Letter from the Standards Chair	3
News & Notices	4
Chapter Reports.....	6
Stringy, Slimy, Smelly, Moldy Paints, Anyone?	8
Review: <i>Calligraphy & Lettering</i> , by Christopher Haanes	9
Thoughts on the Binding of Editions by Peter Geraty	10
Review: <i>Peter and Donna Thomas: Bibliography, 1974-2020.</i>	14
Review: <i>Tradition and Individuality</i> by Julia Miller	15
Technical note from Peter Thomas.....	17
Structural and Material Clues to Binding History: A Series	18

Letter from the President

DEAR MEMBERS,

GBW Library – Feedback Requested

Since the late 1980's the Guild's Library has been housed at the University of Iowa Libraries. Through an agreement with the University, GBW has maintained ownership of the collection, which is available for use by members via the mail—and all materials can be used onsite at the by both members and non-members.

The University of Iowa Libraries has requested the we revisit our agreement with them. Currently, the collection is on loan to Iowa, with GBW maintaining ownership. Iowa has proposed that we end our loan agreement and instead gift the collection to the University of Iowa Libraries. Under this agreement:

- The collection would remain “The Guild of Book Workers Collection”, and we would have the option to have a bookplate inserted into each volume. A collection note would also be added to the online catalog.
- All items would be fully cataloged and made available for use. Items would still be available for use by the general public onsite at the Library.
- Rare items or those with special provenance would remain in Special Collections.
- Some non-rare items would be moved to the circulating collection as appropriate.
- Any items that Iowa does not wish to keep in their collection (i.e. duplicates) would be returned to GBW at the University's expense. We could keep, sell, or donate these items as desired.
- By taking ownership of the collection, Iowa would be able to add certain items to their digitization queue (something not possible under the current agreement).
- Iowa would be able to provide conservation or rehousing services for fragile items (something not possible under the current agreement)

While the terms outlined above are open to discussion and/or negotiation, if we cannot come to some kind of agreement, Iowa would like to terminate our agreement and return the

collection to us. While a complete inventory of the collection is pending, we estimate this to be about 1,000 items. Without a building of our own, storing these items in perpetuity would be a challenge. We could of course sell the collection or work to find another home for it—but considerable planning and discussion would be required. Selling the collection could be complicated since disposing of such a large monetary asset would raise some questions for the IRS—especially since our organization is in good financial health.

To learn more about the library's current holdings and its history, please visit our website:

<https://guildofbookworkers.org/library>

For context—use of the print collection has waned over time—in fact, neither GBW or Iowa have any records to show that items have been requested via the mail for at least 10 years. According to Betsy Palmer Eldridge's President Report in August 2002 Newsletter (143:4), a survey of the membership indicated that “The Library is clearly the least used facility. Almost 85% have never borrowed from it. Most have never checked the online catalogue for books, although substantially more have checked it occasionally for videos or journals”. A 2013 member survey also ranked the GBW Library as one of the Guild's “least important” resources.

The Board discussed the future of the GBW Library at our April meeting, and decided that more discussion and research is required. Regardless of the option that we choose, it seemed that having the collection fully inventoried and appraised was necessary. To that end, we voted to approve the cost of having the collection appraised in a manner that meets IRS requirements should we decide to gift or sell the collection. The appraisal took place in late April, and by the time you read this, I should have the report in hand. We are also consulting with both a tax professional and a lawyer to determine how to proceed with various options.

Because use of the GBW Library is a benefit of membership, the Board has requested feedback from the membership on this matter. We will be including a survey following the election ballot (the election will open in July), but I welcome any feedback that you'd like to share with me via email (president@guildofbookworkers.org). Please contact me to let me know your thoughts—were you aware of the GBW library? Have you requested items for use? Do you consider the library be a valuable resource? Do you think GBW should donate the Library to the University of Iowa? Sell it for profit? Or find a new home for the collection?

The Board will revisit this topic at both the June and August Board meetings (and beyond as required), and we will update you with new information when it is available.

The above notice will also be shared on our website and via the GBW Listserv to ensure all members have the opportunity to provide feedback.

Standards Update

Plans for a virtual Standards of Excellence Seminar to be held in October via Zoom are moving forward. The format will look somewhat different for our usual in-person conference, but there will be a great selection of presentations and virtual events to attend. Registration will open in later summer of 2021. More details will be released once they are confirmed and will be published in the August Newsletter as well as on our website at <https://guildofbookworkers.org/content/standards-excellence-hand-bookbinding-2021>

- Our 2022 conference will take place in Decatur, GA on October 20–22. Speakers TBA.
- Our 2023 conference will take place in San Francisco in September 28–30. Speakers TBA.

Many thanks to our Standards Chair, Jennifer Pellecchia for helping us to navigate through uncharted waters!

As always feel free to contact me with questions or feedback about anything Guild-related!

Bexx Caswell-Olson
President, Guild of Book Workers
president@guildofbookworkers.org

Letter from the Standards Chair

DEAR MEMBERS,

I'm happy to share the news that plans are underway for holding the 2021 Standards of Excellence Seminar online in October. Though there is no substitute for gathering in person, this temporary change of format means that Standards has the potential to reach more interested attendees than ever before. A full schedule of events will be announced this summer, with registration opening in August.

After input from members and presenters, we have chosen to host all Seminar sessions on the Zoom platform. If you haven't had the pleasure of spending much of the last 15 months on Zoom, now is a great time to download it and try it out: <https://zoom.us/>

I encourage anyone who is already all too familiar with Zoom to apply for a Scholarship this year! Scholarships are open to all Guild members, including those who have already attended an in-person Standards seminar on scholarship.

As is often the case, Standards programming will begin with an opening reception showcasing the WILD/LIFE Exhibition on Thursday, October 7. Many thanks are due to Exhibitions Chair Jeannie Goodman for her help in planning this event, as well as an upcoming session on preparing your work for exhibitions.

I am also immensely grateful to our members who have taken on the task of online teaching. Beyond helping to keep our craft alive during this strange and overwhelming time, they are providing a model for how Standards can remain an important event, and an evolving resource, for book workers around the world. Karen Hanmer, Radha Pandey, and Jeff Peachey are three individuals whose many skills include

teaching over Zoom, and I'm happy to announce that they have agreed to present at our online event this year.

Jeff's Peachey's presentation, "Forty-One Ways of Reattaching Book Boards," originally planned for the 2020 seminar, has been rescheduled for our 2023 conference in San Francisco. Our other 2020 presenters—Dr. Cathleen A. Baker, Béatrice Coron, and Erin Fletcher—have rescheduled their sessions for the 2022 seminar in Atlanta. They will be joined by Brien Beidler, who will share techniques for designing and making finishing tools.

For those who like to plan ahead, please save the dates for our next in-person seminars:

OCTOBER 20–22, 2022

Courtyard Atlanta Decatur Downtown/Emory

SEPTEMBER 28–30, 2023

Hilton San Francisco Union Square

Until then, I hope to see all of your faces in the Zoom room this October!

Jennifer Pellecchia,
Standards Chair
standards@guildofbookworkers.org

News & Notices

REPORT FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT

With just about 600 responses, we had a tremendous number of participants for the GBW Community Survey in April! Thanks to everyone who took the time to provide feedback. Recipients of the three \$50 Colophon gift cards were selected and contacted, and currently the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee is analyzing the data and working on a report that will be shared with the membership directly and made publicly available on the website. Stay tuned!

LETTER FROM THE JOURNAL CHAIR

The editors of the Guild of Book Workers *Journal* are now inviting submissions for volume 51, an issue with a projected publication date in the fall of 2022.

We encourage submissions that address the ways in which the community of book workers (collectively and individually) have responded to the extraordinary events of the past year. Submissions may relate to maintaining and developing community, the pandemic, the movements for social justice, and the presidential election. Did your work change in response to crisis? Have you found ways to grow within your book worker community? Did you devise imaginative ways to cope economically during the shutdown? Perhaps you crafted an effective way of using virtual tools to continue your professional activities? These are just some potential topics, but there are many others.

Submissions on other topics not directly related to the ongoing challenges in our communities are equally welcome. Formats for submissions may consist of brief articles, photo essays, as well as longer treatments of complex subjects.

If you have an idea for a submission but aren't sure if it is appropriate, feel free to contact the editors at journal@guildofbookworkers.org for feedback and help in developing your topic. Full submission guidelines can be found on the *Journal* pages of the Guild's website.

Deadlines for final submissions are **March 1, 2022**.

We look forward to hearing from you,

Peter D. Verheyen,
Journal Chair

Erratum in Volume 49 of the Journal

Ben Elbel would like to let you know that a work described in his article, "The Pixel Binding" published on page 23 of Volume 49, 2020 of the *Journal* contained an error: Andrea Odametey's *Daedalus et Icarus* does not fall in the "semi-flexible" binding category, as its boards are in fact, fully stiff. Apologies for the mistake.

CONGRATULATIONS, JUDY REED

Judy Reed, former Conservation Librarian of The LuEsther T. Mertz Library of the New York Botanical Garden, received the Charles Robert Long Award of Extraordinary Merit on May 5, 2021 from the Council on Botanical and Horticultural Libraries (CBHL).

The Charles Robert Long Award of Extraordinary Merit is the highest honor presented by CBHL. This honor was established to recognize outstanding service to CBHL and/or to the field of botanical and horticultural literature, information services and research. The award was presented to Reed during CBHL'S virtual annual meeting hosted by the Smithsonian Institution.

Reed earned an AMLS from the University of Michigan and studied bookbinding under a noted bookbinder. She has been an active CBHL member since 1968 and has made many contributions to this community. She has served as a member of numerous committees, contributed a Newsletter column with a focus on conservation and preservation, co-hosted several annual meetings, and in her retirement, continues as an active support for annual meeting hosts. Reed's leadership within the field is recognized by the number of grants awarded to support conservation and preservation efforts at New York Botanical Garden. An active collaborator, Reed has trained and inspired numerous conservation and preservation librarians. Fostering a community of learning and engagement, she has been a frequent speaker, presenter, symposium participant, and author/co-author of books and articles.

This award recognizes Reed's exceptional commitment to professional development, her interest in the collaborative efforts of libraries, her continued search for professionalism, and her extraordinary service to CBHL. The Council on Botanical and Horticultural Libraries empowers its members to lead in botanical and horticultural information services. CBHL strengthens its membership; addressing emerging issues, and providing expertise and value to our respective organizations. For more information about CBHL, visit its web site at <http://www.cbhl.net>.

Submitted by Rita Hassert



We are excited to announce the venue lineup for the upcoming Guild of Book Workers Triennial traveling exhibition, “Wild/LIFE”. In a biological sense, wildlife describes the myriad of creatures sharing this planet, interacting and adapting, all connected to each other and their environment. “Wild” also describes an untamable essence that survives despite the constraints of society and culture. As craftspeople, knowledge of materials and keen observation of how they behave (and often how they refuse to comply) is integral to our practice, and a reminder of how traditional bookbinding materials originate in nature. Members were invited to interpret the theme of “wildlife” in any way they wish, be it literal or abstract, humorous or serious.

Please consider making a tax-deductible donation to the catalog and exhibit printing fundraiser.

Your donations helps to keep fees to enter the exhibition low from year to year, making entry more widely accessible to members. You may do so by going to www.guildofbookworkers.org and going to the “GIVE” tab.

Venue lineup

May 2–June 24 2022

Cushing Memorial Library, Texas A&M University

College Station, TX

<http://cushing.library.tamu.edu/programs/index.html>

July 5–Sept. 22, 2022

Lloyd Library and Museum

Cincinnati, OH

www.lloydlibrary.org

June 2–Aug 7, 2021

American Bookbinders Museum

San Francisco, CA

<https://bookbindersmuseum.org/>

Sept. 3–Dec 7, 2021

Robert C. Williams Museum of Papermaking, Georgia Institute of Technology

Atlanta, GA

<https://paper.gatech.edu/robert-c-williams-museum-papermaking>

Jan. 7–Feb 11, 2022 (Tentative)

North Bennett Street School

Boston, MA

www.nbss.edu/

Feb. 21–April 22, 2022

Collins Memorial Library, University of Puget Sound

Tacoma WA

www.pugetsound.edu/academics/academic-resources/collins-memorial-library/

Chapter Reports

New England

CHAIR: ERIN FLETCHER

The New England Chapter's 40th Anniversary Exhibit will be going on display at the Boston Athenaeum from May 15–August 7, 2021. In addition to the exhibit, the Athenaeum will also be hosting an online talk with exhibitors Nancy Leavitt, Julie Stackpole and Erin Fletcher on their work in the exhibit and in the Rare Book & Manuscripts Collections at the Athenaeum. The talk is scheduled for July 8 with more details available on our website soon: www.negbw40thanniversary.com.

California

CHAIR: MARLYN BONAVENTURE

John DeMerritt presented a workshop, *Drop Spine Box Making*, over 3 days in April. John truly has the tricks for streamlining the process of box making and most any edition productions, and all his tips are priceless. This was a very successful and full class.

On June 5, 2021 Debra Disman is scheduled to hold a one-day workshop: *Folded Fan Sculptural Artist's Book*. Registration and further information can be found on our website, gbwcaliforniachapter.wordpress.com.

The California Chapter of the Guild of Book Workers invites members to participate in our upcoming exhibition *Book / Art / Artifact* which will open June 10, 2022 through August 28, 2022 at San Francisco Center for the Book, San Francisco, CA. We invite members to participate in the exhibition so note Intent to Enter begins May 17–31, 2021 via Formstack. Find information on our website: gbwcaliforniachapter.wordpress.com

Event: Contemporary Binders of *La Prose Du Transsibérien* June 26, 2021 from 11:00 AM to 1:30 PM PDT on Zoom

Sponsored by the Guild of Book Workers, Northwest and California Chapters, available to the Guild of Book Workers and Designer Bookbinders, and open to the public.

The binders will discuss their process of designing and executing a binding for the new facsimile of a book that was groundbreaking for its time. The twenty-one participating binders will give presentations in groups of five.

Registration is required for this Zoom event

Check our website for further information:

gbwcaliforniachapter.wordpress.com

Lone Star

CHAIR: KIM NEIMAN

The Lone Star Chapter covers a lot of territory, 268,596 square miles to be exact, which can make it difficult to engage with members. But COVID didn't stop the chapter officers from implementing new ways to stay in touch across Texas and beyond. Yippee-ki-yay!

“Colophone” is a recurring monthly Zoom meeting, to share informally, in a casual, supportive setting with other members. Members can share what they have been working on; book or otherwise, what they've participated in or where they visited etc. Contact Syd Webb, LSC Events Coordinator to participate: sydawebb@gmail.com

“Ex Libris” is a quarterly member interview and exhibition, created as an informal introduction to meet members. Contact Craig Kubic, LSC Secretary/Treasurer if you'd like to be interviewed: ckubic@swbts.edu

“Limp Vellum Binding Workshop” in the style of Kelmscott Press. Zoom workshop with Karen Hanmer, June 13–14. To register email lonestar@guildofbookworkers.org

Stay tuned for more Lone Star Mini Workshops on Zoom. Follow us on Facebook [@lonestarchaptergbw](https://www.facebook.com/lonestarchaptergbw) & Instagram [@gbwlonestarchapter](https://www.instagram.com/gbwlonestarchapter)

Northwest

CHAIR: JODEE FENTON

The Northwest Chapter is finishing its “Working From Home” series of virtual visits to members' studios. Our next series will focus on the business of book arts with speakers, panels, and discussions about making a living from book arts. Members participated in an exchange called “Renewal” by creating art that explored the idea of renewal. Photographs of each entry will be shown in The Nipper, the chapter's biennial newsletter due out in the next month. The Chapter is co-hosting the first ever Pacific Northwest Regional Book Arts meeting to bring members from various book arts organizations together to explore areas of potential cooperation including how we can all support and amplify the GBW Wild/LIFE exhibit coming to the University of Puget Sound in February/March 2022 for the general public, students, and educators.



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Stringy, Slimy, Smelly, Moldy Paints, Anyone?

by Iris Nevins

OKAY THEN! HOW MANY OF you can relate? Everyone at some point? Well, if you have not yet experienced anything in this title, marble long enough and you likely will! So let's talk about this before it happens, and you don't know why or what to do about it.

What I am discussing here is watercolors for marbling, which will include gouaches as well.

Now that summer is coming, watch out, your paints can spoil. All of these problems with paints tend to happen when you save your paints, already mixed with ox-gall during hot weather. Most problems can be solved by not mixing up too much paint with ox-gall, and trying to mix up only what you think you will use for the day. Keep your main bottle of paint pure, and it should not have these issues, but sometimes may. Chances are greatly reduced, though.

STRINGINESS

I find this happens more with gouaches or tube watercolors. Perhaps they have a higher gum arabic or other binder content than liquid paints for marbling, but I have had it happen just the same. There is something I cannot explain scientifically, but rather by experience, that when paint mixed with ox-gall is stored in a hot place for weeks or months, there is sometimes a chemical reaction that can make it seem syrupy or stringy or both. It doesn't happen often, and I suspect it has to get very warm for a good long while.

The advice here: toss it out. It doesn't marble so well anymore.

SMELLY PAINTS

With the slimy, stringy mess, this too can also smell pretty foul. Again, toss it out, except if it is ultramarine blue. It is not even necessary to have added ox-gall to it for it to smell! It can smell, reek really, of rotten eggs or a sulphur smell. I have had this happen with numerous brands of ultramarine. If your main bottle stinks, and it will more in warm weather, don't worry! It is just fine. Use it; I have never had it cause any trouble.

MOLDY PAINTS

It has only happened a couple of times over 43 years to my paints. One time I decided to go ahead and use color that had fine white hairs growing up from the surface. I was pretty intrigued. Yes, it had been mixed with ox-gall and stored in a very warm room maybe for a week. It was in a yogurt cup with a lid.

I was just curious, and sure I'd contaminate all my tools, tray, likely poison myself, but I HAD TO see what would happen. I wish I had saved a sample of the papers I got, but it formed odd-shaped spots, with a lighter color outer ring, and some interesting inner patterning. It looked really archaic, like very early marbling, and it was a look I had tried to get in copying some early papers, and just could not quite get the effect. Then it dawned upon me: the old-world marblers likely wasted nothing, and if the paint molded, so be it. Use it anyway!

The moldy paint experiment was really interesting, and brought me back to the early 1700's. I have actually tried to make my paint mold since, and it has not happened. Maybe it is just something you have to wait for. In any case, it didn't contaminate anything.

One thing though: where the mold may have come from. Many times my corn broom whisks have gone moldy. You can try to create mold with them by leaving them damp in summer, I suppose, then stick them in the paint and leave the paint to sit a while. Molding whisks were not something I enjoyed, though, so long ago I went to very untraditional plastic whisks, which I make from plastic whisk brooms, taken out in sections and tied with rubber bands. They last forever and never have molded. In case any of you are having moldy whisk issues, you can go to plastic.

Hoping this helps to avoid summer mold, slime, smells (except normal for ultramarine!) and you have happy marbling this summer.

Review: *Calligraphy & Lettering*, by Christopher Haanes

by Beth Lee

HAD I KNOWN THAT TWO wonderful books would be released shortly after the last GBW Newsletter deadline, I would have delayed the review of my old favorite, *The Calligraphic Line*, in the last issue. But, as book people, you're always up for another book review, yes? I will put off a review of the latest Speedball Textbook for another time, and here discuss Christopher Haanes' new book, *Calligraphy & Lettering*.

CHRISTOPHER HAANES

Christopher Haanes is a Norwegian calligrapher who trained with Ann Camp at Roehampton, graduating in 1989 with a Diploma in Calligraphy & Bookbinding. His design work has included logos, typefaces, books and book jackets, and, notably, the Nobel Peace Prize awards. He has authored several books as well, including ABC for Adults. A look at his Instagram feed (@chaanes) will make it immediately apparent that he is more than qualified to write a comprehensive calligraphy manual.

THE BOOK

Calligraphy & Lettering began its independent publishing life as a Kickstarter project in October 2020. Given the depth and breadth of Haanes' understanding of the topic, this individual approach in no way limits the scope of the book. Actually, I'm not sure what an editor could have contributed: this 224-page book is simply packed with information, and the writing is clear and spare.

The first quarter of the book is a history of Western lettering. It begins with the roots of writing in 3500 BC, and progresses through Roman and Greek lettering in antiquity, monastic writing in the middle ages, and the invention of printing during the Renaissance. Here Haanes connects the invention of new printing technologies with the rise of pointed pen lettering and the writing manual. He continues with the renaissance of calligraphy in England as part of the Arts and Crafts Movement, tracing this development into the late-middle 20th century. This is followed by an explanation of the evolution of letter design in Germany arising from Anna Simons' translation of Johnston's book, *Writing & Illuminating & Lettering*. There is a well-articulated comparison of characteristics of the Arts and Crafts Movement and the Bauhaus School.

The exposition of the connections between printing/type and calligraphy throughout history sets this book apart from other calligraphy manuals, and, indeed, most histories of graphic design. One of the most interesting aspects of the

history section is that historical forms are juxtaposed with modern type and calligraphy to show how those historical forms continue to provide a rich trove of inspiration to lettering designers today. Sumner Stone's 2000 typeface Numa is shown next to early Etruscan and Latin alphabets. Jovica Veljovic's 2001 typeface Silentium appears next to a 9th-century Tours manuscript. Zapf's first typeface, Gilgenart (1952), is positioned next to a 1514 Augsburg prayer book.

The remainder of the book is a practical manual. Presentation of the various hands is both lucid and rigorous. Instruction begins with Roman capitals, followed by its cursive and ornamental forms. The Foundational hand comes next, and here I particularly like the label on one page of example lettering that reads: "Foundational mistakes and options". It is a hint that an accidental flaw may be repurposed as an intentional feature. Next, the Foundational hand is modernized, and the ideas and processes of pressure and pen manipulation are developed with clarity and precision. This is both unusual and welcome, as pressure and manipulation are topics much more often seen on workshop handouts than in calligraphy manuals. Numbers are not neglected. Italic, Carolingian, and Irish uncials are introduced, and pressure and manipulation applied and expounded there as well. There is an excellent presentation of Gothic forms in all its variety, including Haanes' adaptation of Civilité. The book ends with a discussion of handwriting, a short but valuable primer on how to see and analyze typographic and other letter forms, and a few pages on layout and page design.

Beautiful exemplars and examples abound throughout the book. I begin to suspect that Haanes wrote this book to address the omissions of other calligraphy manuals on the market. If you want to delve into the history of calligraphy as set in the broader history of graphic design; if you would like a clear explanation of pen pressure and manipulation in service to the letter form; if you have never sorted out all the styles encompassed in the term "blackletter"; if you want some clear letter forms for your own calligraphy practice; if you want a comprehensive manual of calligraphy, then I highly recommend this book.

Thoughts on the Binding of Editions

by Peter Geraty

SCALING UP A BINDING PROJECT from one book to many is not just a simple order of multiplication. There are many considerations to think through. True, it will require a multiple of materials and time, but what does that really mean in practice? Let's talk about what some of those considerations might be. This is not an exhaustive list but a good place to begin thinking about it.

CLIENT RELATIONSHIP

- It is important to have a thorough and clear line of communication with the client.
- **When will you get all materials the client is responsible for sending**, i.e. printed sheets, other materials (artwork to bind in, special inserts, graphics for stamping dies, etc.) if they are providing them?
- **How will the sheets come to you**, as F&Gs (folded and gathered), as parent sheets that you are responsible to cut, fold and collate? This is usually a time-consuming job.
- **What is the expected deadline** for completion; is it hard or mutable, and is it realistic for both you and the client? Does it take into account unplanned interruptions, such as a pandemic?
- **Who is designing the binding for the edition?** You, the client, or an independent designer, and do they understand the limitations of the chosen materials?
- **Try to work with the client before the book goes to press if possible.** Sometimes there are considerations in pre-press design that could be altered to make the book and the binding turn out better. You know more than the printer or the client about how books function kinetically and how the initial design can affect the final outcome. The signatures could be too thick or too thin, the paper could be too stiff and lack drape and thereby not open well. The type of endsections planned for the book may require the printer leaving out or inserting more blanks into the layout at the beginning and end of the book.
- **Is there a bible for the book?** This is a set of F&Gs in correct order containing all inserts. This is what you can check against to make certain the books are correct before you begin work. It can also be checked throughout the job in case of confusion/misunderstandings or changes to the edition. The bible is gold. Whether you create it or the client supplies it, make sure that both of you agree with it. This gives you protection from mistakes already cooked into the book. However, if you see any problems or things that aren't as you were expecting them consult the client before beginning work.
- **A prototype should be made.** They are often separate from the price set for the edition and invoiced at an hourly rate. If the client refuses to pay for one, then you should make one and eat the cost. Finding mistakes later because you didn't anticipate them by making a prototype will surely cost you more in time and materials later on. Also, a prototype will make it clear to the client what they can expect and it is a good idea to have in writing — email or letter, not phone call — their pleasure at what you have come up with in the prototype or the changes that need to be made.
- **Specify how design changes are to be implemented** and advise the client that they may reflect a change in the cost of the job and possibly require another prototype.
- **Some clients require handholding leading up to and throughout the job**, many phone calls, many emails... They may be new to the process or simply needy individuals. You can often tell who they are. This can take time away from the actual work and it is wise to factor that time into the cost.
- When there are phone calls with the client, **write up what you understood from that call and email it to the client** so everyone is on the same page. Agreements and changes made over the phone can be misremembered by you or the client later on.
- **How will the payments for the job come to you?** A steady flow of money over the timeframe of the job gives you a more secure feeling. If the job takes many months to complete, maybe you can arrange to get a check each month. Another method is to get the payment in thirds: part up front, part in the middle and part upon completion. Try to make this an amicable aspect of the client relationship. You may think of yourself as a craftsman, but in this relationship you are also a salesperson: embrace your new title.
- **Payments for materials should be considered separately from the job** and it would be a good idea to get that up front. You don't want to spend money on materials and have the client pull out afterwards.
- **Contracts can be drawn up for jobs, but things in our trade are notorious for being "handshake" deals.** That doesn't mean contracts are wrong. I have rarely used them, and maybe I have just been lucky. The world changes. Even if there aren't contracts, emails can

be a good way of making sure everyone agrees with cost, timing, design and other expectations both parties have for the edition.

- **Some clients require partial deliveries of the finished books.** This is a pain because it interrupts your workflow. Partial deliveries represent a real slowdown in time and therefore the job takes longer. There is nothing wrong with reworking the cost of the job if this is thrown into the mix.
- **Sometimes you can negotiate with the client about getting a copy of the book for yourself** — it may simply be the prototype, part of the edition or an artist's proof. This gives you something to show future, potential clients what you are capable of. It can also be a pleasure to look back at some of your accomplishments as they accumulate. You may have to pay for the contents, especially if there is original artwork. Perhaps any costs for this simply deducted from the overall cost of the job.

FINANCES

- **How do you come to an idea of the cost for the job?** What are you charging and what will it cost for you to produce? The way I figure costs is to go over in my head how long I think it will take to do a single operation on a single book. I add up all the operations that go into the book and then take a look at that number. I multiply it by the number of books in the job and then look at the total. Does the final amount sound right when I think of what goes into the job? Since an edition isn't a one-off, multiplying it times the number of books will yield a cost that may be too high. If the job is fairly straightforward then it most likely is too high, but if the job is complicated or has aspects I am unfamiliar with, it might not be too high. There is an acquired art to this and it can be difficult to calculate cost at first. Don't respond too quickly to the clients request for pricing. You may regret the number you give. This is important, so make certain you like your final figures. Sometimes you can come back to the client partway through a job and renegotiate the price. It is not wise to rely on this because it can sour the relationship you have with the client. Try to get it right the first time.
- **Is it clear that the methods you choose are reflected in the cost?** A lot of what we do isn't visible to the client, and they may not appreciate extra steps such as lacing on boards, sewn-on endsections, sewn endbands, etc. They may not know why the work costs so much. Are you prepared to short-change some of the steps in order to bring the books in within the desired cost range? There is no sin in this; just make sure the client knows what is required to meet their cost expectations and the ramifications of those choices for the outcome of the books.

When a client truly understands the differences between a good binding and a binding that is less resilient and long lasting, they sometimes come around to the better alternative. Revisit your inner salesperson.

- **It is not unusual to have a tiered pricing structure for work.** Fine bindings and conservation might be your top dollar work. You may have steady clients with small jobs for whom you give a break in the cost because you can count on them for future work. Binding of editions is often done for less money per piece. The job is much larger, with a more steady income and you have the benefit of "mass" production. Repetition of operations allows you to get things done faster than you can with one-offs.
- **You have to pay rent and utilities (phone, internet, lights, water, etc.).** You also have to pay for insurance for the shop, insurance on the work that is in the shop, liability insurance for the client who comes into your shop and gets a paper cut. You have to pay taxes to the town or city where your business is.
- **Do you have insurance for having someone else's materials (i.e. printed books) in your shop?** Keep the books and materials stored away from windows and covered in plastic to avoid accidents.
- All of this is to say **there are costs that aren't visible at first when setting prices and estimating the cost of the job.** Make sure you know what they all are. It can be helpful talking to other craftspeople in your area with similar overheads to find out what they charge per hour. They don't have to be bookbinders; all craftspeople have these same issues.
- **Profit—Don't forget about this.** It isn't what you take home every week—that is your salary. Profit is what you have left over to plow back into the business for expansion, a rainy day fund, dreams, retirement, etc.
- If the job is large, say more than fifty books, **prepare 3-5% more materials (endsections, etc.) than the job requires.** Revisiting previous operations to catch a book(s) up to where you just made a mistake takes more time than preparing extra in the first place. Unless you are perfect, there will be mistakes. If you are perfect, then congratulations.
- **Order about 10% more materials than you anticipate needing for the job.** Don't go overboard, especially since the client is paying for them, but when you run out of cloth for instance, you may find the dye lot has changed since the last time you ordered, and the colors are no longer exactly the same. Also, what the supplier has in stock now may be on backorder when you run out near the end of the job.
- **If you are responsible for ordering materials, then it is normal to up-charge the client for them.** That

means that you add a percentage onto what you pay for the materials. I add 15%. That covers the cost of locating the materials, placing the orders and handling them when they arrive, as well as storing them. The percentage amount is up to you. Another way to do it is to simply charge the client for the time you spend doing this and skip the percentage. You may choose to have the client order the materials and then they spend their time, but you still have to handle the materials when they arrive. And if the client orders the wrong materials then everyone is disappointed. Most times the client is content to have you do it.

- **You need to be paying your employees a wage that reflects their rarified training; this isn't flipping burgers.** The employer is responsible for matching some of the taxes that the employee also has to pay. We also have to invest in Worker's Compensation (injury insurance) and there may be medical and retirement funds as well, depending upon how many employees the shop has. Know what is required for you wherever you are.
- **If you are using sub-contract labor, check out the tax requirements for them.** Some binders simply pay someone as a sub-contractor, figuring they can get away with not having to put them on payroll, which adds cost to their bottom line. There are legal issues using sub-contract labor. Make sure you know what they are so you don't get into trouble.
- **During the job there are daily tasks requiring shop time:** sharpening your knives, cleaning off your bone folders, cleaning the benches, sweeping up the debris you have left on the floor at the end of the day, taking out the trash... Who pays for this? It may be part of the job estimate or part of the overhead you figure into the shop rate, but either way, it isn't free.
- **Who is responsible for shipping the finished books and who is responsible for that cost?** Don't forget it takes shipping materials and your time to safely pack and get them out the door, let alone the cost of the shipper.
- As with shipping the books out, keep in mind **there is also time spent taking the books into your shop**, as well as time spent unpacking, sorting, and looking for damage that might have occurred during shipment to you. There is also checking to see that you got everything you were supposed to get.
- **Final inspection should be included in the cost estimate.** Final inspection may include minor repairs, removal of glue spots, etc.

PLANNING THE JOB AND WORKFLOW

- Large jobs rarely go exactly as planned.
- **Can you count on the timely arrival of the materials needed**, and are they what your supplier promised?
- Number of employees: remember you may be doing all of this on your own, so be realistic about your time. **Are there people you can draw from if needed when you get backed up?**
- **If you are using sub-contractors, are they coming in on time and on budget?** Is their work what you expected in quantity and quality? Establish good relationships with them. You may need them again and they may need you or even refer clients to you in the future.
- **Rest assured that it always takes longer to do a job than you can probably imagine.** A normal workday consists of eight hours. You may be lucky to get six of those at the bench. There are the phone and emails to answer, the post to check, employees to oversee, visitors coming and going, the restroom to visit, an afternoon cup of tea to ease your worried mind, etc. However much time you plan for a job, always add to it. You will look good if it comes in on or before time and will look bad otherwise.
- **Think about how the edition coming into your shop will dovetail with other work already accepted or in process.** Can you handle other work at the same time or does that throw off all scheduling? Really think this through. I sometimes don't.
- **Have you considered the space in which you have to work?** Do you have unimpeded methods for moving large amounts of materials into and around your shop as well as places to store them? Do you have the bench space for the books as they are in process? Do you have the equipment and tools necessary for this job? Are they well oiled and in working order? Are you?
- **Do you need to purchase special tools or equipment for the job?** Who pays for those? If the purchases are things you will continue to use long after the job is done, then the cost may be on you. If they are very specialized and of little to no use to you afterwards, then the client should bear the responsibility for them. Even if you can use them later, you may be able negotiate with the client to cover some of that cost.
- **It takes time to order and receive materials into your shop.** Suppliers might be backordered or change stock on you. It is wise to establish a good relationship with your regular suppliers.
- **Where are you going to store the materials and is it safe?** Do you have to rent space for the duration of this job in order to house everything necessary? Who pays for that? Have you accounted for all the time you will spend

planning the job, moving materials, doing prototypes, figuring out and making jigs, even writing out checks and doing accounting for the job?

- **Have you accounted for all the time you will spend planning the job,** moving materials, doing prototypes, figuring out and making jigs, even writing out checks and doing accounting for the job?
- **Even though you have estimated the cost of the job and the only thing left is to do the work, track your time.** This will give you valuable information that you can use on future jobs. Track by the operation and you will see how long each one actually takes. That information will tighten up the estimate on your next job. There are multiple phone apps that will help you and their use can become second nature. Encourage your employees to use them as well.
- **On large jobs, pace yourself so you can make it to the end of the job.** If it works well, mix operations so you aren't doing the same one over and over until you are sick of it and start making mistakes. Also, be aware that repetitive tasks can do physical harm to your hands, back and legs. You may not realize that initially, but it can come back to haunt you later. Try learning to use your less dominant hand for tasks; that may cut down on the stress of repetitive tasks. It can be easier to transfer the knife or folder from one hand to the other than turning the book each time. There are also mirrored cuts you may need to make that can be difficult to do using the same hand all the time.
- **There are many types of small operations going into the completion of an edition.** Your employees may have differing skills and skill levels. How do you parse these out over the job in order to get the best work from each of them? Don't forget they are people just like you and need to feel their input into the actual job, and how that is perceived is important to the final outcome. Give them something just above their level and they will rise to that level. Give them something too far above and you will both suffer. You can give your employees dumb work because a lot of what we do from day to day is just that, but make sure you do some of the dumb work too and not keep all the "fun" stuff for yourself.
- **Jigs.** When doing one-offs, jigs are not usually worth the time spent devising and making them. For editions, they are worth every penny and may prove to be the best investment you can make. It is wise to date the jigs when they are made. You may find, especially after the prototype is built, that you want to make subtle adjustments in the jigs. By dating them you will always be using the up-to-date jigs. Keeping the old ones throughout the job may confuse, but they may still give you valuable information — you decide whether to keep them or toss them.

- **Take photos of jigs, set-ups, processes and the like as you go along.** These are valuable references if you split the job up and only do part of the edition at a time. They will remind you of how you did something, especially if it was unusual. They are also good for future review when you do a similar job.
- **Forget the dictum, "Measure twice, cut once."** Measure a bunch of times, agonize over those measurements and measure again, then cut one piece and double-check the measurements one more time. A simple mistake replicated throughout the entire edition can have a disastrous consequence.
- **Order of work.** This may be obvious, but do consider it. Every time you pick up a book in an edition you are using time. You may be able to do more than one operation to it at a given time, but if one of those operations requires a specialized set-up, it may take you more time than picking it up twice. Sometimes it is faster to do a partial operation to each book. Once done, you go through each book again to finish it. Say you make specialized cuts on each book and come back later to glue them up rather than cutting and gluing each in turn.
- When the job is finally completed, if you have the space, **you may wish to archive everything you have relating to the job,** jigs, sample materials, prototype, stamping dies and set-ups, etc. These can be useful if the job is being done in stages or if there is a follow-up job from the same client. For that matter, it can also inform you on how you dealt with certain aspects of the job that might have been unusual.
- **Lastly, enjoy this process.** Create a steady rhythm you can easily maintain and you can live to be an old binder, still working away at the bench and loving every minute of it.

This was originally put together for a presentation to the Society of Bookbinders, East Midlands Region in April of this year. Even though written by me, it got critical eyes and comments from Lisa Hersey, Mark Tomlinson and Matthew Zimmerman. All of us are currently immersed in a very large edition.

Review: *Peter and Donna Thomas: Bibliography, 1974-2020*.

Reviewed by Gabby Cooksey

PETER AND DONNA THOMAS: BIBLIOGRAPHY, 1974-2020, a recent book from The Legacy Press, is a visual chronology detailing their bountiful careers as book artists during that 46-year period. Broken into multiple sections, this publication showcases books the pair worked on together, their individual creations, class projects, collaborated works with other artists, and commercial books. In their ongoing careers, Donna and Peter have created hundreds of artist books, and as curious readers we are given the joy of seeing them all in one space—with lots of pictures.

There is a warm candidness in the way the book is written, mainly from Peter commenting on each book, about how they made the work or describing their process. There are also written contributions by James P. Ascher, Alice Ladrack, and Max Yela. There is only a handful of missing pictures (mainly one-off books), but really being able to SEE Donna and Peter's body of work is what makes this book a gem to explore.

One part I found particularly insightful was near the end when they included the transcript of a talk they had given at the Norlin Library discussing what *actually* is a book. As a traditional codex bookbinder, I often catch myself wondering, “well is *that* a book?” And reading Peter's commentary cracked that idea open for me. So Peter and Donna: Thank you for softening that gatekeeper in my head telling me what a book is or is not (and it most likely is).

Over and over again, I found myself jotting down notes about their journey as book artists, their stories of when things didn't go just right, or how they made it work when they didn't have a lot of type, or the learning curve involved with paper making. There were so many aha moments of thinking something will look cool—like having a deckle at the head of the book, and then learning why one usually does not do that. I also enjoyed hearing about their joys of selling the work and their openness around doing commissions or not. Also getting skins from an exterminator is pretty metal.

Peter and Donna's way of exploring a medium, like their 1993 book, *Paper*, was just amazing. The level of thought and care that went into that edition was inspiring. The way they really like to add layered meanings into a book creating a treasure hunt as you turn each page; like in 2017's *Plute Creek*, how lifting the scroll up gives you a goody which can only be discovered if you truly poked around in the book.

My only wish is that they would have included the prices of their books that sold. I'm always curious about those details and having a recorded account of it would be helpful.

Overall, this book was a fabulous showcase of Donna and Peter's life's work so far. The words accompanying the pictures, the care in craftsmanship, and their love for the medium shines in this 415-page book.

Gabby Cooksey lives and works in Tacoma, WA as a bookbinder and book artist. She graduated from North Bennet Street School in 2014 and has studied under Jessica Spring, Suzanne Moore and Don Glaister. Her work is collected privately and by institutions across the world.

Review: *Tradition and Individuality: Bindings from the University of Michigan Greek Manuscript Collection*, by Julia Miller

Reviewed by Lizzie Curran Boody

TRADITION AND INDIVIDUALITY: BINDINGS from the University of Michigan Greek Manuscript Collection by Julia Miller is a thoroughly descriptive and visually stunning survey of the collection of Greek and Greek-style bindings housed at UM. The size of the tome is admittedly daunting, but the larger format allows the numerous full-page color photographs to bring the collection to life, rendering *Tradition and Individuality* an essential research tool for Greek bindings as well as documentation practice. The details and distinguishing quirks of each binding in this compelling collection are revealed through exhaustive photographic documentation accompanied by assiduous annotation. Kyle Clark's appendix, which meticulously illustrates the process of making a model of Mich. Ms. 79, is a significant addition to this already valuable resource.

Although Greek and Greek-style bindings are held and studied at institutions around the world, UM's collection—which spans from the fourth to the 19th century—is unique in that nearly all the bindings in the collection are original. For comparison, Miller notes that only 2% of the Greek bindings in the Vatican's collection remain in their original bindings. For this reason, the study of UM's collection is not only noteworthy because of its quality but also because of the access it allows to such rare and historically significant materials.

In Chapter 1, "The Groundwork of Description," Miller credits J.A. Szirmai and Nicholas Pickwoad (two household names in the field of book conservation) for creating the survey format used for structuring the binding descriptions, as well as some of the nomenclature. The careful attention to defining terminology allows each element of the various binding descriptions to evoke both "tradition" and "individuality." The similarities are rather evident while the particularities of each binding emerge more subtly.

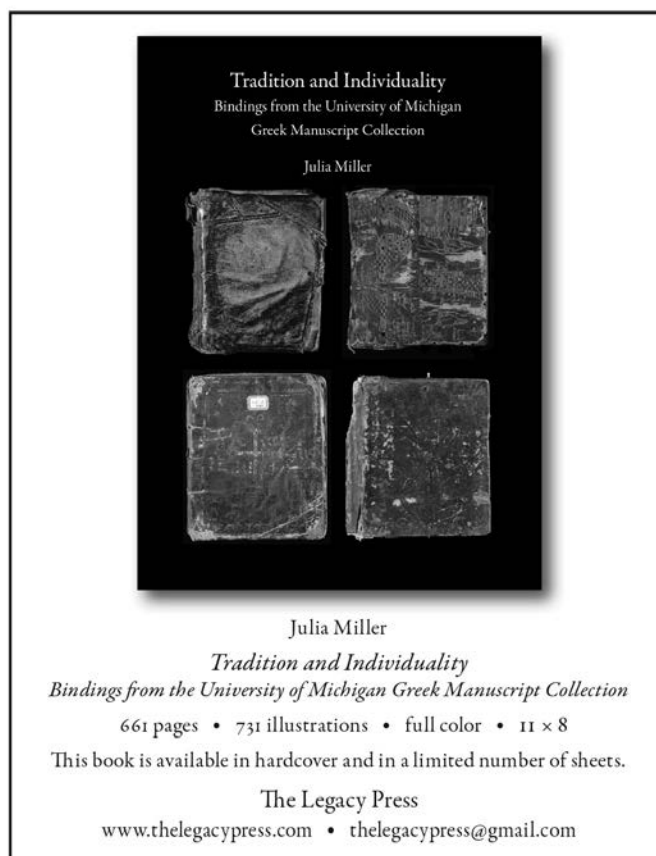
In Chapter 6, "Interpreting the Evidence," Miller plays with descriptive categories. By distilling the diverse details of the collection into a series of often-overlapping categories, the reader begins to truly appreciate the depth of the survey. A particularly poignant grouping is "Artisan choices." It serves as a reminder that as makers, observers, interpreters, and custodians of the craft, we are individuals making artistic decisions (or mistakes? Improvisations?) while creating objects that have a very far-reaching past and, undoubtedly, a future as well.

As bookbinders and conservators, we are constantly reminded of the past by virtue of our craft's tactile connection to history. In the Appendix, Kyle Clark's thorough research

and investigation into the structural components, design and construction of Mich. Ms. 79 is an excellent example of how experiential benchwork brings a fuller understanding of the book and its history. Using clear illustrations and technical explanations, Clark elucidates the practices of binders in the ancient past whose methods are largely the same as Clark's.

In our field we value the knowledge gained from handling an object. Through careful observation of structures, techniques, and material choices, an object's history reveals much of itself. Miller's portrayal of UM's collection of Greek bindings allows for a similar learning process to handling and observing an object, making it as desirable to book nerds and lovers of beauty as it is useful to researchers.

Lizzie Curran Boody is the Assistant Conservator at Dartmouth College in Hanover, NH. She is a graduate of the North Bennet Street School and is currently pursuing a diploma at the American Academy of Bookbinding. Lizzie has previously held positions in the conservation labs at University of Washington and the Huntington Library. She resides in Vermont, and has a job backer in the living room.



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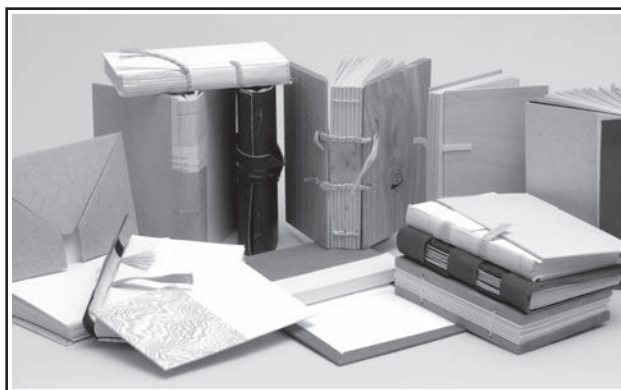
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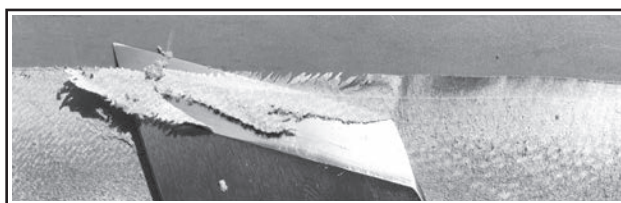
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Technical note from Peter Thomas

HOW TO CALCULATE THE EXACT DIMENSIONS OF THE COVER BOARDS AND HINGE FOR A CASE BINDING

The goal in making a case is to have it fit the bookblock snugly at the spine, foredge, head, and tail, with the desired square. If the hinge or boards are too wide, the case will be loose at the spine; if they are too narrow, the bookblock's foredge will be forced past the square.

To make exact calculations, begin with the dimensions of the bookblock and choose the width for the square. The average square is from 1/16" to 3/16" (1.6 mm to 4.7 mm) wide, equal at the head, tail, and foredges, and in proportion to the size of the book.

The height of the cover boards should be equal to the height of the bookblock plus the width of the squares at the head and tail.

Variables for determining the width of the cover board and hinge include:

- If the cover boards are cut the same size as the bookblock, the spine, when cased in, will overhang the board by the width of the square. Thus, the hinge must be the width of the square plus the thickness of the spine board. If a case is made with these measurements, it will fit the bookblock perfectly, but usually the covers will not open flat because the hinge is not wide enough.
- To create a wider hinge, cut the covers slightly narrower than the bookblock and increase the hinge space proportionally. (Usually one board thickness.)

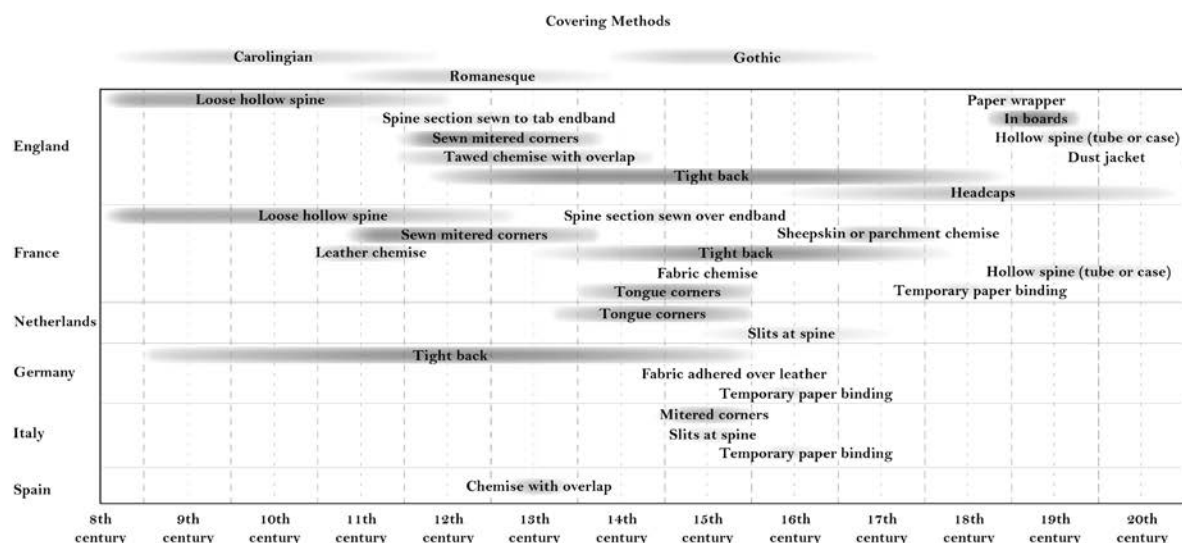
The width of the cover boards should be equal to the width of the bookblock less about one cardboard thickness; the width of the hinge should be the width of the square, plus the width of the spine board, plus about one cardboard thickness.

Even after following these steps there are still several other factors to consider to assure a perfect fit:

- If the cover material is thick, the hinge will need to be slightly larger.
- If the cover material stretches, the hinge will need to be slightly smaller.
- If the spine is rounded, the hinge will need to be made narrower.
- If the cover material is pressed into the hinge to create a groove, and it cannot stretch, the hinge width will need to be increased.

From *More Making Books By Hand*. Rockport (now Quarry), 2004.

*Peter and Donna Thomas are book artists from Santa Cruz, California. They work collaboratively, making both editioned and one-of-a-kind books. They make the paper, print, illustrate and bind their books, combining the precision of the fine press aesthetic with the structural creativity found in contemporary artists' books. Between 2009-2019 they made four cross-country road trips, traveling in their artistic tiny home on wheels as the "Wandering Book Artists," teaching classes and giving talks about the book arts as they visited university and community based book arts centers around the country. They are authors of *More Making Books by Hand*, and editors of 1000 Artists' Books, and in 2021 *The Legacy Press* published a descriptive bibliography of their work: *Peter and Donna Thomas: Bibliography, 1974-2020*.*



Structural and Material Clues to Binding History: A Series

Part 13: Covering Methods and Temporary Covers

by Emily K. Bell

In the thirteenth article in the series, we look at different methods of applying covering materials, including some measures that were intended to serve as temporary protection of the textblock. A chart showing some details of covering methods and the evolution of temporary covers is included.

NOW THAT WE HAVE IDENTIFIED the materials with which books have been covered, we can take a close look at how those materials have been attached. There are a few subtleties in the methods used to apply the covering material that can be helpful, such as the way that the portion covering the corners of the boards has been managed. Clues can also be seen in the way the section covering the head and tail of the spine has been handled, particularly in bindings where the boards were attached before the covering material was added. And there are some tantalizing clues to be gained from “temporary” covers such as the chemises used on medieval books. Though most have not survived—many seem to have been intended as sacrificial—when they are available they can provide some interesting historical notes.

THE TIGHT BACK VS. THE HOLLOW SPINE

Is the covering material glued directly to the spine of the textblock, or is there a hollow? There is a distinction to be made between a loose hollow back, in which the covering material is simply left loose across the spine, or a binding with a hollow tube attached to the spine. In the latter case, the covering material is adhered to the tube, but there is still a gap between it and the spine of the textblock that allows the cover to flex in the opposite direction from the textblock spine when the book is opened. It may not be immediately obvious which type of hollow one is looking at, but if one can peek inside the opening, it might be possible to discern the folded edges of the tube.

According to Middleton, Coptic and insular books usually had loose hollow backs. Marks also asserts that 12th- and 13th-century bindings had loose spines, and we assume that she is speaking of English bindings. Books sewn on raised cords or thongs, on the other hand, typically had tight backs, with the spine section of the covering material adhered directly to the spine of the textblock (sometimes with intervening spine linings, but sometimes not). Vézin insists, however, that early French bindings had loose hollow spines until the mid-13th century, even though textblocks were sewn on supports

before that time. Once recessed-cord sewing was adopted in the late 18th century, the hollow tube began to appear, and the covering material would have been adhered to the tube rather than directly to the spine of the textblock.

Szirmai discusses the occasionally deleterious effects of spine linings and of adhering the covering material to the spine. He notes that using stiff animal-hide glue, combined with rounding, spine linings, and a tight back on top of that, seriously compromises the opening of carolingian parchment manuscripts that were rebound in the mid-15th century in St. Gallen. Although by contrast this at first suggests that the covering material on carolingian bindings might have originally been loose through the spine area, there are traces of starch on many of the carolingian spines in his samples, which suggests that they were in fact tight backs. He concludes that because starch paste is a relatively weak adhesive, and tends to degrade over time, it's more likely that carolingian bindings had tight spines. The fact that the ones in their original bindings open well, while the 15th-century rebindings do not, seems to have more to do with rounding and backing, as well as the type of adhesive used, rather than simply the fact that the rebindings have the cover material adhered to the spine.

The tight-back binding persisted in France until the 18th century, and to the beginning of the 19th in England. Prideaux credits the French binder Nicolas-Denis Derome with the introduction of the hollow tube. In her opinion, this is evidence of the catastrophic deterioration of the craft in the late 18th century. One of the downsides of a tube is that if the leather breaks at the shoulder, the entire spine piece is likely to be lost, whereas on a tight back book the pieces will usually remain attached to the spine of the textblock even if they are damaged. Diehl also decries the hollow spine as an indicator of an inferior craftsmanship, though she mostly credits its appearance to the mechanization of binding and the development of the case binding in the 18th century. Paired with sawn-in cords and (as Diehl describes it) overly-thinly-pared leather, the existence of a tube can be a relatively reliable indicator of an 18th- or 19th-century binding.

MANAGING THE TURN-IN AT THE SPINE

Romanesque bindings that featured high tab endbands, which we described in part 6 of this series, required a special approach to covering. Slits needed to be cut in the covering material next to the tab lining, to allow it to turn over the edge of the board. According to Clarkson, on English bindings in the 12th century, these cuts were usually made at right angles to the board. Frequently the covering material was sewn to the endband tab, and sometimes a facing fabric, with perimeter stitching, which could be as decorative as the embroidered endbands themselves. Often the stitching covered the end of the cut in the covering material and extended onto the board, reinforcing the part of the covering material weakened by the slits.

A manuscript from 1658 from the Netherlands describes all the steps used in “regular” binding, including covering. It also mentions the need to cut slits in the covering leather at the edges of the spine, and in particular directs the binder to turn in the flap at the spine first. Some of the 15th-century bindings examined by Anderson also have slits in the covering material next to the spine, which she interprets as being necessary to go around the cores of the endbands that are laced into the cover boards. There were examples that had slits even though the endband cores were not connected to the boards, which may be evidence that the cords were originally laced in but have broken. With the advent of the stuck-on endband in the 16th century, slitting the covering material at the spine would not have been necessary, though none of my sources have mentioned this explicitly.

Diehl describes having to slit the tube on a hollow-back binding in order to be able to turn in the covering material. Since she describes the practice in the section of her book that is the actual instruction in book binding, we can assume that she finds this practice preferable to slitting the covering material. In a case binding, where the case is constructed separately from the textblock, it would also not be necessary to cut the covering material because it can be turned in before being attached to the book, whether it has a hollow tube or not. So, a lack of deliberate slits in the covering material may indicate that either the spine was lined with a hollow tube, or the endband cores were not laced into the boards, or the binding may be a case binding; any of these conditions would usually mean that it is of a more recent date.

Headcaps, where the turned-in leather at the spine is left a bit long and is folded over the endband to protect it, began to appear around the 16th century, according to Marks. Carvin, however, notices in his 14th- and 15th-century French bindings a variant in which the turn-in is trimmed so that it can be folded over the endband to cover it. I wonder if these are more closely related to the tab endbands, since Carvin describes embroidery covering the turn-in-and-endband system. In the chart, I have referred to the French version as having the spine section sewn over the endband, rather than calling it a true headcap.

CORNER TREATMENTS

How is the covering material handled at the corners of the boards? How the excess covering material in the corners is managed can sometimes give us some clues as to when and where the binding was made, although as the “Matters Technical” feature in the previous issue of the *Newsletter* reveals, each workshop or even each binder would have had their preferred methods. Szirmai summarizes the different types of corner covering in his samples, and it seems that over time there developed more and more different ways to address the corners. All three eras examined by Szirmai feature some form of the mitered corner, where a single triangular

piece is removed before the edges are turned in and the cut edges come together diagonally across the corner. Some of his examples were cut so the turned-in edges would be flush, while others had an overlap of varying degrees. There are some examples in the carolingian and especially in the romanesque periods where the leather has been sewn together at the mitered corner. Sewing the corners seems to have been particularly popular in the romanesque period in England and in France, though it was occasionally found in Switzerland as well. Vézin notices sewn corners on French bindings as early as the 11th century. Clarkson observes that it was common on English 12th-century bindings, and notes some of the finer examples feature hidden threads, indicating that the sewing was done from the inside first, before the turn-ins were folded over the board, and was pulled tight just before adhering. It may have been a way to ensure that the (unpared) leather would not detach completely from the boards if the adhesive failed, or may simply have helped to hold the leather in place while the adhesive set and possibly to control shrinkage as the leather dried.

In Anderson's survey of 15th-century bindings, she notes that the Netherlandish bindings often employed the "tongue" corner, in which a narrow strip of leather is cut perpendicular to the corner, then a triangular piece of leather is removed from either side of the tongue. The tongue is turned in first to cover the point of the board corner and then the other edges are turned in, their cut edges abutting the edges of the tongue on both sides. The Italian bindings in her sample, on the other hand, tended to have the simpler mitered corner. The "tongue" corner appeared first in romanesque bindings in Szirmai's survey, but was not particularly common until the gothic period, when he also observes that it was popular in Netherlandish binderies. Carvin's French examples from the 14th and 15th centuries had mostly tongue corners, with more instances on the 15th-century bindings but distributed throughout his sample. The next most common was a mitered corner with a significant overlap, usually with the foredge side having been turned in last. It is interesting to imagine that, in France, at least, the sewn mitered corner gave way to a mitered corner with a large overlap, followed by the more complex tongue corner. It is possible that the differences are more regional than temporal, however, as I have not closely examined from which part of France each author's samples came.

Clarkson also notices that the width of the foredge turn-in could vary significantly in 12th-century English bindings. Some had "narrow" turn-ins (he is not more specific, but I assume similar to the head and tail), but others could cover the inner face of the board by two-thirds of its width. He does not speculate on a reason for this exceptionally wide turn-in. It seems like an extravagance that does not appear to offer a structural advantage. My only thought is that it might have been a way to cover most of the board without using an

endsheet, but I can't imagine why one would wish to do so. I hope readers will weigh in with their ideas.

CHEMISES AND OVERCOVERS

Some medieval books, typically from the 12th to the 15th century, had a secondary covering, known as a chemise or overcover, which was not glued to the binding but was a loose or partly attached wrapper intended to protect the binding and to make the book more portable. A chemise could be made of fabric (often silk) or leather, particularly a soft leather known as chevrotain. Clarkson's article on 12th-century English bindings includes a drawing of a typical chemise of the period, made of tawed skin and having a short overlap that protects the edges of the textblock. This example also has metal bosses on the surface of the chemise that covers the board, just as other romanesque covers themselves had protective metal furniture (see part 9 of this series). It seems that these bosses may in fact have been part of the connection between the overcover and the primary covering, indicating that they may have been intended to be more permanent than one might have thought. Szirmai has drawings of the construction of two variations of romanesque overcovers, one with an overlap to protect the edges of the textblock and one without. He notes that the overlap was common on English romanesque bindings, but could also be found on 13th-century Portuguese bindings from Alcobaca. Yale University Library's booklet on Medieval bindings has a nice photograph of an English 14th-century chemise made of what look like multiple scraps of leather sewn together. The photograph shows how these covers were wrapped around the book and secured in place with sewn pockets for the foreedges of the boards, much as one might remember making grocery-bag wrappers for one's elementary-school textbooks, if one is of a certain age. Vézin also makes this comparison when he describes French overcovers from the end of the 11th century, but comments that often the primary binding was only partially covered at the spine with thinly-pared leather, the overcover serving as a more robust cover that the primary binding could not really do without.

In his review of an inventory of the Pontifical library of Avignon from 1369, Pierre Gasnault notices that some of the more elaborate bindings with fabric as a primary covering material (most commonly velvet, but also cloth of gold or samite, sometimes embroidered) were protected by a chemise. Most of the chemises were of linen fabric, but some were also fine textiles themselves, particularly samite (which is typically made of silk or silk and linen), sometimes even embroidered with silk and gold threads.

The practice of protecting the cover of a book with a secondary wrapper may have persisted into the 18th century, at least in France. In a survey of French binding manuals from 1680 to 1800, Giles Barber reports that Furetière's dictionary from 1680 describes a *fausse couverture* or "false cover" of sheepskin or parchment used to protect the "true" cover. Prideaux

also mentions an embroidered fabric envelope over a tooled binding from France from the 17th century, noting that it may have been a way for the owner to tone down the sumptuousness of the binding while she was in mourning.

OTHER SECONDARY COVERINGS

Szirmai identifies two carolingian examples of fabric coverings over a primary leather covering, both from Germanic regions. However, on examining images of one of them, Princeton UL Garrett MS 43, it appears to have a fabric covering adhered all over the surface, rather than a loose wrapper. The images also show remnants of what appear to be tawed straps on the back board, in addition to the central strap with metal clasp that still functions. Holes for pegs in the front cover exist where those two straps would have come across. It looks to me like the central strap, made of green leather, might have been added later, perhaps to compensate for the loss of the original pair of fore-edge straps. The binding notes on the images date the alum-tawed covering to the 11th century, with the green silk fabric a possible 15th-century addition. The example from St. Gallen, SG Cod. 398, similarly shows traces of a fabric cover adhered over leather, and again, there is evidence that old straps and pegs on the fore-edge broke or were removed and a single new clasp has been added. What I find particularly fascinating about this example is that the original straps were attached to the fore-edge of the front board, fastening to pegs on the fore-edge of the back board, as most carolingian bindings seem to have had. The extant strap begins on the back board and attaches to a peg in the fore-edge of the front board, reversing the direction of closure. As we discussed in part 9, this configuration of strap originating on the back board seems to have been much more popular in German and Netherlandish bindings than elsewhere, but seemed to have been adopted later than the strap originating on the front board. Perhaps this is further evidence of the textile covering material having been added at a later date, as part of an effort to repair or protect an already worn binding. Although we must be wary of drawing conclusions based on only two examples, it is an intriguing idea.

PAPER COVERS: TEMPORARY OR NOT?

Contemporary with the later years of ubiquitous leather covering and mostly before the full adoption of bookcloth, there exists a period of time in which books were often sold “in boards”. This was typically paper-covered pasteboards, and initially was probably intended as a temporary binding until the book could be “properly” bound in leather by its final purchaser. Sadleir bases his argument on the fact that the earliest examples of in-boards bindings were unlabelled. In the period between 1730 and 1770 in England, books were often issued by printers in bundles of sheets within a plain paper wrapper, sometimes with a stiffener if the pages were large, or

else simply in folded signatures, so that they could be bound as needed by the bookseller. Once the business of an independent publisher began to be more defined in the 1770’s, they continued to issue books the same way, but as time went on the paper wrapper began to decline, all but disappearing by 1802, when the paper-board became common. Much of Sadleir’s discussion is about how books were labelled or otherwise titled, which can be summarized this way: rough paper wrappers, intended to be discarded once the book was bound, date from the mid-18th century; tailored but unlabelled wrappers or paper boards are from the 1780s; minimally labelled boards, possibly also intended as semi-temporary bindings, date from the 1790’s to 1810’s; more elaborately or informatively labelled and more carefully constructed board bindings, including those with differently-coloured spines and sides or with decorated paper coverings, date from the 1820’s and could resemble later cloth case bindings in their construction.

Barber points out that different kinds of books would likely have been approached differently by binders, and that school books and periodicals would probably have been marketed differently than literature or scholarly works. He notes that in 18th-century France it was common to sell books that were “broché”, meaning that they were sewn with few cords, often not all-along but two- or three-on, and wrapped in plain or marbled paper. Contemporary illustrations seem to bear out his assertion that books were also sometimes read while still in this temporary form, but Barber observes that the French market seems to have preferred fine leather bindings, and so the publisher’s binding, with its inexpensive paper covering, was more often replaced with a sturdier binding in France than it might have been in other countries.

Earlier examples of temporary paper covers rarely survive, but Edith Diehl mentions the existence of paper-covered bindings from the end of the 15th century, when pasteboards (made of sheets of paper pasted together) first appeared. She notes that some of the surviving examples are from

DATES

Coptic: 2nd–11th century, specifically in North Africa

Insular: pre-12th century, in the British Islands

Carolingian: 8th–12th century

Romanesque: 11th–14th century

Gothic: 14th–17th century

Dirck de Bray, active from 1656, died before 1702; *Ondervijis van’t Boek-Binden* (“A Short Instruction in the Binding of Books”), 1658⁶⁴

Nicolas-Denis Derome, 1731–1790⁶⁵

Germany, and appear to be the publisher's wrapper used as a pasted-on covering material. Other examples came from Italy, and use papers, decorated with woodcuts, that seem to have been expressly designed as a book cover, rather than a re-used wrapper.

A SPECIAL CASE: THE PAPER DUST JACKET

One might debate whether the modern paper dust jacket is more closely related to the temporary paper wrappers used as semi-permanent covers, or to the protective chemise of the medieval book. I would argue that both have had their effect on the development of the paper jacket. In the sense that the jacket protects the surface of a publisher's binding from abrasion, staining, and light damage, then it is partly like the chemise. Many book owners and libraries consider them to be temporary and disposable, and in that way they are also like the easily-replaced chemise. However, many dust jackets have had much more effort put into their design and decoration than the covering material itself, which is often left plain and sometimes without titling or identification of the contents at all. In that sense they are more like the publisher-created paper wrapper, identifying the book and decorating it (to greater or lesser extent as desired by the publisher and designer). Margit Smith has an excellent history of the book jacket that also traces its ancestry to both the chemise and the paper wrapper. She credits the 19th-century adoption of the book-cloth-covered publisher's binding with being the impetus for the modern paper dust jacket. The first known dust jacket in England was from 1833, used to protect the silk binding of an annual. It was printed with a decorative border around the title and included advertisements of other available books by the publisher.

Some details of covering methods are more useful than others when it comes to dating and locating bindings. Tight backs, in which the spine area of the covering material is adhered to the spine of the textblock, were common throughout Europe for a long period of time, and so are not necessarily helpful in narrowing things down. Hollow spines might be

very early or very late, with the earliest ones being perhaps a case of the paste used to adhere the cover material having lost its adhesion over time. The existence of an identifiable tube on the spine is more likely to indicate a more recent binding, but not necessarily where the binding was made. Likewise, slits in the covering material were common throughout the time and space we are mostly concerned with. In the case of corner treatments, sewn corners are usually diagnostic of English or French bindings, and the tongue corner is often indicative of a French or Netherlandish binding. Temporary and secondary covers of all kinds are somewhat confusing, partly because they rarely survive. But a leather or fabric chemise, especially one that seems contemporary with the rest of the binding, usually indicates that the binding dates from the gothic period at the latest. Lightweight paper bindings, initially intended to be temporary, are pretty good indicators of a 15th- to 18th-century binding, with more "permanent" versions being later.


In the next article, we'll talk about different ways to decorate books, both the covers and the edges. For all of these articles, if you would like a full-sized copy of the charts in colour, you may contact the author at ekb.booksaver@gmail.com.

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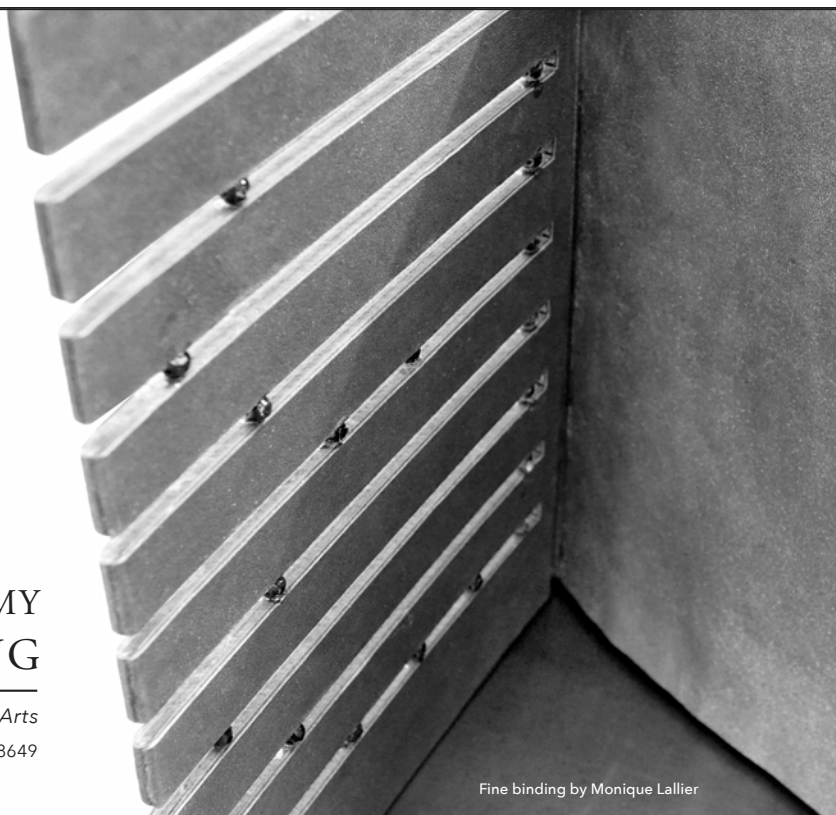
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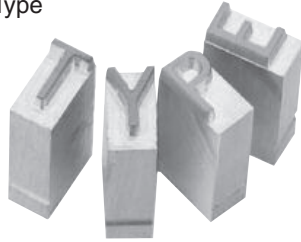


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