

# Skin Deep

The Biannual Newsletter from J. Hewit & Sons Ltd.

No.16 – Autumn 2003

## Contents

**The Silver Kelmscott Chaucer** Page 2

James Brockman tells the story of this most unusual binding, a collaborative work by Rod Kelly and himself.

**How to Modify a Spokeshave for Paring Leather** Page 8

A step-by-step guide for adapting your new spokeshave for paring leather

**How to Make a Single Section Binding** Page 13

Following our decision to sell a 'beginners' pack of Bookbinding tools and materials we are now pleased to offer the newer bookbinders amongst you, a simple binding project to follow.

**A Short Binding Story** Page 17

Susan Allix recounts how she was inspired to bind 'The Golden Temple Mail'.

## Regular features

Product & Company News Page 6

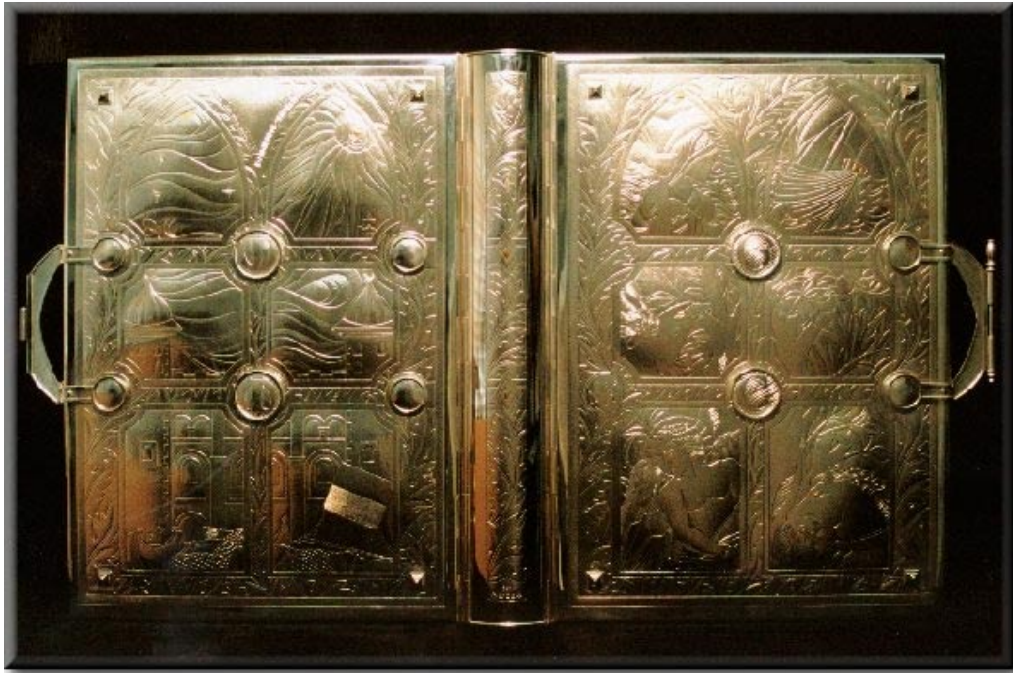
Study Opportunities Page 10

Dates for your Diary Page 16

# The Silver Kelmscott Chaucer

By James Brockman, Bookbinder and Rod Kelly, Silversmith

*Have nothing in your binding that you do not know to be useful or believe to be beautiful*  
- with apologies to William Morris.



*The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer – The Kelmscott Press 1896.  
Bound 1998-2003 by James Brockman and Rod Kelly.*

How do you compliment the finest achievements of Geoffrey Chaucer, William Morris and Sir Edward Burne-Jones in the twenty first century? Most bibliophiles declare that the Works of Geoffrey Chaucer finished on the 8th May 1896 at Morris' Kelmscott Press is the greatest book of the (almost) 20th century. There were a total of 425 copies printed on handmade paper and Rod Kelly, Silversmith and I were approached by John Keatley to bind one. John knew Rod Kelly having commissioned several silver items from him. He was also aware of my work, having purchased for The Keatley Trust at auction my first all metal single hinge binding, *In Memoriam*.

John owned a copy of the *Kelmscott Chaucer* which had been re-bound in a style he felt inappropriate. This then would make the perfect candidate for a new binding as the Collector's conscience would be clear, not having to remove the original published binding - an action considered worse than murder in the UK but completely acceptable in France!

When John Keatley contacted me to ask if I would work with Rod Kelly on a silver binding for a Kelmscott Chaucer I was very interested. I had previously worked on several copies of the Chaucer including a vellum copy commissioned by Colin Franklin when I was running The Eddington Bindery in Hungerford in 1975. This copy is now in The Southern Methodist University Library in Dallas, Texas. I knew the Chaucer was a heavy book with very narrow back margins and that it must open well to display the wonderful large printed borders. Normally "good opening" is achieved with flexible sewing and minimum spine linings but on heavy books like the Chaucer, the binder must compromise between flexibility and support of the spine.

I knew immediately that I was only prepared to be involved with the binding if the structure was to be all-metal. I have frequently been disappointed by historical metal bindings that are compromised by using leather or fabric for the joints. Equally bindings with a single metal hinge at each joint will not open more than approximately 170° unless the hinge tubes stand above the joint which is not acceptable for fine work.

The answer to these two problems of a metal hinge and a supported but flexible spine lay in my early experimental work with book structures. Twice in the past I have used a double hinge on each joint to allow perfect opening. The first time was in 1978 on my binding *New Directions in Bookbinding* and again in 1979 on *Beauty and Deformity*. The double hinge made of metal is virtually indestructible and allows the covers to open fully without pulling back the text block. On both these earlier bindings I used the double hinge with a flat spine which threw up when the text block was opened. These earlier experiments had led me on to my single hinge bindings, the first being *In Memoriam* in 1984. The single hinge binding automatically created the concave spine which led me to produce my first rigid concave spine binding in 1993 *The Doves Bindery* (now in the British Library Collection).<sup>1</sup> Therefore the solution to the structural problems presented by a full silver binding on a heavy large book with narrow back margins was obvious - the first rigid concave spine binding with a double hinge at each joint.

It was not so easy to convince all concerned. John Keatley, after much consideration, agreed with the concave spine so long as it wasn't too obvious. He suggested a dummy convex spine to make the binding look more conventional. I wanted the honesty of the concave spine but understood his reservations and admit that the finished binding looks very comfortable with its convex spine. Rod Kelly is a wonderful silversmith but he thought the double hinges were far too complex and argued for some time that a single hinge on each cover would be fine - this was the closest I got to withdrawing from the project. Rod and I had an excellent relationship throughout but the complexities of a binding structure are often alien to book people let alone a silversmith with no previous bookbinding experience!

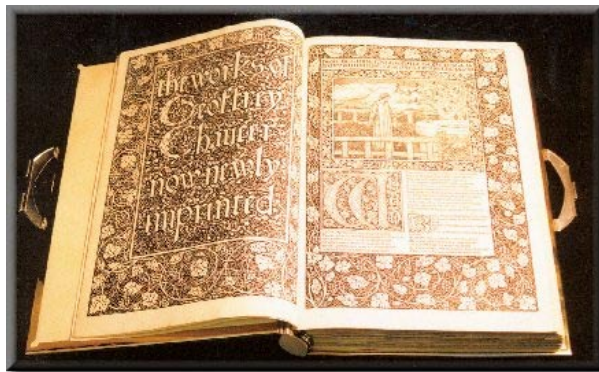
Whenever these misunderstandings over structure occurred, I made a brass model of the part in question to demonstrate the function. To Rod's credit once the details were proved to work, the objections melted away.

I started work on the book with the help of my assistants Simon Haigh and Diane Walder in December 1998. The book was taken down, there were many tissue repairs that needed re-doing and the book was dry cleaned throughout. A folio of toned vellum was added at each end and the edges were gilt on the deckle. Rod Kelly made up five curved stainless steel sewing supports. These had stainless steel countersunk screws soldered to them for eventual fixing of the cover to the text block. The sewing supports were covered in acid-free paper and the book was sewn with the concave spine being formed as the sewing progressed. It was quite tricky controlling the swell, when sewing, to ensure that the text block thickness matched exactly the length of the stainless steel sewing supports. The book had to be sewn twice to achieve this. After sewing, double endbands in black, grey, white, and gold threads were sewn on and the spine lined with cotton and 12 linings of acid-free paper between the stainless steel sewing supports.

In order that Rod Kelly could continue with the silver cover, I made a wooden block to the exact dimensions of the sewn text block. This enabled him to construct the cover without risking any damage to the book.

Rod was entirely responsible for the decoration of the cover. John Keatley had conceived the binding as a memorial to his mother and Rod was asked to incorporate imagery that related to the Keatley family as well as to the Burne-Jones images in the book.





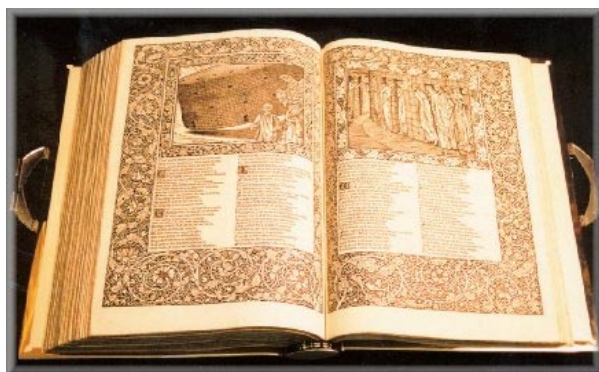
*Book open at Title Page*



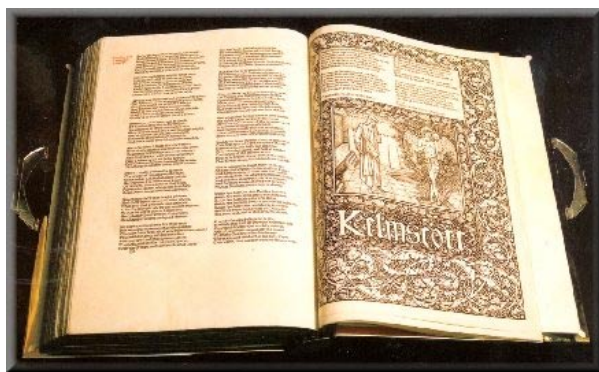
*Book quarter open*



*Book half open*

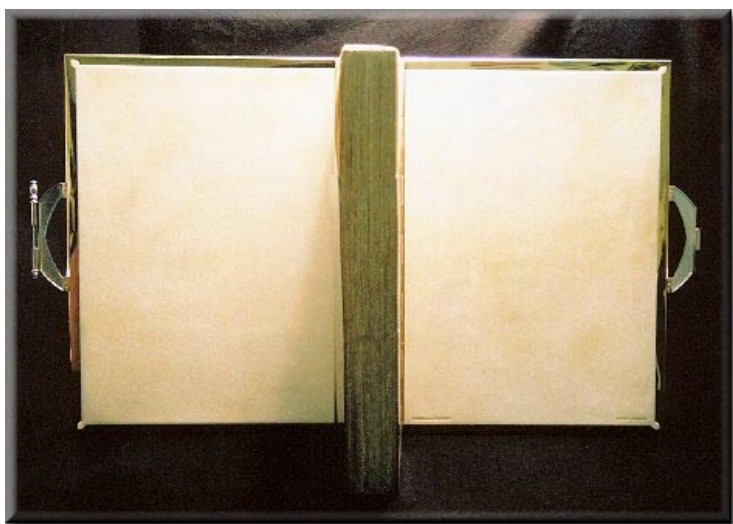


*Book three quarters open*



*Book open at end*

I discussed with Rod the traditional ways of dividing the book cover based on raised bands, placing of bosses and relating the clasp position to the decoration. He took some of this on board. He decorated the silver sheet by chasing.<sup>2</sup> This involved embossing the silver with steel punches and a repousse hammer. The silver is worked over warm Swedish pitch for support and the images are raised in a low relief style that is most successful, it reminds me of the cushioned boards on a leather binding.<sup>3</sup> It took Rod approximately one hour to complete one square inch of chasing. The extensive chasing caused the silver to warp and Rod enlisted the help of a friend, Ian Calvert, to help him undertake the heart stopping procedure of bolting the decorated covers to stainless steel plates and heating them until they glowed red hot. This relaxed the tensions from the silver caused by the chasing and to everyone's tremendous relief, the covers stayed flat.



*Toned vellum Doublures and Fly-leaves*

After many telephone calls, letters, visits to my bindery in Oxfordshire and Rod's workshop in Norfolk, the binding was ready to assemble. I drove to Norfolk with the sewn book and we constructed the cover around the text block. I returned to Wheatley to add the toned vellum doublures, stainless steel hinge stops and to sign the book in gold on the rear doublure. I had decided early on that any silver that came into contact with the paper leaves or vellum doublures should be gold plated to avoid any problems with the silver tarnishing and causing staining. As a result of this decision there is a wonderful reflection of the gilt edges in the gold plated squares.

Rod spent in excess of 400 hours on the silver work. My work on the binding was completed in March 2003 - 4 years and 4 months from beginning to end and amounted to 220 hours.

**James Brockman** - was an apprenticed finisher in Oxford from 1962-68. From 1968-73 he worked with the late Sydney Cockerell at Cambridge. He started and managed *The Eddington Bindery* 1973-76 and started his own workshop 1976. He was President of *Designer bookbinders* from 1985-87. He has also lectured and demonstrated extensively in Europe, U.S.A., Canada and Australia. He currently holds the position of President of the Society of Bookbinders.

#### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>*The Rigid Concave Spine – Time to throw away your Backing Hammer*, an article by James Brockman fully explaining the ideas and methods of the Concave Spine, was published in 'Skin Deep', Volume 2, August 1996.

<sup>2</sup>Chasing is a decorative process to obtain a relief of surfaces by delicate tracery, low relief or embossing. Chasing can include a variety of methods:

- |                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| <i>Embossing</i> | <i>Working from the back of the surface to obtain depression on the surface of the material. This method does not create definable or sharp marks or lines.</i> |
| <i>Repoussé</i>  | <i>(pushed back again) work, follows the lines and shapes created by embossing and is used to sharpen the lines and marks on the front of the work.</i>         |

<sup>3</sup>*Swedish Pine Pitch* offers a firm but yielding surface in which to hammer the sheet of metal against and because the pitch is sticky, it will grip the object while the chasing work is being carried out.

# Product & Company News

## Thank You

Our warm thanks to all our customers and friends who contacted us with good wishes regarding our April relocation to Edinburgh. Your kind thoughts were truly appreciated. Apart from a few minor 'hiccups' and delays in shipping orders during the two weeks of upheaval, the move went relatively smoothly.

Thank you for your patience.

## Bangladeshi Calfskin Necks

We are pleased to offer these economical pieces of leather that are suitable for small leather goods, leather craft work and modelling, such as dolls, miniature saddles and bridles. The misshapen off-cuts are available as follows:

### Rough Tanned

- Average Skin Size: 0.28m<sup>2</sup> (3ft<sup>2</sup>)
- Colours available: Natural, Dyed Black, Dyed Dark Brown and Dyed Tan
- Standard Substance: 1.0 - 1.1mm
- Price for single skins: Natural - £2.50 per skin  
Dyed - £3.00 per skin

### Fair

'Fair' skins are also available as above, but we re-tan the skins with Sumac or Tara. We then soften and shave to 0.8mm to produce a beautiful, silky soft leather.

- Price for single skins: £8.00 per skin.

## Topics in Conservation Science

The Library of Congress Preservation Directorate in partnership with the Folger Shakespeare Library presented a "Topics in Conservation Science" workshop covering Adhesive and Leather from September 29th until October 1st, 2003.

The leather portion ran for two days and was taken by our very own Roger Barlee and Roy Thomson of the Leather Conservation Centre. The topics covered were as follows:

- A review of the history of leather.
- The science of skin structure and tanning.
- Deterioration and its causes (over the last 150 years).
- Recent work on Archival tannages, a summary of the CRAFT Leather Project and an update on current research.
- A lecture on the conservation of leather objects.
- A lecture and discussion on leather conservation techniques.

Roger will also be giving a cut down version of these lectures for the New England Chapter of the Guild of Book Workers at the Boston Athenaeum Club on Saturday 18th October.

## Self Adhesive Felt

Our new adhesive backed felt is ideal for lining boxes and slipcases. As it is self-adhesive, its application to board and wood could not be easier. The felt is made from a mix of 70% viscose and 30% wool and is available in 6 attractive shades on roll widths of 900mm. The weight of the material is approximately 170gsm and it has a thickness of approximately 1.0mm. The adhesive is a high-tack modified acrylic transfer tape.

Prices:

- 0-29 metres - £6.04/metre
- 30+ metres - £4.59/metre

Please contact us for a sample swatch.

## Bookbinder's Starter Pack

Due to popular demand, we are delighted to bring you the 'Bookbinders Starter Pack'. It contains the basic tools and materials that you will require to get you started in the ancient craft of bookbinding. Each pack will contain:

- 4 x 0.5 metres Reliance Bookcloth - Red, Blue, Green, Black
- 1 x metre No 1 Mull
- 1 x 33 metre roll 10mm Cotton Sewing Tape
- 1 x 50g skein Linen Thread
- 1 x packet No 18 needles
- 1 x No.14 Wooden Glue Brush
- 1 x packet Cold Water Paste Powder
- 1 x 6" pointed Bone Folder
- 1 x Clip Point Knife, Damascus Steel
- 1 x pair 6" scissors
- 2 x half sheets Greyboard
- 2 x sheets assorted Kaskad Paper
- 2 x sheets assorted JHS Marble Paper

The items in this pack are valued at £44.73, but we are pleased to offer them for sale at £40.00.

## Craft Paper

We have just started selling a light weight Manila Craft Paper for spine linings. Available in sheet sizes of 625 x 1000mm, long grain at 90gsm.

Prices:

- for 1-24 sheets           £0.42 each
- for 25-49 sheets       £0.24 each
- for 50-99 sheets       £0.21 each
- for 100-499 sheets   £0.19 each
- for 500+ sheets       £0.18 each

These new items may be ordered from our online shop. (Prices shown are subject to shipping and handling charges and VAT where applicable)



# How to Modify a Spokeshave .....

## .....for Paring Leather

Over the years, we have sold numerous spokeshaves, but until relatively recently, had rarely been asked how a spokeshave should be modified for use before paring leather. So following numerous requests from customers, we decided to post a message to the Internet's Book Arts List requesting advice on this 'perplexing' question. We had a number of very helpful responses and have decided to put them together here to give what we believe is a concise and definitive description on 'How to Modify a Spokeshave for Paring Leather'. We gratefully acknowledge the contributions of Ken Brownlow, Don Drake, Rodney Fry, Mia Leijonstedt and Shelagh Smith without whose help this article would not have been written.

Spokeshaves were 'invented' by wheelwrights, as their name suggest, as a tool for hand shaping the spokes on the wooden wheels of carriages and wagons. The modern spokeshave hardly differs from those of days gone by. However, it will not work on leather without some modification.

There are two parts to the modification process, as both the blade and the spokeshave body will need to be altered. The following applies for the more common Stanley No.151 model, but the information provide is pertinent to all models of flat-based spokeshaves.

### The Spokeshave Body

Disassemble the spokeshave and clamp upside-down to a bench clamp using two G-clamps. (see fig.1) The bottom surface of the body, i.e. the part that is now uppermost, needs to be filed flat and parallel to the bench. This may be done with a large, flat engineer's file and should give an angle to the blade of approximately  $30^{\circ}$ .

When bought, the slot aperture in the base of the spokeshave is too narrow and will need to be enlarged to prevent the leather shavings from clogging it up. The slot will need to be increased to about 5mm (3/16"), carefully filing away from the leading edge.

It is worth taking time finishing off these two process by smoothing grinding on a sharpening stone until the surface is shiny, a sign that the face is free of irregularities. If available, a diamond stone is preferred as it retains its flat shape for longer.

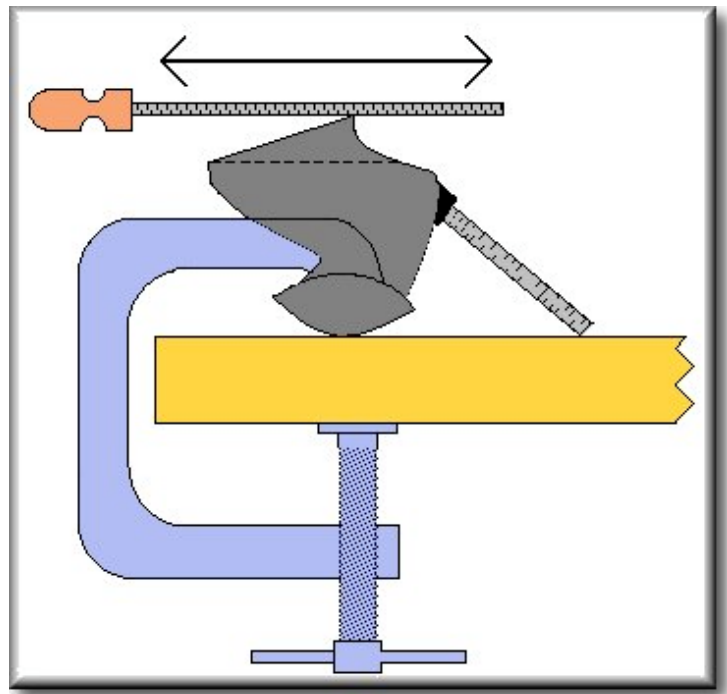


Fig. 1



## The Blade

Since the metal on the steel blade is much harder than that on the cast iron body, a degree of patience will be required for the next step.

The bevel edge on the blade is supplied with an angle of approximately  $30^{\circ}$ . The bevel edge will need to be ground down to a more acute angle of about  $10^{\circ}$ . If you have a grinding machine, then the job will be relatively easy. If not, then you will need to be patient and use a coarse stone. A way of judging this angle is that when finished, the line from where the bevel starts will need to be about 3mm ( $1/8$ " ) from the oblong hole of the blade. (see fig. 2)

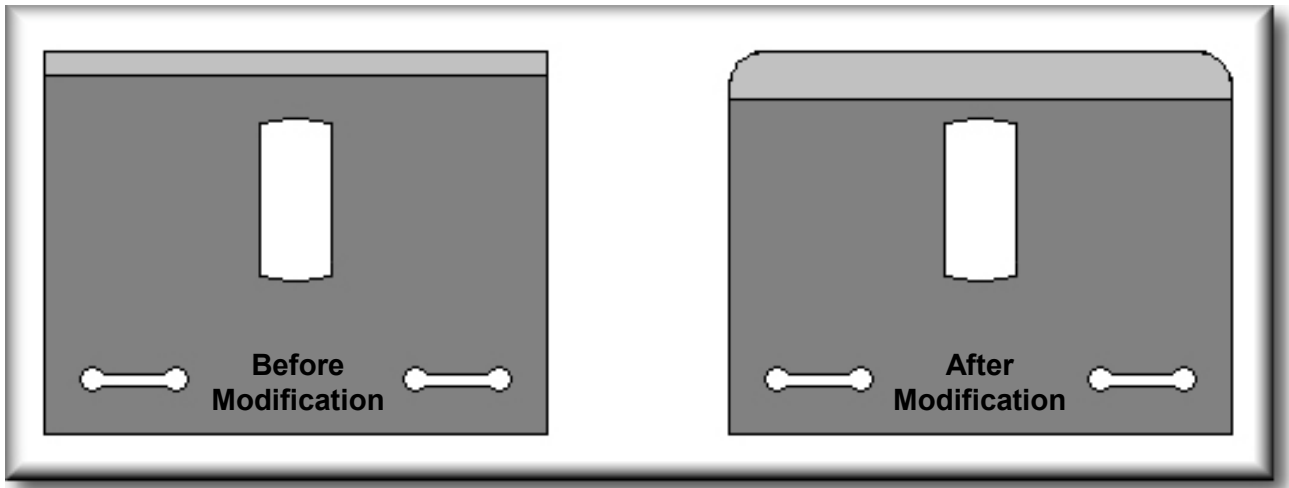


Fig.2

The sharp corners of the blade will need to be rounded-off, to prevent them from snagging on the leather when paring. Each corner is slightly rounded for a length of about 6mm ( $1/4$ " ) so that the sides of the blade are not visible when looking along the bottom edge of the spokeshave.

Finally, the blade will need to be made very sharp. The final edged should be honed by using a fine Arkansas stone or a 5000 or 6000 grit stone.

## Reassembling the Spokeshave

When reassembling the spokeshave, it is important to ensure that the blade is replaced in the correct way for leather paring; that is with the bevel side down, the opposite way in which you would expect to use a paring knife. Please note that this is also most probably the opposite way to which the spokeshave was supplied to you.

Use the adjusting screws to make the blade protrude just slightly from the bottom surface, and 'set' the blade so the paring is done by the centre of the spokeshave.

# Study Opportunities

## Urchfont Manor College

### **Bookbinding: Repair & Conservation**

Date: 27<sup>th</sup> - 31<sup>st</sup> October 2003

Tutor: Maureen Duke

General Topics plus special topic: Library Styles

### **Bookbinding: Repair & Conservation**

Date: 12<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> January 2004

Tutor: Maureen Duke

General Topics plus special topic: Finishing

### **Bookbinding: Repair & Conservation**

Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup> May 2004

Tutor: Maureen Duke

General Topics plus special topic: Bible Repairs

### **Bookbinding: Repair & Conservation**

Date: 5<sup>th</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup> July 2004

Tutor: Lori Sauer

General Topics plus special topic: Edge Decoration

### **Bookbinding: Repair & Conservation**

Date: 23<sup>rd</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup> August 2004

Tutor: Maureen Duke

General Topics plus special topic: Leather Work

### **Bookbinding: Repair & Conservation**

Date: 8<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> November August 2004

Tutor: Maureen Duke

General Topics plus special topic: Binding Miniature Books

Further information on these courses is available from:

The Secretary, Urchfont Manor College  
Urchfont, Devizes, WILTSHIRE, SN10 4RG

Tel: +44 (0) 1380 840495 Fax: +44 (0) 1380 840005 E-mail: [urchfont@wccyouth.org.uk](mailto:urchfont@wccyouth.org.uk)

## **Bookbinding and Restoration Workshops, Northampton, UK**

### **2 x three week courses on Saturdays**

Dates:

Saturday 11th, 18th & 25th October 2003

Saturday 15th, 22nd & 29th November 2003

Instructor: Doug Mitchell

Course Fee: £49 + materials

An opportunity to bring along your own books etc. and learn the basic skills of Restoration and Bookbinding. 11am. 5.30pm with a 1 hour lunch

*These courses will be held at: The Castle Theatre, Wellingborough, Northamptonshire, NN8 1XA  
For further details, please e-mail Doug Mitchell at: [thebinder@hotmail.com](mailto:thebinder@hotmail.com)*

## Leeds College of Technology, Yorkshire, UK

Last year with great success, Leeds College of Technology, Yorkshire, UK, ran a basic craft bookbinding course. They had a good response, with eight enrolling on the course, most of who would like to move on to more advanced level. They have also had a few interested enquiries for the next basic course. This has prompted them to set up an Intermediate Craft course, which will start in February, following on from the beginners course in September. The new course will again have a certificate from NCFE after successful completion. They intend to move on to quarter and half bound case books and quarter and half bound leather bindings.

The courses will run on Wednesday evenings, 5.00-8.30pm., 18 weeks each course. The fee will be £150 plus a small enrolment fee.

For more information:

Contact: Mick McGregor at Leeds College of Technology

Tel: +44 (0) 113 297 6438, e-mail [m.mcgregor@lct.ac.uk](mailto:m.mcgregor@lct.ac.uk)

or Student Services: Tel +44 (0) 113 297 6481.

## London College of Printing, London, UK

The London College of Printing has just validated two new part-time courses. One in 'Bookbinding & Book Restoration' and one in 'Book Arts & Crafts'. It is hoped that the Bookbinding course will start in October. It will run on Fridays (6 hours over 30 weeks). Fees are £615 per year which includes material costs. A reduced fee of £20 applies if you are unemployed or earning less than £11000 per year. Applicants should hold a first degree or equivalent. The Binding course is ideal for people with conservation or library background and the Bookarts great for people with graphics/fine art background.

For further information, contact Mike Brunwin at: [m.brunwin@lcp.linst.ac.uk](mailto:m.brunwin@lcp.linst.ac.uk)

## Rare Book School, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA, USA

RARE BOOK SCHOOL (RBS) is pleased to announce its Winter and Early Spring Sessions 2004, a collection of five-day, non-credit courses on topics concerning rare books, manuscripts, the history of books and printing, and special collections to be held at the University of Virginia.

### **Introduction to the History of Bookbinding**

Date: 5th - 9th January 2004

Instructors: Jan Storm van Leeuwen

A bookbinding has two main functions. It protects its text block against wear and tear, and, by its structure, it makes a book out of a heap of otherwise separate leaves or quires. Through the ages, the covers, spine, fore-edge and other parts of the book have been decorated in almost every conceivable manner, technique, and material, thereby turning the binding into a work of decorative art. This introductory course, which will discuss the principal techniques and materials used in the West over binding's long history, is intended for those who wish to develop a better understanding of the history of the field; it is not a practical binding course. It is aimed at historians, special collections personnel, collectors, dealers, conservators and bookbinders, and others with an interest in the binding and its history.

### **Book Illustration Processes to 1890**

Date: 5th - 9th January 2004

Instructors: Terry Bellanger

The identification of illustration processes and techniques, including (but not only) woodcut, etching, engraving, stipple, aquatint, mezzotint, lithography, wood engraving, steel engraving, process line and halftone relief, collotype, photogravure, and colour printing. The course will be taught almost entirely from the extensive Rare Book School files of examples of illustration

processes. As part of the course, students will make their own etchings, drypoints, and relief cuts in supervised laboratory sessions.

### **Introduction to the History of Typography**

Date: 5th - 9th January 2004

Instructors: Stanley Nelson

A survey of European and American typographic history from 1450 to the present, but concentrating on the period 1480-1950. Topics will include: the development of Roman and italic; from Old Style to Transitional to Modern (Italian, French, Dutch, and English developments); display types; the coming of machine composition and the historic revivals; typeface nomenclature; and techniques for dating pre-1885 hand-set typefaces and for naming post-1885 machine-set typefaces. In laboratory sessions, students will have a chance to set type by hand, proof, and print.

*Further information may be found on the Rare Book School Web Site at:*

<http://www.rarebookschool.org>

### **Bookbinding Tuition in Summerfield, North Carolina, USA**

Monique Lallier, teaches in her studio at home, one-on-one or up to a maximum of 4 students at a time. She teaches every Monday, afternoon or evening or both to regular students that come every week or other week. Monique also teaches on a weekly basis for out of town students. Lessons may be booked for one week or longer at a cost of \$500 per week for a 6 hours a day. In all cases, the tuition program is tailored to meet the specific needs and abilities of the student, where each student has an individual program. All aspects of bindings are taught as well as box making. For further details, please go to Monique Lallier's web site at:

[www.moniquelallier.com](http://www.moniquelallier.com), or e-mail her at: [folium@triad.rr.com](mailto:folium@triad.rr.com)

### **Bookbinding Tuition in the North East of Scotland**

Weekend and week-long sessions available in all aspects of bookbinding. Tuition tailored to suit the needs of the individual. All aspects and levels of craft and design binding, including repair and renovation work, may be undertaken under professional instruction in a private, well-equipped bindery in the Scottish countryside.

For further details call: Mark Ramsden +44 (0)1467 671581 evenings. E-mail: [bookman@bti](mailto:bookman@bti)

### **Bookbinding Tuition at the Otter Bindery in Surrey England**

The Otter bindery specialises in one to one tuition and small groups of a maximum of three. We offer three workshops:

**Workshop 1** - Beginners - Learn about why paper folds easier one way than the other (grain direction) and it's importance as a fundamental of book binding. Then sew and create a single section note book. The course is designed for those with little or no experience but who have an interest in the craft of bookbinding. Marysa will show you various other simple projects that you can either do at the workshop or take home with you. The idea behind this is to teach you the basic skills and show you how, with minimal materials you can produce beautiful creations from your own home.

**Workshop 2** - Learn how to repair a favourite paper back and take the skills home with you to carry on with minimal equipment. Following on from the above course learn some more complex structures as well as simple methods of creating photograph albums, scrap books and portfolios.



**Workshop 3** - For the more experienced, an exploration into leather, the different types of leather used in bookbinding and why. You will then have an opportunity to create and cover a book in leather.

Please note the above courses are designed to run for one and two days. The workshop descriptions are a guide only. Suggestions are always welcome and changes can be made to the workshops to fit in with your requirements. Accommodation is available if travelling from afar. The Otter Bindery welcomes experienced bookbinders wishing to visit and share knowledge.

Please contact Marysa de Veer for further information on prices, accommodation, times, etc. Tel +44 (0) 1932 845976 or e-mail [marysa@deveer.co.uk](mailto:marysa@deveer.co.uk)

## How to Make a Single Section Binding

By John Pursey

Follow the 10 basic steps below, to produce a single section book or pamphlet.

- 1 Choose a pamphlet or fold some plain (A4 or Legal) paper to the required size and thickness (no more than 16 pages will give you the best results)
- 2 Select some coloured paper and fold it to produce some endpapers. You will need 2 pieces to wrap around the outside of your section. These need to be cut to the same size as the section. (see fig.1)

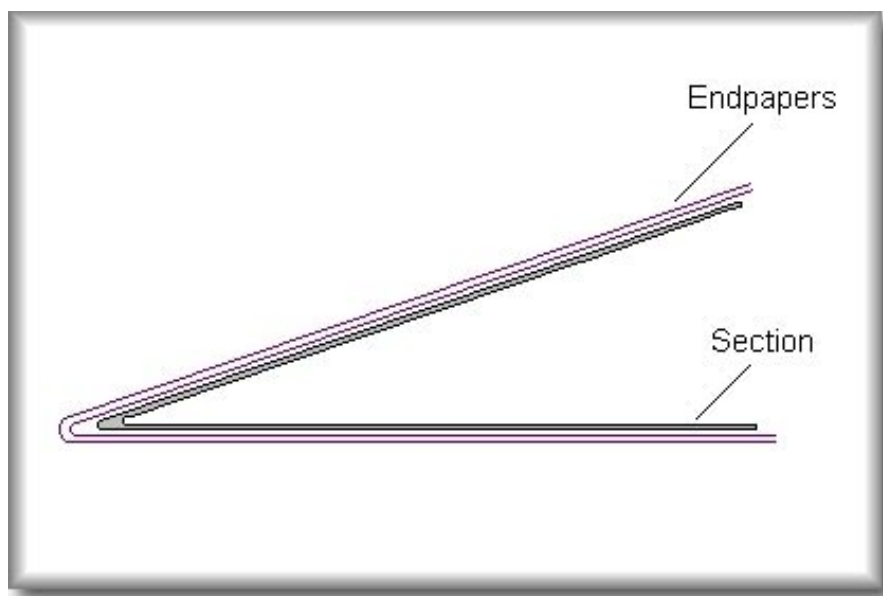


Fig.1

- 3 Take a piece of linen or mull, this will act as a reinforcement to the binding edge. The suggested size of this piece is 75mm wide by 25mm less than the length of your section. Fold this piece in half long ways and mark it. The next operation is to glue this piece to the outside of the endpapers around the spine. It is important that you do not use too much adhesive and that you keep your work space clean by throwing away all the waste paper you have glued out on.

- 4 The next step is to sew the book and to do this we will use three hole sewing. Measure the length of your section and mark the middle faintly with a pencil on the inside, then measure in 50mm from top and bottom and mark again. Thread your needle with some sewing thread and starting from the inside push the needle through the middle hole (A). Leave a tail of thread approximately 50mm long and then enter via (B) along the inside and out through (C) and finally back through the middle hole (A). Once you have done this pull the thread tight and tie into a knot. (see fig.2)

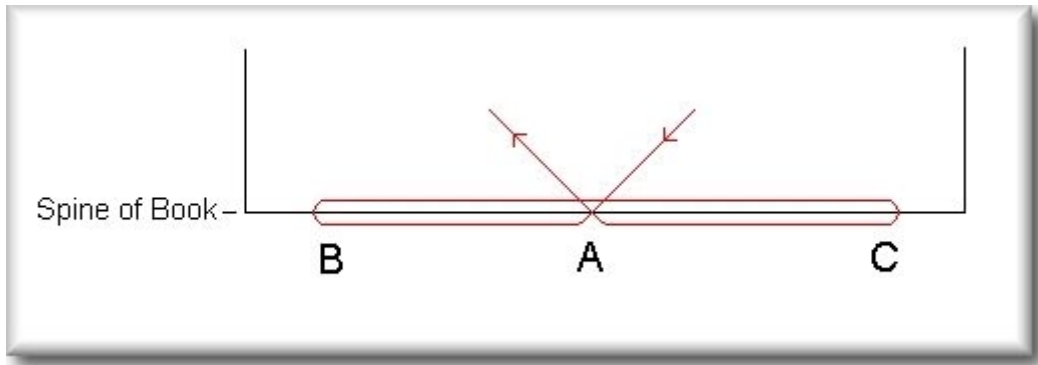


Fig.2

- 5 Trim section or pamphlet if necessary, by using a guillotine or a knife and straight edge.
- 6 The next operation is to cut some greyboard for the front and back of the book. The grain direction should run from head to tail of these boards. They need to be 6mm longer than your book and 6mm less than the width so that when they are put over the section it gives you a standard 3mm overlap. (see fig.3) As you will see from this diagram, the boards are 9mm from the spine, this allows the book to open and close easily. It is also very important that these boards are cut accurately and are square.

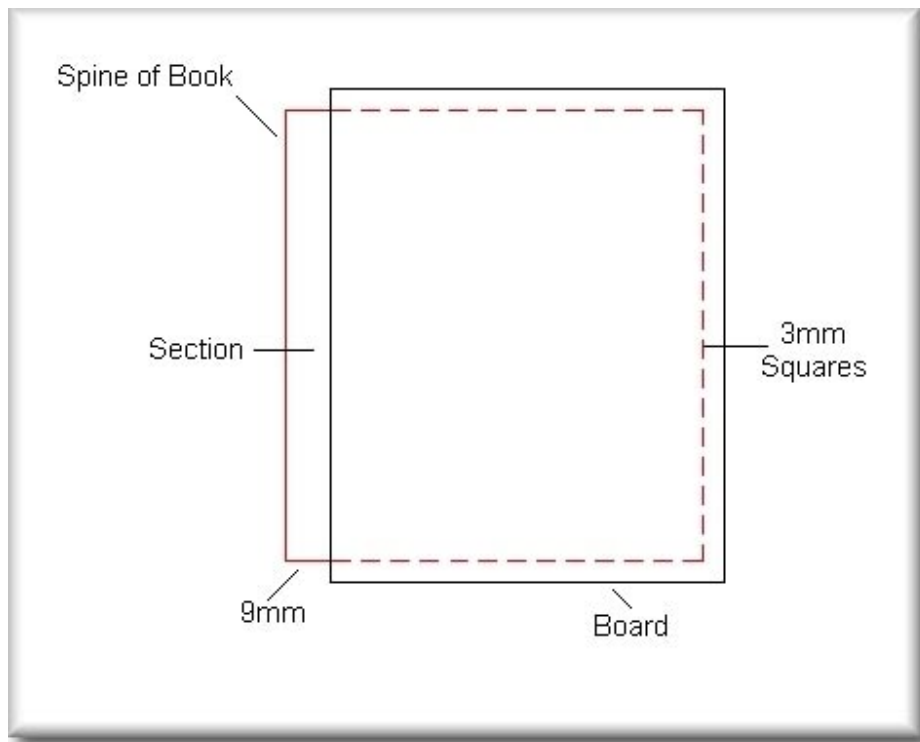


Fig.3

- 7 You now need to make a template so that you can cut your cloth to the right size. We are going to have a full bound cover. Take a piece of clean waste paper and wrap it around your book and boards and add 20mm extra on each edge. When you have done this place the template onto the chosen cloth and cut the cloth out accurately.

- 8 Place the cloth onto a large piece of waste paper so that when you start to glue the material you keep your bench clean. With a pencil mark the middle of cloth and draw a line from top to bottom. You will use this line to position your book to. The next step is to glue your material and this needs to be done quickly and with an even spread of PVA. Always glue from the middle of the cloth, by brushing away from you. Holding book and boards as in Diagram 3 place them in position on the cloth with the spine along the line you have drawn. Make sure you have equal margins all around the board. Press one board down and then by holding that firmly in position bring the remaining cloth over, and press it onto the top board. Lift cloth, boards and book off of waste paper in one move and place in clean position. Throw waste paper away.
- 9 Remove the book from between the boards and open cloth back into a flat position. You must now mitre the corners and turn the cloth in. (See fig.4). When cutting the corners they should be a board thickness away from the corner of the board. This will give you a neat turn-in. Bring the cloth over on the long edges first and fold in any excess on corners and then turn-in the last two sides. If you find that the glue has started to dry apply a little bit more. The cover should now be pressed (flat) and allowed to dry.

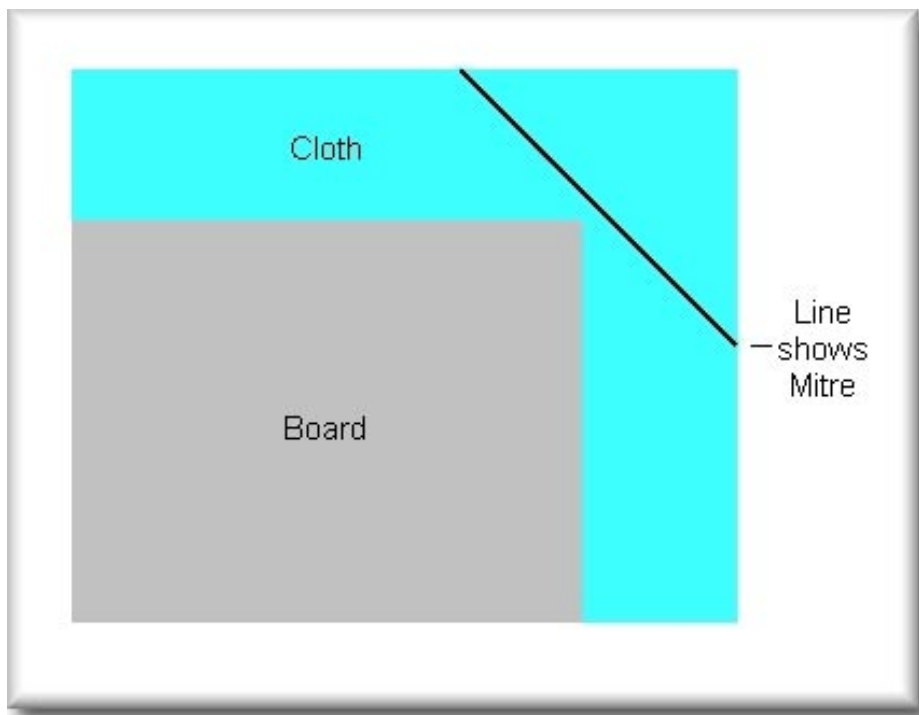


Fig.4

- 10 The last stage is to case the book in. You will need 2 pieces of waste paper slightly larger than your book. Put the cover flat on the bench and place your book accurately in position on one of the boards ensuring that you have the 3mm square on three sides. Place one piece of waste between the 2 coloured endpapers and glue or paste the top sheet. Pull out the waste sheet and then by holding the book in position with one finger bring the cover over to come into contact with the endpaper. Turn the book over and then repeat the process on the other side. **DO NOT OPEN THE BOOK.** Put the book into a press between pressing boards and press. Leave your book under a light weight to allow it to dry. When the book is dry open it. If you were binding a pamphlet make sure you have cased in the book with the title pages at the front.

If you had wanted to title this project, the tooling could either have been done before or after casing-in.

# Dates for your Diary

**23<sup>rd</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> October 2003**

**\*The Guild of Bookworkers annual Standards of Excellence Seminar**

To be held at the Hyatt Regency, Denver, Colorado

List of Speakers: Mark Esser  
Richard Baker  
Julie Chen  
Claire Maziarczyk  
Tini Miura  
and Craig Jensen for the Foundation session.

Further details are available from the Guild's web site at:

<http://palimpsest.stanford.edu/byorg/gbw/index.shtml>

**1<sup>st</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2003**

**\*UK Fine Press Book Fair**

Saturday 11.00 – 18.00, Sunday 10.00 – 17.00

Oxford Brookes University, Gipsy Lane, Oxford, UK

For further information contact Michael Taylor +44 (0)1379 853889

**4<sup>th</sup> November 2003**

**Designer Bookbinders – Tuesday Lecture**

**Ron Costly – Between Author & Reader; the self-effacing work of the book designer**

18.30 - The Art Workers Guild, 6, Queens Square, London WC2 (Holborn Tube)

£4.00 admission (£2.00 for full time students)

**2<sup>nd</sup> December 2003**

**Designer Bookbinders – Tuesday Lecture**

**Susanne Krause – Traditional European Paste Paper**

18.30 - The Art Workers Guild, 6, Queens Square, London WC2 (Holborn Tube)

£4.00 admission (£2.00 for full time students)

**13<sup>th</sup> January 2004**

**Designer Bookbinders – Tuesday Lecture**

**Tracey Rowledge – Process Driven: gold tooling on leather to recreate gestural images on fine bindings and panels. A discussion of her work**

18.30 - The Art Workers Guild, 6, Queens Square, London WC2 (Holborn Tube)

£4.00 admission (£2.00 for full time students)

**3<sup>rd</sup> February 2004**

**Designer Bookbinders – Tuesday Lecture**

**Emma Hill – Contemporary Artists Books: a publisher's viewpoint**

18.30 - The Art Workers Guild, 6, Queens Square, London WC2 (Holborn Tube)

£4.00 admission (£2.00 for full time students)

**2<sup>nd</sup> March 2004**

**Designer Bookbinders – Tuesday Lecture**

**Angela James – Delays, Designs & Deadlines: looking back over 13 years of design bindings by the Fellows of Designer Bookbinders for the Man Booker Literary Prize.**

18.30 - The Art Workers Guild, 6, Queens Square, London WC2 (Holborn Tube)

£4.00 admission (£2.00 for full time students)

\*We will be in attendance at these events



# A Short Binding Story

By Susan Allix

The binding began with the railway timetable; and the railway timetable appeared because the road was terrible. The man reading it said, "You could take the Golden Temple Mail to Bharatpur".

It was one of those moments that cause a slight shiver, a premonition that something was going to happen. The words went round and round in my head, and were still with me as I stood on the station platform. The Golden Temple Mail, a fairly ordinary Indian train, drew in, scattering some families of pigs from the tracks. To my disappointment there was only one man in my carriage and the journey stretched uneventfully ahead. Then the man began to talk, recounting a variety of strange and mystical stories, one of which was the starting point of the book.

So the book became a collection of six Indian encounters accompanied by six coloured etchings. It was neither too big, nor too small, nor too thick nor too thin - in fact the only drawback concerning the binding was a slight inflexibility in the paper on which I had printed the etchings.

A binding must be part of the spirit of the book, so the binding for *The Golden Temple Mail to Bharatpur* had to be the seventh encounter, harmonising the brilliant colours that weave themselves into everyday life. I had acquired some paper for endpapers in Jaipur, in an unlikely paper warehouse that was situated in a modern concrete block above a carpet store. It was a completely disorganised place where small men dived and heaved among colossal piles of coloured papers to find a required sheet, while a sad and silent ring of the unlucky sat cross-legged on the floor filling plastic envelopes with hand-made notepaper.

The structure of the binding was quite simple, so that the inlays of coloured leather could lie smoothly over both boards. I remembered some leather left from an edition completed many years ago, and I found that its original hard yellow had mellowed without darkening, so this was a good start. I added a deep red, a brighter red and shades of pinkish orange all inlaid together. The effect of a complete inlaid binding, even when the colours and design work successfully, can sometimes be quite hard, so to introduce a different texture and sparkle I tried something nerve-racking. After hours of inlay work I took a pad of cotton wool and a bowl of diluted leather dye and made a wide curved swipe over the surface to unite yellow, orange and red. Just once, perfectly, was what was required; and there were no second chances!

After this I cut out an irregular rectangle and inlaid a piece of shiny golden yellow glace kid to give another texture. This is a rigid piece of leather, so it required exactness. The tooling consisted of some of my "painting" with the polishing iron. This means rubbing the edge of the iron through foil, which can give the effect of pencil or crayon shading and use of an old square blank for a tool that I never made, but which had a nice crumbled edge. Finally the book was given a box lined with Indian yellow suede.

All that remained was to repeat the binding eleven more times for the edition, and so it was many months and many events since the moment of the railway timetable before all the books were complete.

*Susan Allix - Studied painting, followed by an MA in printmaking at the Royal College of Art, and a Prix de Rome. Presently working at her own press, where she has been designing and making artists' books for many years. Each book is made completely by hand, using letterpress, printmaking techniques and a variety of materials for fine bindings.*