COMING TO TERMS WITH THE LANGUAGE OF BINDING

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Ligatus Research Centre

The University of the Arts London
23 June, 2015
BOOKBINDING AND THE CONSERVATION OF BOOKS

A DICTIONARY OF DESCRIPTIVE TERMINOLOGY

Matt T. Roberts
and
Don Etherington

Drawings by Margaret R. Brown
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AND THE CONSERVATION
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LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
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1982

KNEEP EN BINDING

een terminologie
voor de
beschrijving van de constructies
van oude boekbanden

voor het
Belgisch-Nederlands Bandengenootschap
samengesteld door

W.K. Gniirrep J.P. Gumbert J.A. Szirmai

KB

Koninklijke Bibliotheek
Den Haag
1992
sewing guards

Preferred label:
sewing guards

Narrow strips of sheet material, most often thin parchment and often obtained as waste from the leaves of medieval manuscripts, folded along their length, and either inserted into the centres of gatherings and sewn through to reinforce the spine folds of the gatherings or placed outside to reinforce the outside of the gatherings on the spine. Also known as sewing stays (Clarkson). Sewing guards were introduced at the same time as paper-leaved gatherings, as it was thought that paper alone would not be strong enough to prevent the sewing thread tearing through the gatherings of bound books with paper leaves. It was a time-consuming part of the binding process and was gradually abandoned in the last quarter of the fifteenth century as the quantities of printed books to be bound increased and it was realised that the reinforcements were not actually necessary.

Alternative label:
sewing stays

Hierarchy:

Broader concept:
guards

Top concept:
objects

Concept uri:
http://w3id.org/lob/concept/3282
Narrow strips of sheet material, most often thin parchment and often obtained as waste from the leaves of medieval manuscripts, folded along their length, and either inserted into the centres of gatherings and sewn through to reinforce the spine folds of the gatherings or placed outside to reinforce the outside of the gatherings on the spine. Also known as sewing stays (Clarkson). Sewing guards were introduced at the same time as paper-leaved gatherings, as it was thought that paper alone would not be strong enough to prevent the sewing thread tearing through the gatherings of bound books with paper leaves. It was a time-consuming part of the binding process and was gradually abandoned in the last quarter of the fifteenth century as the quantities of printed books to be bound increased and it was realised that the reinforcements were not actually necessary.
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Alternative label:
sewing stays

Hierarchy:

[+] guards  [-] sewing guards

Broader concept:
guards

Top concept:
objects

Concept uri:
http://w3id.org/lob/concept/3282
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Alternative label:
sewing stays

Hierarchy:

Broader concept:
guards

Top concept:
objects

Concept uri:
http://w3id.org/lob/concept/3282
Pink-stained
Pink-stained / alum-tawed
Pink-stained / alum-tawed / split-strap
Pink-stained / alum-tawed / split-strap / double
Pink-stained / alum-tawed / split-strap / double / sewing supports
adzes

Preferred label:
adzes

Long-handled tools with a curved blade set perpendicularly to the handle; used for dressing wood. The use of the adze leaves characteristic shallow curved depressions on the surface of the timber.

Source: AAT
Additional reference: http://vocab.getty.edu/aat/300023553 (modified)

Hierarchy:

[-] tools and equipment [+ ] adzes

Broader concept:
tools and equipment

Top concept:
objects

Related concept:
adzing

Getty AAT:
adzes

Concept uri:
http://w3id.org/lob/concept/4059
adzes

Preferred label:
adzes

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Source: AAT

Additional reference: http://vocab.getty.edu/aat/300023553 (modified)

Hierarchy:

[-] adzes

[+] tools and equipment

Broader concept:
tools and equipment

Top concept:
objects

Related concept:
adzing

Getty AAT:
adzes

Concept uri:
http://w3id.org/lob/concept/4059
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reverse-twist supports

Preferred label:
reverse-twist supports

Double supports in which the twist in each element is different, even though they are made from a single length of twisted material. All recorded examples have been made of cord and they would appear to have been made by the binders who would take the necessary number of thick threads, hang them over a hook with an equal length on each side of the hook, and twist the group on the right side clockwise to give an S-twist, and the group on the left anticlockwise to give a Z-twist (this comes naturally when it is carried out). The technique has only been recorded on Germanic bindings, probably from the south of the German-speaking area, in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.
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Hierarchy:

[+] {sewing supports by formation}

[-] reverse-twist supports

[+] double sewing supports

Broader concept:
double sewing supports

Top concept:
objects

Concept uri:
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<td>stitched within a cover (bindings)</td>
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<td>stitched without a cover (bindings)</td>
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stationery bindings

Preferred label:
stationery bindings

The bindings found on books made to be written in, such as ledgers, account books, etc. A variety of structures were used for these books (e.g. laced-case, tacketed, springback, etc.), but they were all intended to serve the same purpose. In eighteenth-century England, the binders who made these books were known as 'vellum binders', as parchment was the predominant covering material used on these books at that time.

Alternative label:
archival bindings
blank-book bindings
ledger bindings

Hierarchy:

Broader concept:
bindings

Top concept:
objects

Related concept:
stationery books

Concept uri:
http://w3id.org/lob/concept/3045
The Language of Bindings Thesaurus (LoB) is a thesaurus of bookbinding terms for book structures dating from the ninth to the nineteenth century. This project has been partially funded by the AHRC. Contributions to the thesaurus have been made by a number of Contributors during 3 workshops.
COMING TO TERMS:
GUIDELINES FOR THE DESCRIPTION OF
HISTORICAL BOOKBINDINGS
External sewing supports

Secondary tackets

Longstitch
be very hard to identify by visual means alone.

APPLICATION

6.3.3 Paste (made from starch) will usually be applied in a thin layer, but glue (made from animal protein) could be applied in varying degrees of thickness. The type and thickness of application of adhesive may be significant, as there appears to be a marked tendency for British and Spanish binders in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to use thick layers of a dark, animal-based glue on the spines of their books, especially those in laced-case parchment bindings. German and Low Country binders typically used much thinner glue layers, whereas Italian and French binders are much more likely to use paste rather than glue.

THE THICKNESS OF THE ADHESIVE LAYER

6.3.3.1 A more detailed record should attempt to record the thickness of the adhesive layer.

THIN

6.3.3.1.1 The glue layer follows closely the profile of the gatherings on the spine in a thin coating of the paper or parchment.

6.13 A thin layer of adhesive

MEDIUM

6.3.3.1.2 The glue fills the space between the gatherings, but the individual gatherings are still clearly visible beneath the glue layer.

6.14 A medium layer of adhesive

THICK

The glue layer is sufficiently thick to obscure the individual gatherings and appears as continuous layer across the spine.

6.15 A thick layer of adhesive

SPINE-COVER CONNECTION

The covering material on a binding can either be adhered to the spine of the bookblock, making what is known as a tight back, or it may not be adhered to it and will arch away from the bookblock when the book is opened, creating a hollow back. The moulding of the covering material over raised bands is not always an indication of a tight back, as some laced-case bindings in parchment will be found with the parchment shaped over the raised bands with a natural hollow. This is a feature of some Italian laced-case bindings with boards from ca 1650 to ca 1750 (see Appendix III, A3.6.4.2).

TIGHT OR HOLLOW?
The first question to ask therefore is whether the book has a tight back or a hollow back.

UNINTENTIONAL RELEASE OF TIGHT BACKS

Damp storage conditions and weak adhesives will often release the covers of tight-back bindings (see Appendix III, A3.6.4.3).

NATURAL OR ARTIFICIAL?

If the book has a hollow back, it may be either a natural hollow back or an artificial hollow back.
be very hard to identify by visual means alone.

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**NATURAL OR ARTIFICIAL?**

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5.1.1.8.1 Raised sewing supports
   5.1.1.8.1.1 Flat parchment supports
   5.1.1.8.1.2 ‘Sewing cords’
   5.1.1.8.1.3 Number of elements per support
      5.1.1.8.1.3.1 Single raised sewing supports
      5.1.1.8.1.3.2 Double raised sewing supports
         5.1.1.8.1.3.2.1 Double supports with single slips
         5.1.1.8.1.3.2.2 Identifying double supports
         5.1.1.8.1.3.2.3 Recessed double sewing supports
         5.1.1.8.1.3.2.4 Double sewing supports sewn as one
      5.1.1.8.1.3.3 Kapitalbünde and halfbands
         5.1.1.8.1.3.3.1 Single bands on a bevel
      5.1.1.8.1.3.4 Triple sewing supports
      5.1.1.8.1.3.5 Paired single raised sewing supports

5.1.1.8.2 Recessed sewing supports
   5.1.1.8.2.1 Partially recessed sewing supports
   5.1.1.8.2.2 Thin raised sewing supports and smooth spines
   5.1.1.8.2.3 Counting recessed sewing supports
   5.1.1.8.2.4 Adhesive recesses

5.1.1.8.3 External sewing supports
Sheep parchment laced-case with a cover lining

Laced-case with strap-type tanned-skin sewing supports and cover of re-used medieval manuscript parchment

Sheep parchment laced-case, endband-slip-lace only, with loop and bead fastenings

One-piece calf-parchment adhesive case with an envelope flap from the right side

Reversed goat-parchment laced-case with turn-in lacing only, with two-colour paired ribbon ties

Longstitch through guard with full goat parchment cover

Calf parchment laced-case, all slips laced, with two pairs of alum-tawed skin ties on the fore-edge

Calf parchment laced case, support slips split-laced. Two pairs of ties on the fore-edge
THE DECORATED PAPER PROJECT
This project aims to compile a database of described and photographed decorated papers in order to provide a reference collection and a tool to assist any user in the identification and recording of decorated papers.

- Search papers
- Visual glossaries

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<th>Technique</th>
<th>Material by function</th>
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![Image of decorated papers](image1)

![Image of decorated papers](image2)

![Image of decorated papers](image3)

![Image of decorated papers](image4)

![Image of decorated papers](image5)

![Image of decorated papers](image6)

![Image of decorated papers](image7)

![Image of decorated papers](image8)
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- Search papers
- Visual glossaries

**Technique**
- block-printing
- brush-colouring
- coloured fibres (techniques)
- dabbing (techniques)
- engine-colouring
- metal-leaf embossing
- paste-decorating
- sprinkling (techniques)
- surface-colouring (techniques)

**Material by function**
Choose some options

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block-printed paper

Paper produced using the technique of block-printing. They were very popular in Italy, where the Remondini family of Bassano produced a wide range of designs in the eighteenth century, but were also made in most other European countries, including Germany (where they were known as Kattunpapier) and France, where they were known as Dominotier papers, with Rheims and Oriéans as the major centres of production.

brocade paper, Brokatpapier

Alternative labels include: Dutch gilt paper, gilt paper, Augsburg paper. A type of decorated paper which may use more than one technique, but which is distinguished by being partially or completely covered with sheets of metal leaf and a slightly embossed surface. The embossing was created by means of the engraved metal plates which were also used to transfer the metal leaf to the paper; this was done by applying pressure in a copperplate printing press through a felt blanket or other soft material. The pattern created by the plates can either be metal-leaf embossed, where the metal leaf remains only in the depressions created by the raised parts of the plates, or blind-embossed, where the metal leaf covers the entire surface of the paper which is then simply embossed with the same type of plate. The paper used can be uncoloured, already coloured or decorated with a variety of techniques including stencilling, hand-painting, brush-colouring, etc.
Brocade paper, stencilled in multiple colours

Paper which has been purposely trained with a relief texture.