

Book bindings in the International Museum of Leather Craft (IMOLC) collection

Books, in the modern sense of a number of leaves bound together in a protective cover, date from early Christian times. Leather was an obvious choice as material to use in the binding of sheets, at first merely as a hinge joining the two protective wooden boards, and later as a completely enveloping cover. Once used in this manner, leather soon provided the opportunity for artistry and craftsmanship, and there still exists, even from early times, a profusion of lovely bindings displaying the highest skill in the manipulation of leather and an amazing profusion of imaginative decoration, elegance and richness.

(select) Gazetteer of book bindings held in the IMOLC collection:

16th Century -

- 'Conciones in Epistolal et Evangelia' Antwerp 1573. Alumed pigskin on wood
- 'Tertullian's works' 1st edition Basle 1521. Calf on wood
- 'M. Tulli Cicerones Officiorum' Paris 1549 Robert Estienne (printer to the King). Calf and gold tooling
- 'Valerii Maximi dictorum factorum que memorabilum' Antwerp 1600. Calf with gauffered egedes
- 'Artistotelis, Alexandri et Casii problemata etc. Francofurdi apud heredes Andrae Wecheli' 1585. White pigskin on wood.
- Book cover Persian 16th Century, papier mache covered with goatskin.
- 'The works of Ovid' Basle 1549. Tawed goat.
- Book cover Venetian early 16th Cnetury, paste board covered with white, tawed goatskin.
- 'Achilles Bocchii Bonon Symbolicarum questionum de universo genere quas serio ludebat' Bologna 1574 (Bound by Hague end of 19th Century in imitation of French late 16th century) calf, gold tooled, gauffered edges.

17th Century -

- Holy Bible 1697. Black morocco with silver mounts
- 'Les privileges Franchises et Immunity Octroyees' Lyons 1634. Vellum bound (later?)
- 'Riders almanack' 1655. Black glazed goatskin, gold tooled.
- Holy Bible 1660. Black calf
- Book cover, Persian 17th century (or earlier) papier mache covered with red goatskin, lined with fawn lamb leather.
- Book cover, Spanish 17th Century. Gold tooled brown goatskin.

18th Century -

- Book of Common Prayer. Oxford binding c1750. Red morocco leather

- (parts only) 18th century book bindings. Tree calf, wood calf and blotched calf examples. From the library of the Rookerery, Bromley Common, Kent. Damaged by fire in 1946.
- Almanack 1798. Inlaid multi coloured leather, slip case to match. English
- 'L'Enfer de la mare Cardine' France 1793. Printed on vellum and bound in gold tooled citron morocco (purple doublers)
- 'Calendario' Naples 1790. Gold tooled citron calf.
- Book of Common Prayer. English 1717. John Barnet, Oxford. Gold tooled dark blue sheepskin.
- (2vols) 'Recueil d'Estampes d'apres les plus beaux tableaux etc' Paris 1729. Gold tooled mottled calf.
- 'A collection of statutes etc. London 1709. Black morocco leather

19th Century -

- 'Rider's 'British Merlin' 1804' gold tooled red roan.
- 'Gray's Elegy' Relievo binding of mechanically pressed leather on wood. English 1846
- Book of Common Prayer 1821. English. Black long grain morocco (ex Brighton Pavilion , chapel)
- 'Descriptive and historical account of various palaces and public buildings' J Brewer 1821, bound in full calf.
- 'Altar services' Clarendon Press. Gold tooled dark red morocco leather ca.1860
- 'Pindari, Opera omnia etc' Oxford 1697. Green morocco, bound by Charles Lewis 1860
- 'Emaux et Cameco' by T Gautier. Paris 1895. Bound by Zaehensdorf in gold tooled green morocco. From the library of Princess Alix, Tsaritsa of Russia, murdered 1918.
- 'Madam Chrysantheme' by Pierre Loti. Paris 1888. Bound by Zaehensdorf in blue crushed morocco leather.

20th Century -

- a collection of books privately bound by Sir Stephen Tallents. Sir Stephen had an interest in leather made from the pelts of unusual animals. This collection contains examples of books bound in: Rat, Cat, Fox and Grass snake. All animals met their end 'accidentally' on his property in Kent
- 'The Georgics of Virgil' gold tooled blue morocco, bound by Roger Powel ca 1950. (Exhibited at the Arts & Crafts exhibition)
- 'Roundabout Europe' bound in red and black leather. 1972
- 'Leather in Life, Art & Industry' 1946. Bound by Bernard Middleton
- 'Leather in Life, Art & Industry' 1946. Bound by Sangorski and Sutcliffe

<http://www.imolc.com/>