

Date: 10/2/08

Conservator: Stephanie Gowler

Instructor: Chela Metzger

Temporary ID #:08-104

Call Number/Collection: Tarlton Law Library, University of Texas

Author: Littleton, Thomas, Sir

Title: Littleton's Tenures in English

Imprint: London, 1627

Collation/foliation: 142 numb leaves [284 pages] [3 p]

Format: octavo

Dimensions (binding): 14.3 H x 9.7 W x 1.7 T cm

Dimensions (textblock): 14 H x 9 W x 1.5 T cm

## TREATMENT OBJECTIVE

To reconstruct and stabilize the binding for safe handling in a special collections environment.

## DESCRIPTION

### Binding

This is a hollow tube, tight-joint binding with laced-on boards. It is fully covered in brown vegetable tanned calf. The leather has been sprinkled with acid for decorative effect. The leather has been blind tooled in a panel/frame design on the boards and there are two blind-tooled lines on either side of the 5 false bands on the spine. The edges of the board have been blind tooled with a roll. There is a black Morocco leather gold-tooled label on the spine. The binding is not contemporary to the text – it appears to be a 19<sup>th</sup> century (or possibly early 20<sup>th</sup> c.) binding.

The binding is in poor condition overall. The top board is missing completely. The bottom board attachment is tenuous. The leather covering is cracked all over and suffers from “red rot” at the joints and board edges. There are many losses in the leather on the spine, including a large loss of approximately 1.5 x 0.5 cm at the tail. The gold on the label is flaking.

### Board-to-Text Attachment

Three hemp cord sewing supports are laced on to the boards.

The front board is missing completely, and the back board lacing is tenuous.

### Textblock

The textblock paper is cream-colored (3), medium-weight (1), moderately textured (1) handmade paper.<sup>1</sup> The sewing pattern is not visible. It is sewn over three recessed hemp cord supports. Edges of the text are trimmed and sprinkled. Front-bead endbands are sewn on; they are pink and green thread on what is likely a parchment strip. The text is printed in black printers ink with negligible type impression. Endpapers are similar to the textblock in both thickness and surface quality, though they are a lighter tone. They are single folio construction and tipped on.

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<sup>1</sup> Lunning, E. and Perkinson R. 1996. *The Print Council of America Paper Sample Book*. The Print Council of America.

The textblock opening is severely restricted. There is extensive handwritten marginalia and annotations throughout the text in various media, including iron gall inks, graphite, and unidentified red ink. Some of the iron gall inks are haloed and burning through the paper. There are three embossed stamps: one on the title page, one on page 9, and one on page 10. The pages have been heavily trimmed, removing some of the marginalia. Pages 9 and 10 are narrower than the rest of the textblock by a couple of millimeters. There is a small triangular loss in the middle of the title page. There is acid burn-through from the leather covering on the edges of the endsheets, both on the pastedown and flyleaf.

## PROPOSED TREATMENT

The following are 4 possible treatments, from least to most invasive:

- 1) Re-house in a clamshell box with a support board in place of missing front board.
- 2) Attach a new front board and reinforce the back board attachment with a hinge on top of the spine (not removing spine).
- 3) Remove spine, clean & line spine to enhance textblock opening. Attach new front board and reinforce back board with hinge under the leather spine piece.
- 4) Disbind, re-sew to allow for better opening. Attach new front board and reinforce back board with hinge under the leather spine piece.

I would recommend option #3, since gaining access to the spine will allow me to address both the issue of textblock opening and board attachment, without going to the extreme of disbinding. Addressing the opening of this textblock is important due to the extensive marginalia. There is the possibility that simply cleaning the spine and adding new linings will not enhance the opening enough, in which case we should consider option #4.

## POSSIBLE EFFECTS OF TREATMENT

Some of the degraded leather on the spine could be lost in the process of attaching boards. Cleaning the spine will have to be done very carefully to avoid moisture seeping to the textblock which could cause tidelines and damage the various media used for annotations in the margins.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

(Books consulted during before treatment documentation)

- Kite, Marion & Thompson, Roy, 2006. *Conservation of Leather and Related Materials*. Elsevier.
- Lunning, E. and Perkinson R. 1996. *The Print Council of America Paper Sample Book*. The Print Council of America.
- Middleton, Bernard. 1972. *The Restoration of Leather Bindings*. American Library Association.
- Pearson, David. 2005. *English Bookbinding Styles 1450-1800*. The British Library and Oak Knoll Press.

## TREATMENT OPTION #3

Estimated treatment time: 10 hours.

## TREATMENT PERFORMED

- I. Consolidated leather on spine with Cellugel (diluted with isopropyl alcohol). (30 min.)

2. Lifted and removed spine piece by slicing through edges of hollow tube. (1 hr.)
3. Mechanically removed textblock paper spine lining with microspatula. (15 min.)
4. Removed animal glue using MC poultice and microspatula. (1 hr.)
5. Lifted leather on back board at head and tail for board reinforcement. Applied Cellugel in these areas to consolidate flaking leather. (30 min.)
6. Adhered aero cotton spine lining (overhanging at front; overhanging at head and tail only at back) with Lascaux 498. (15 min.)
7. Constructed new front board out of blue binders board, with 10-point card laminated to front and back. (20 min.)
8. Scanned back board on Epson Perfection 4870 Photo scanner (300 dpi, 24-bit color, best quality, 100% scale) and printed onto heavy-weight matte finish archival paper (Kinko's large format printer). (30 min.)
9. Coated scanned image with dilute MC. (5 min.)
10. Toned scanned image with acrylic wash. (30 min.)
11. Toned gampi for covering new board with acrylic wash. (45 min)
12. Delaminated "frame" area on front and back of new board by lifting out 10-point card. Toned with colored pencil on edges and frame of board to provide brown undertone prior to coving with long fiber paper. (25 min)
13. Toned scan with pastels. (30 min)
14. Covered new board with toned gampi, adhered with Lascaux. (30 min)
15. Toned covered board with pastels and watercolors. (1 hour)
16. Cut, toned and adhered pastedown to inside of new board – Twinrocker, Delphi textweight, antique laid handmade paper; toned edges with watercolor to mimic acidic burn from leather on original endsheets. (45 min)
17. Consolidated leather on back board near spine at head and tail. (15 min)
18. Adhered hinges from cloth lining under lifted leather on back board at head and tail with Lascaux / WSP mix. (10 min)
19. Removed burnt leather from back board (caused by Cellugel consolidation). Applied toned long fiber paper patches over damaged areas. In-painted patches with acrylics. Applied SC6000 to surface of patches. (3 hours)
20. Lifted front board and attached overhanging cloth lining, Lascaux / WSP mix. (30 min)
21. Painted exposed cloth lining with acrylics. (15 min)
22. Built and attached painted Moriki hollow tube to spine of textblock with PVAc. (15 min)
23. Completed toning on front board with acrylics (15 min)
24. Attached original spine piece with Lascaux / WSP mix. (5 min)
25. Touched up toning on patches on back board, and applied SC6000 to patches to mimic original leather shine. (10 min)
26. Constructed museum board book shoe enclosure. (30 min)

Total treatment time: 11 hours, 45 minutes.

#### MATERIALS USED

- Precipitated wheat starch paste (WSP) 1:4, cooked 20 minutes in de-ionized water, Colophon
- Lascaux 498 HV, Talas
- Tangucho long fiber tissue, Hiromi
- Moriki long fiber paper

- Western handmade paper, Twinrocker
- Blotter paper
- Mylar, Talas
- Acrylic paints (soft body)
- Pastels
- Watercolor pencils
- Cellugel, Preservation Solutions
- Elvace - PVAc, Talas
- SC6000 Wax, The Leather Conservation Center