

Author/Editor: John Selden**Title:** Table-Talk: Being the Discourses of John Selden, Esq., Or His Sense of Various Matters of Weight and High Consequence, Relating Especially to Religion and State.**Imprint:** 1716**Dimensions (binding):** 14.7 cm x 9.1 cm x 1.3 cm**Dimensions (text block):** 14.3 cm x 8.6 cm x 1.0 cm**Collection:** Tarlton Law Library, Rare Books Collection, University of Texas at Austin**Call Number:** PR 2339 S3 A7 1716**Examination Date:** 10/07/08**Treatment Date:** October – December 2008**Conservator:** Sonya Issaeva**Supervising Conservator:** Chela Metzger**Treatment Objective**

The goal of this treatment is to make the book safer to handle by: attaching a new front board and introducing new material to the spine in order to reinforce the textblock-to-board connection and to protect the exposed textblock spine folds.

Description:

The Discourses of John Selden Esq., (1584-1654), were originally recorded by Richard Milward, Selden's secretary. It was first printed in 1689. Selden studied law in London 1602-1612. His books included Titles of Honour and The History of Tithes. John Selden's ideas were controversial with the Church and repressed by the King. Selden had been a member of the Parliament from 1623 onward and was imprisoned twice for his work to promote the role of the Parliament in the affairs of state. Selden was a prodigious collector of illuminated manuscripts. Over 8000 items from his collection are now at the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

There is a signature of "Exlibris Joh. Oxley" made at the top of the title page in what appears to be iron gall ink. This is the third edition of the volume, published in London. In the find print at the bottom of the title page it says that "The text was printed for Jacob Tonson at, at Shakespear's-Head, over-against Catherine-Street in the Strand; and Awنشam and John Churchill, at the Black Swan in Pater-Noster-Row."

Condition:

Binding: It is a full leather tightback and tight joint binding with three sawn-in cords connecting the laced on boards and with blind tooling on the remaining board. Two more cords are positioned in between the sawn-in cords and act as sewing supports but do not extend onto the board.

The front board is missing. There is sewing thread exposed at the front shoulder, where the front endsheet folio had been attached to the textblock. The sewing supports are broken at the front shoulder. Sewing thread is also exposed along the spine edge of the back board, on the interior and to a lesser degree on the exterior. The thread extends from sewing support to sewing support parallel to the spine and is partially covered by the pastedown on the interior and by the leather covering on the exterior. This suggests that the endsheet folios were sewn on all along. The back board is securely attached to the textblock by means of the three cords, There is an even gap of about 2-3 mm between the back board and the textblock, when the back board is opened. It appears that the pastedown and the back fly leaf attachment had been severed a long time ago. There is burn-through from the leather covering visible along the edges of the pastedown and the back fly leaf.

The back board is tooled with blind lines, an ornamental pattern and four small organically shaped design elements. The overall layout of the frame and panel design is a series of three rectangles of different size and texture stacked within one another. Acid had been used to create the speckled fields of texture. There is a sharp indentation, as if from a cord or a stick, on the edge of the back board, at the midpoint of the foredge. The board has a gilded ornamented edge. The design is prominent along the foredge, but has rubbed away for the most part along the head and tail edges. There is loss of leather covering at both head and tail edges of the

board, especially at the head edge, where binder's board is exposed along the majority of the edge. The leather is delaminated near the losses at fore-edge corners. The leather is broken all along the shoulder and there are losses in leather covering along the spine edge.

The spine leather covering is partially missing from the head down to just past the second false band, exposing the section folds. The leather is cracked and appears brittle. The head endband is missing. There is a remnant of the endband tiedown between page 8 and page 9. There is loss of the grain layer in the leather at the tail endcap. The tail endband appears to be made from neutral-colored linen thread and is intact. The color of the endband, however, might have faded overtime.

Text block: The textblock is well consolidated, the sections have stayed together remarkably well. The textblock does not open easily and can only be opened about 45 degrees before it springs back closed. The pages have no drape. It is likely that the sections are sewn on two-on but the sewing is not visible when the book is opened.

There are remnants of the front fly leaf present along the front shoulder. The textblock is heavily stained from the title page to page 3. The brown stain extends down from the head edge of the volume down to the lower quarter. There is also extensive staining from page 119 to page 136 (the last page), which also extends from the head edge down the foreedges of the pages and down the spine fold, roughly in the shape of the letter "M". There appears to be old mold damage near the head and spine edges of the back fly leaf and pastedown.

Treatment options:

Minimal treatment:

- Construct a custom made enclosure for the volume
- Place a piece of acid free mat board cut to size on top of the title page to protect the textblock

Medium intensity treatment - option one:

- Lift spine covering at the head and tail endcaps, retaining the spine fragments
- Line the exposed sections of the spine with Japanese tissue and overhanging airplane linen
- Prepare partial spine replacements of toned Japanese paper for the lifted sections
- Prepare a new front board, covered in toned Japanese tissue, along with a new pastedown and endsheet of handmade paper
- Lift the leather covering at the spine edge of the back board at the corresponding head and tail sections
- Attach the boards to the textblock using the overhanging textile lining as means of attachment
- Cover with toned Japanese tissue spine replacements
- Make fills for the losses in the leather spine covering using toned Japanese tissue. Adhere the original spine fragments retained after the lifting process.
- Attempt to print out a real-life-sized scan of the back board. If the reproduction looks appropriate and visually pleasing, adhere the image to the newly attached front board. Some research into different brands of inkjet ink and paper quality would be needed for this treatment option
- Construct a custom made enclosure for the volume

Medium intensity treatment – option two:

- Follow the same procedure as in option one, but use leather as partial spine replacement material and covering material for the new front board.
- The leather covering on the front board would be left plain, not tooled as on the back board
- Construct a custom made enclosure for the volume

High intensity treatment:

- Lift the entire spine covering, retain original spine fragments
- Disbind the volume
- Test ink signature on the title page for solubility in water

- If media allows, wash the front and back sections that exhibit heavy staining in an attempt to reduce discoloration
- Re-sew the textblock
- Sew on a new front endsheet folio of handmade paper
- Line the text block with Japanese tissue and airplane linen
- Cover the spine in leather
- Prepare a new front board covered in leather
- Attach the new spine covering to the front and back boards
- Construct a custom made enclosure for the volume

Treatment considerations:

The curator selected “Medium Intensity Treatment, Option One” as the most appropriate, both in terms of time spent on the treatment, its potential for a high level of aesthetic integration, and stable materials.

Treatment Performed:

New front board

- The front board of the volume was scanned on an Epson flatbed scanner. The scan was printed on 40# archival quality paper with colored inkjet ink. The printout was coated with a dilute solution of methyl cellulose.
- The new front board was cut from museum quality blue board. A window mat of ~1/4 inches wide was cut from 10pt board and pasted onto the blue board, so that the printed scan panel could be inset into the resulting space. Wheat starch paste was used as the adhesive.
- The new front board was covered with two layers of medium weight Japanese tissue, which had been toned with acrylic pigments. Wheat starch paste was used as adhesive.
- The trimmed scan printout was inset into the front board, using wheat starch paste. A piece of light weight Japanese tissue was pasted onto the opposite side of the board to prevent warping.
- The area outside the scan was toned with watercolor pigments to make it look similar to the existing board.
- The covered board was burnished with a bone folder to add some surface sheen.
- Two slits were made in the board at the head and tail, along the spine edge. The top layer of the board was lifted to create space for being able to insert an overhanging lining. The size of the slits was determined by the size of the head and tail panels of the leather spine covering. The leather panels would have to be lifted in order to introduce a new overhanging lining.

Spine lining

- The new front board was lined up with the textblock and existing board and the whole package was placed into a lying press.
- The head and tail panels of the leather spine covering (up to the first band) were faced with Crompton’s heat set tissue, moistened with alcohol. The leather panels were lifted and set aside.
- The exposed spine was lightly scraped and lined with Tengucho Japanese tissue, then allowed to dry overnight.
- The exposed portions at the head and tail of the spine were then lined with cotton fabric, which was left overhanging at the front spine edge, where the newly constructed board would be attached.

Board attachment

- The cotton lining was glued up with Lascaux and inserted underneath the lifted head and tail portions of the front board.
- The lifted board was glued back down with Lascaux. The book was taken out of the lying press and placed flat on the table. A light weight was placed on top of the front board and the adhesive was allowed to dry.

- A small amount of Lascaux was placed under minor delaminations in the original leather covering of the back board.

Original spine fragments

- The exposed cotton lining at the head and tail of the spine was covered with toned Kizukishi Japanese tissue, using wheat starch paste.
- Using ethanol, Crompton's heat set tissue was removed from the fragments of the original leather covering that were lifted from the head and tail of the spine. The panels were attached to the toned tissue using Lascaux.
- Diluted acrylic pigments were applied to the toned tissue with a small brush to achieve better aesthetic integration. In places, where the lifted leather panels had suffered minor surface losses, a barrier coating of Lascaux and dilute acrylic pigments were applied as well.

Front pastedown and enclosure

- An off-white piece of Seikishi Japanese tissue was used for the front pastedown. In order to avoid warping of the front board, the pastedown was adhered along the edges with a thin coat of Lascaux.
- After consultation with the curator, a book shoe was constructed for the volume out of blue museum board.

Materials used

Kizukishi Japanese tissue, Hiromi
Seikihi Japanese tissue, Hiromi
Tengucho Japanese tissue, Hiromi
Crompton's heat set tissue, Talas
Cotton fabric
Lascaux, Talas
Wheat starch paste, Zin Shofu, Talas
Ethanol, Fisher Scientific
Acrylic pigments, Liquitex
Watercolor, Winsor-Newton
Blue binder's board, Metal Edge
10 pt board, Talas
Ink jet printout. Kinko's