



Bookbinding: Its Background and Technique (Two Volumes Bound as One) (v. 1 & 2)

Edith Diehl

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Edith Diehl (1876–1955) was one of the world's foremost practitioners of traditional bookbinding and an exceptionally able teacher. From the vantage point of a lifetime's experience, she gives today's bookbinders a historical survey of this centuries-old art and an eminently practical guide.

Nearly one half of the encyclopedic volume is devoted to an overview of the historical development of bookbinding. The author shows how the codex form of the book became identified with the Christian era, how bookbinding became a craft and trade in the 15th century, and how the production and distribution of books shifted from the monasteries and universities to the illustrious printer-publishers of the 15th and 16th centuries. She describes various bookbinding practices such as sewing, the use of boards and leathers, hand versus machine binding, cased books, etc. And she examines in depth the different national styles of book decoration in Italy, France, England, Germany, North America, and other countries, and the specific contributions of such influential bookbinders as Jean Grolier, Thomas Mahieu, Le Gascon, Samuel Mearne, Roger Payne, Jacob Krause, Edmund Ranger, and John Ratcliff. Ninety-two full-page plates provide visualization of certain key points and, above all, numerous examples of the finest decorated bindings. Edith Diehl then guides the reader through more than 400 profusely illustrated pages on the craft of hand bookbinding. She details and illustrates the steps involved in the nearly 30 necessary binding operations: collating and paging, pulling and removing glue, guarding and mending, pressing, sewing, backing, lacing-in, headbanging, lining up back, casing texts in protective cover, covering, cutting inside margins and filling in, and many more. In addition she conveys much useful information on such ancillary topics as doublures, fly-leaves, half bindings, limp bindings, vellum bindings, slipcases, repairing old bindings, cleaning and washing papers, materials (leather, paper, gold leaf, glue, paste), finishing tools, tooling, lettering, etc. The 242 illustrations that accompany this book-within-a-book are unmatched for economy and clarity.

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