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'*Met by chance*' - a group of ten books bound for the Bodleian Library in February 1624 by William Wildgoose of Oxford. ¹

Abstract

This paper compares the bindings of a consignment of books bound for the Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, in February 1624. This paper will present a structural, material and technical comparison of this group of plain Oxford bindings, grouped by archival records rather than by their tooling. This paper will investigate whether the content, place of publication or language affected the bindings made for the Bodleian. It will look at whether the Library specified different bindings for different genres, sizes or shelving requirements. It will question whether differences in the materials and techniques used for these bindings can be used to indicate the importance of these books to the Bodleian Library, and will investigate whether the organisation of Wildgoose's bindery can be revealed from this group of bindings.

Keywords

Bookbinding, Bodleian Library, Oxford

Introduction

Large numbers of early modern books survive in contemporary bindings, in contrast the documentary evidence for the processes by which these bindings were made is very rare. The administrative records of the Bodleian Library allow us to glimpse the commissioning of bindings by an institutional library in the first decades of the seventeenth century, and this paper will investigate one consignment of ten books that were sent by the Bodleian to William Wildgoose for binding in 1624. ² Famously, this consignment contained *Mr. William Shakespeares comedies, histories, & tragedies* (London, 1623), hereafter referred to as the First Folio. ³ The copy was received by the Library in 1624 but left at some time after 1664. In 1905 Strickland Gibson, then an under librarian, identified a copy of the First Folio brought into the Library for advice as the Bodleian's long lost copy by comparing it with other volumes known to have been sent for binding at the same time. He

¹ "We met by chance; you did not find me here." William Shakespeare, *Troilus and Cressida*, Act 4, Scene 2.

This paper has drawn on work of the entire Book Conservation Team at the Bodleian Libraries: Nicole Gilroy, Arthur Green, Simon Haigh, Andrew Honey, Sabina Pugh and Julie Sommerfeldt.

² The Bodleian Library, which opened in 1602, is the main library of the University of Oxford. William Wildgoose, bookbinder, was admitted as *bibliopola* by the University in 1617 and is known to have bound for the Bodleian between 1621-6. For the little known about him, see Gibson (1903), p. 48; Pearson (2000), p. 137.

³ The First Folio is the first publication of William Shakespeare's (1564-1616) collected drama, see Blayney (1991).

identified it as an Oxford binding from a chained library, and matched the printed waste used as the paste-downs with others from the group. Following his identification, and after a public appeal, the First Folio was reacquired and is now one of the Library's treasures. Recent conservation work undertaken to enable the digitization of this copy produced the first detailed description of the First Folio's binding for over one hundred years and prompted an examination of the other Wildgoose bindings in this group.⁴ This paper will present a structural, material and technical comparison of this group of plain Oxford bindings, grouped by archival records rather than by their tooling.

Strickland Gibson, Oxford binding, and the recovery of the Bodleian's First Folio

In three pioneering works published between 1903 and 1907, Strickland Gibson (1877-1958) laid the foundations for the study of bindings from Oxford and they remain the cornerstone for their study to this day.⁵ Other early studies of bookbinding largely concentrated on decoration and tooling, grouping books by the engraved finishing tools used on them - but these works by Gibson relied on three interdependent forms of evidence; the study of the materials and techniques used to bind the surviving books, the identification and grouping of finishing tools used to decorate these bindings, and finally the archival records for Oxford binders.⁶ Gibson first drew attention to the binding of the then lost Bodleian First Folio in his *Early Oxford Bindings*.⁷ In it he published extracts which refer to binding from the Bodleian Library's account book (1613-76), and lists of books sent out for binding identified from two day books (1613-20 and 1621-25). He also produced a list of books bound between 1613 and 1630 by seventeen named binders which could be identified from these sources, including two further bindings that were executed by Wildgoose, and noted three entries for Wildgoose in the Register of the University.⁸ His transcriptions from the account book and day books were only partial, but indicated the types of archival resources that are available at the Bodleian for the study of Oxford binding. With this research fresh in his mind Gibson must have been amazed in January 1905 when Falconer Madan (1851-1935), sub-librarian, brought a copy of the First Folio in an early binding to him for his opinion. The copy had been brought into the Library by Gladwyn Turbutt (1883-1914) who was then an undergraduate of Magdalen College and the copy had belonged to the Turbutt family since the mid-eighteenth century. The excitement of the discovery of the Bodleian's long lost First Folio and the then frantic but ultimately successful appeal to purchase the book for the Library in the face of persistent competition is the stuff of bibliographical legend and has been related several times.⁹ The methods used by Gibson to identify the book through the detailed comparison of the materials and techniques of binding were lauded at the time, but the study of binding during much of the twentieth century largely followed a different path concentrating on decoration. It is only in recent years, with renewed interest in provenance and

⁴ For the digitization and photographs of the binding, see Bodleian (2013); for the conservation, see Gilroy et al. (forthcoming).

⁵ For Strickland Gibson, librarian and bibliographer, see Bodleian (1959).

⁶ Gibson (1903); Gibson (1904-6); Gibson (1907).

⁷ The loss of the Library's First Folio was first noted in modern times by William Dunn Macray in 1868 (Macray (1868), pp. 41-2).

⁸ Now Bodleian Library, D 1.13 Th. (Calvo, Pedro, *Homiliarum totius anni tomus i, continens xxiii*, Uppsala, 1619), and G 1.7 Jur. (Genuensis, Marcus Antonius, *Tractatus de Ecclesia, sive practicabilia ecclesiastica*, Rome, 1620, bound with Fichardus, Joannes, *Tractatus cautelarum omnium, siue cautionum*, Lyon, 1577). Gibson (1903), pp. 48, 51-60, these are the only archival records for William Wildgoose.

⁹ For the official version of the recovery, see Craster (1952), pp. 179-81; for details of the attempt by Henry Clay Folger to purchase the copy, see Smith (1939).

copy specific details, that the efficacy of his techniques to date and localize the large mass of 'plain local bindings' has been recognised and begun to be practised once more.

Archival sources for binding at the Bodleian Library

The library is fortunate to retain two day books which show the process of recording books sent out for binding in Oxford from the years immediately after the death of Sir Thomas Bodley (1545-1613). From the opening of the Library in 1602 until his death in 1613, Bodley bore all of the financial and most of the administrative burden of the Library and separate financial and administrative records only survive from after his death when the Library became the direct responsibility of the University of Oxford. The first day book, for the years 1613-20, contains lists of books sent for binding, lists of imperfect books, books given or promised to the library, second-hand book purchases, and lists of duplicate books to be exchanged.¹⁰ In contrast, the second day book almost entirely consists of lists of books sent for binding between 1621 and 1625.¹¹ The day book binding entries take the form of lists of brief titles which are numbered to indicate the number of volumes they are to be bound as, and are headed by the date and name of binder they are sent to. When the bound volumes were returned the list was checked, each item was marked with an "R" and then signed by the bookbinder. The First Folio with nine other titles sent was sent to William Wildgoose as a consignment on 17 February 1624 and is recorded in the second day book. The second day book lists a total of 88 consignments sent for binding between 19 June 1621 and 9 June 1625 to twelve Oxford binders, with 68 of the consignments (75% of the total) being sent out to four main binders.¹² The remaining 20 consignments were shared between eight binders¹³ with William Wildgoose receiving the largest number, five consignments between 19 November 1621 and 23 February 1625.¹⁴

In addition to the working day books the annual accounts of the Library are recorded for the years 1613-76 in a more formal account book.¹⁵ The accounts for the years 1613-1646 have been published since Gibson's time and amongst other expenses they list payments for binding.¹⁶ However, they only record two payments to Wildgoose, the first in 1620-21 and the second in 1625-6.¹⁷ An overview of the consignments listed in the second day book is given alongside details of payments made for binding between 1621 and 1626 (Tab. 1). From this it can be seen that the day book and accounts do not always directly correlate and that payment may have lagged behind work.

¹⁰ Now Bodleian Library, Library Records e. 9, mainly in the hand of Thomas James (1573-1629), Bodley's first Librarian (1602-20).

¹¹ Now Bodleian Library, Library Records e. 528, mainly in the hand of Jean Verneuil (1583-1647), the Library's underkeeper (1618?-32?).

¹² William Spire (20 consignments, 22% of total), Richard Billingsley (19, 21%), Henry Bluett (19, 21%), John Allam (10, 11%). Details of all the Oxford binders mentioned in this paper can be found in Gibson (1903), pp. 43-50; Pearson (2000), pp. 125-137.

¹³ William Wildgoose (5 consignments, 6% of total), William Davies (4, 4%), Roger Barnes (3, 3%), William Johnson (3, 3%), Christopher Crouch (2, 2%), Mr Jockson (1, 1%), Elias Peerse (1, 1%), Robert Way (1, 1%).

¹⁴ The five consignments are: 19 November [1621], 16 titles bound as 12 volumes; 11 August 1623, 14 titles bound as 8 volumes; undated [after 11 August 1623], 14 titles bound as 3 volumes; 17 February 1624, 10 titles bound as 8 volumes; and 23 February 1625, 14 titles bound as 10 volumes (Bodleian Library, Library Records e. 528, fols. 9v, 33r, 33v-34r, 45r and 60r). No consignments are recorded for Wildgoose in the first day book.

¹⁵ Now Bodleian Library, Library Records e. 8.

¹⁶ Hampshire (1983).

¹⁷ Hampshire (1983), pp. 48 & 67.

Unfortunately the accounts for the years 1623-5 are the least clear. In 1623-4 payments were made to only one binder (Richard Billingsley) though the day book records consignments sent to four binders, and in 1624-5 Sampson Bele was paid 10s for binding though he does not appear in the day book. The other payment for binding in 1624-5 was £7-02-00 paid to John Rouse (1574–1652), Bodley's second Librarian, for "monny laid out by him for binding, and paying for diverse books". In total Wildgoose was paid at least £3-02-10 for binding the 49 volumes in his five consignments, but he may have also have been paid separately by Rouse for all or part of the three consignments that he was sent in 1623-4.

The binding entries for the two day books are currently being edited for publication and the above overview is given as a context for this paper. The day book entry for the consignment sent to William Wildgoose on the 17 February 1624 was first partially transcribed by Gibson in 1903, then reproduced in 1905, and is now fully transcribed below (Tab. 2).¹⁸ In 1903 Gibson identified five of the eight volumes from this consignment as still being in the Library.¹⁹ The First Folio subsequently returned to the Library in 1906 and the final item from the binders book has now been identified, leaving only one volume from this consignment no longer in the Library.

The books

The ten titles sent to Wildgoose vary in language, date and place of publication as well as size and format, and bibliographical details of the titles with their sizes and formats are given in Table 2. Four of the titles are in English and were printed in London, the other six are Latin, three printed in Spain and one each in Lisbon, Paris and Strasbourg. Nine of the titles were new or recent (dating from 1610, 1617 (2 titles), 1619, 1622, 1623 (3 titles), and 1624) and it is assumed that they arrived at the Library unbound in sheets. Only a single earlier title, dated 1519, appears to have been purchased second hand, with pre-Bodleian dirt and wear to the leaves as well as annotations indicating that it had an earlier binding. It has long been assumed that the First Folio and presumably the other English titles were sent to the Library under the agreement with the London Stationers' Company, but there is no documentary evidence to confirm this for individual titles.²⁰ The six continental titles are likely to have been purchased.²¹

The ten titles were printed on two sizes of paper (crown and foolscap) and in two formats, with seven being folio and three quarto.²² The ten titles were bound as eight volumes, with four of the

¹⁸ Gibson (1903), pp. 57-8; Madan et al. (1905), plate 3.

¹⁹ Gibson (1903), pp. 57-8.

²⁰ In 1612 an agreement was reaffirmed between Sir Thomas Bodley and the London Stationers' Company, requiring a copy of every new book published in England and registered at Stationers' Hall to be sent to the Library (Macray (1890), pp. 40, 44-6). In 1905 Madan asserted that the First Folio had arrived under this agreement and thus should be "regarded as the standard exemplar [...] the copy selected by the publisher for permanent preservation, at a time when it was seen to be advantageous that some one copy, such as this, should be accessible in the future for purposes of reprinting". Much was made of this claim during the public appeal to purchase the copy in 1905-6, but Turbutt had admitted in 1905 that the copy does not "present the leaves uniformly in the earlier of later states", and it can't be assumed that this copy was *the* standard exemplar (Madan et al. (1905), pp. 6, 8). Philip has noted that only 20% of the books that were registered with the Stationers' Company in 1613-4 were delivered to the Library (Philip (1983), p. 28).

²¹ A total of £97-02-00 was spent on books by the Library in the 1623-4 (Hampshire (1983), pp. 58-9).

²² Gaskell lists the sizes of crown and foolscap in this period as approximately 350 x 450 mm. and 320 x 420 mm. (Gaskell (1974), pp. 74-5). The only exception to these two paper sizes is the 1519 Paris title which was

titles being grouped by size and bound as two volumes. Thus this group of eight bindings fall into three distinct sizes, the four largest sized volumes are crown folio (336-53 x 216-20 mm.), the two medium sized are foolscap folio (293-300 x 203-16 mm.), and two smallest are foolscap quarto (211-2 x 160-3 mm.) (Fig. 1).²³ Books were shelved by size and subject within the library at this date - as folios, quartos or octavos - and by subject in the four faculties - Theology, Law, Medicine and Arts. All of the eight bound volumes, despite their different sizes and formats, were treated as 'folios' with five shelved in the 'Theology' collection in the main section of the Library, and three shelved with 'Arts' in Arts End, the first extension added to the Library between 1610-12.²⁴ The books that were shelved in Arts End on shelf S 2, the shelf where the First folio was originally housed were reassembled and photographed in 1916.²⁵ A range of sizes can be seen in this shelf of seventeen 'folios', with at least five volumes appearing to be larger quartos. At this period 'folios' were chained in the Library and all were bound as inboard bindings.²⁶ Quartos and octavos were not chained in the library and some of them were bound in parchment, a material proscribed for chained books in the Library's first statute.²⁷

The bindings

The seven bindings which remain in the Library from this consignment conform to the standard type of Oxford binding from around 1615 to 1650, plain inboard bindings covered with tanned leather and with minimal tooling. This type of binding has been described by Gibson and Pearson, with their defining decorative characteristic being a blind-tooled frame to the boards, and hatching at the extremity of the spine and at the board edges adjacent to the spine.²⁸ They appear at first sight to be entirely uniform with the great number of bindings from the first half of the seventeenth century which survive in Oxford collections. However, closer study reveals differences from other bindings and indeed variation within this group of seven. It is these differences and the customary binding habits used by a binder that will be investigated in this paper. Before a detailed discussion of the materials and techniques, the following short description is given as a generic description of these

bound and trimmed with a foolscap folio title (binding 3), but was probably printed on chancery paper, c.320 x 450 mm. (Needham (1994), p. 125).

²³ Although the seventh item sent for binding is no longer in the Library (see Tab. 2), the Library owns two other copies of this edition. A 2.2 Art. Seld., which came to the Library in 1659 as part of the bequest of John Selden (1584-1654) in an early seventeenth-century binding, is 340 x 228 x 82 mm. (binding) and 332 x 207 x 67 mm. (text-block).

²⁴ For the history of the Bodleian Library in the early-seventeenth century, see Philip (1983).

²⁵ Bodleian (1916), p. 15 and plate 6.

²⁶ The term 'inboard binding', coined by Nicholas Pickwoad, is used to denote a binding structure where the boards are attached to the text-block before the volume is covered. For chained libraries, including the Bodleian, see Streeter (1931).

²⁷ The Library's statute of 1613, which was issued in Latin, contains a clause about binding. The statute was published in 1845, with Clause 13 translated as: "We also enact, that the books which hereafter shall be new-bound or put in covers, shall all, if it can be done conveniently, be bound in leather, not parchment", and this has been taken to mean a blanket prohibition of the use of parchment for any bindings though many parchment bindings from this date are found on quarto and octavo books. David Howlett has more recently translated this clause as: "We enact also that books hereafter to be bound from new or to be fixed together, should be all (if it can conveniently be done) in leather, when they are to be bound in chains, not parchment" (Ward (1845), p. 266; and Howlett personal correspondence 10 April 2003).

²⁸ Gibson (1903), pp. 40-1; Pearson (2000), pp. 35-6.

bindings. Four of the bindings have been rebaked since Gibson's study of them in the early twentieth century and this has unfortunately obscured some of their information.

The remaining seven volumes are all blind-tooled inboard bindings of brown tanned calf over pulp boards.²⁹ Their endleaves comprise a paste-down and a plain paper flyleaf, each with an outside hook, sewn as a single gathering.³⁰ The volumes are sewn on between four and six raised alum-tawed supports, with a relatively thin natural-coloured thread with the final spun direction of 'S' twist. The edges of the textblocks are trimmed and the edges sprinkled red after the boards were attached, but before the endbands were worked or the books covered.³¹ The endbands are sewn with blue and pink threads over a single tanned leather core, with a single thread on the needle and worked with a front bead. The books all have a gentle round but no spine linings. The boards are couched laminate pulp boards approximately 5-8 mm. thick, and the boards are attached to the text-block by lacing each of the sewing supports using a two-hole horizontal path. The books were covered as tight-backs, with brown, tanned calf-leather, flesh side out.³² The leather was edge-pared and turned in on all edges with the corners lapped, fore-edge over. The spine was tied up after covering leaving a single impression of cord on either side of the sewing supports and two each at head and tail. The leather turn-ins were not trimmed after covering. All decoration is blind-tooled and each board has a frame made using a four-line tool crossing at the corners.³³ The edges of boards nearest the spine have edge hatching in a series of oblique and near-perpendicular single lines (Fig. 2).³⁴ The spine is divided into panels using two impressions of a single line tool on either side of the sewing supports. There is a single line adjacent to the head edge of the first panel and the tail edge of the last panel and the first and last panels have typical Oxford spine hatching comprising oblique hatching between two single lines in the area of their kettle stitches (Fig. 3). Each binding originally had two textile fore-edge ties attached to each board.³⁵ The ties were laced through the boards and the ends pasted to the inner face of the boards before the paste-downs were put down.³⁶ After their return to the Bodleian each volume was chained to its folio shelf, the volume was

²⁹ In this paper the bindings will be referred to by their number in Table 2.

³⁰ This is the most common type of endleaf found in Oxford bindings at this time (Pearson (2000), pp. 50-1). The only exception is the right endleaf of binding 1, which uses the last blank leaf of the text-block as the flyleaf instead of an additional piece of plain paper.

³¹ The only exception is binding 3, a *Sammelband* of two titles. Here the edge of each title has a solid colour (red for the first title, yellow for the second) to indicate that the volume contained more than one text. This was common practice for *Sammelbände* at this time in Oxford libraries, see Thomas Bodley's August 1605 letter (Wheeler (1985), p. 149).

³² The only exception is binding 6, which was covered with tanned leather grain side out.

³³ Gibson has noted that the use of a four-line tool by Wildgoose is unusual in Oxford though not unique to him (Gibson (1903), p. 40).

³⁴ In all cases this corresponds to Pearson edge pattern J, with the exception of one board of binding 4 which has worn hatching similar to Pearson edge pattern C (Pearson (2000), p. 38, Table 2).

³⁵ All the ties have since been removed from the bindings by cutting them flush with the outer face of the boards. The pasted ends of the ties can only be seen on the inner face of the boards of binding 2, where the paste-downs have been lifted. They are approximately 30 mm. wide and are woven from linen or hemp thread and comprise nine stripes: pink/white, yellow, green, pink, blue, pink, green, yellow, pink/white.

³⁶ The one exception is binding 1, which had the ties attached after the paste-downs were put down. The ends of the ties of this binding are covered with plain paper patches.

attached to the chain with a chain staple riveted towards the head, at the fore-edge of the left board.

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From this general description it would seem that the Bodleian must have provided a specification for these bindings, based on where they were to be shelved, before they were sent out. All of the bindings, irrespective of their size or format, were destined for the 'folio' shelves and were to be bound as inboard bindings. In addition the books were to be 'shelf-ready' for the Library, with ties and suitable edge colouring carried out as part of the binding process rather than as an additional activity after they returned to the library.³⁸ There are two errors in this shelf-ready process. It appears that the ties for binding 1 were forgotten until after the paste-downs were put down, when they were added as an extra step with additional plain paper patches needed to cover their ends. A more serious error occurred with the edge colouring of binding 5, the second *Sammelband*. This is sprinkled in one colour rather than having a striped edge to indicate the two texts, and this might have caused the second title to be overlooked when the appendix to the Library's catalogue was published in 1635.³⁹

Materials

Within this group of bindings there is little variation in binding technique but some unexplained variation in the materials used. In two areas this is most clearly seen, the covering leathers and the paper used for the endleaves. Six of the seven remaining bindings have been covered with tanned reversed or rough calf, and although there is some variation in texture the colour is remarkably uniform being a warm orange/red brown.⁴⁰ It would seem that this leather was from a common and probably local source. On some of the bindings small areas of the reversed calf are lifting and a grain layer can be seen, but the flesh side has been evenly and probably professionally prepared by a currier. We must assume that it is leather specifically prepared for use as reversed calf and was probably a cheaper product than normal tanned calf. The First Folio (binding 6), was covered with tanned calf with the grain side outermost and although the leather is now worn it has a uniform grain layer and is a darker brown than the reversed calf. Two types of covering leather were used, but it is not clear why the First Folio was bound with a different and more expensive material.

³⁷ The chaining of books was not carried out by either binders or Library staff and regular payments to blacksmiths for this work, as well as for the supply of chains and staples, can be found in the accounts. The chain staples were removed with the chains, and the books were turned from being shelved fore-edge out to spine out, between 1757-61 (Philip (1983), pp. 92-3).

³⁸ In the first years of the Library 'stringing', the use of fore-edge ties, was reserved for the smallest books with clasps being provided for all others, see Thomas Bodley's letters of 12 June 1601 and 29 January 1602 (Wheeler (1985), pp. 7 and 24). By the 1620s ties were being specified for books of all sizes and were being attached as part of the binding process, though occasional payments can still be found for 'stringing' books that had presumably arrived already bound, for example the payment in 1622-3 to Henry Bluett 'for binding and stringing books for the Librarie' (Hampshire (1983), p. 55).

³⁹ Two titles from this consignment were not included in the appendix to the Library's catalogue of 1635 (see Tab. 2), the second title of binding 5 and binding 8. Evidence that they arrived at the Library in 1624 is only attested by the day book and confirmed by their bindings.

⁴⁰ Reversed or rough calf, where the flesh side of a tanned calfskin is prepared with pumice stone, was extensively used for stationery binding from the eighteenth century and is thought to have been a cheaper product than regular tanned leather (Suarez/Woudhuysen (2010), p. 1091). Pearson has noted that "the use of reversed calf becomes noticeable in the second decade of the seventeenth century, for [Oxford] bindings at all decorative levels, although it never accounted for a large proportion of the total output", and Ker dates the first use of rough calf at Corpus Christi College, Oxford to 1617 (Pearson (2000), p. 47; Ker (2004), p. 214).

A standard type of endleaf is found in all the bindings, two leaves sewn as outside hooks with the outer leaf put down as a paste-down. In all the bindings the flyleaf is plain paper, however, printed waste, manuscript waste and plain paper were all used for the paste-downs. In total five sources of paper were used, one source of printed waste, one of manuscript waste and three stocks of plain paper (Fig. 4). Recycled waste paper was a cheaper material than plain paper and the reasons for these variations in use are not obvious, and they do not seem to be related to size, format, or in which faculty the volumes were to be shelved. Printed waste from a single source was used as paste-downs for four volumes, coupled with a plain paper flyleaf derived from a common paper stock. These four volumes represent both formats, both paper sizes, and both areas of shelving, and this should be seen as the standard endleaf in this group.⁴¹ The printed waste is a series of bifolia taken from a bound incunable, with a leaf size of 209 x 143 mm., giving pieces of paper of 209 x 286 mm.⁴² For the foolscap quarto binding, a single bifolio of printed waste was folded to provide the paste-down and hook with the printing perpendicular to the text-block of the binding. For the foolscap and crown folios the paste-down is folded from two overlapping bifolia of printed waste with the printing aligned to the text-block. In this case we have a common source of paper used differently depending on the size of the binding. The plain paper used to fold the flyleaf and its hook for these bindings comes from a single paper stock and is also used in an economical way. The paper appears to have been pot size, smaller than any of the paper used to print the books, and has the watermark of a double handled pot containing the letters PD.⁴³ For the foolscap folio, and the two crown folios each flyleaf is a single sheet of paper, with the hook folded parallel to the long edge of the sheet and the chain lines perpendicular to the text-block. For the foolscap quarto binding the flyleaves are smaller pieces of paper cut from a sheet and with their chain lines vertical to the text-block. It would seem that this standard type of endleaf, made from these two sources of paper was suitable for all formats and sizes found in this consignment and it seems strange that other variants were necessary. The first variant uses manuscript waste as the paste-downs for the other quarto foolscap volume, again paired with pieces of plain paper as the flyleaves, though in this case the pieces of plain paper do not have watermarks.⁴⁴ One of the flyleaves has a large couching flaw, indicating that the sheet was retree or defective and therefore a cheaper material than perfect paper (Fig. 5).⁴⁵ They might be the same paper stock as the PD pot paper and possibly even parts of the same sheets that were used for the other quarto binding, and these endleaves could be seen as a variant of the standard endleaf with only a different source of waste paper. Two of the folio volumes do not use waste paper for their paste-downs and have both paste-downs and flyleaves of plain paper. In the first case, one of the foolscap folio bindings (binding 3), the paste-downs and flyleaves are folded from half

⁴¹ Bindings 1, 2, 5 & 7.

⁴² Cicero, Marcus Tullius, *De officiis, et al.*, [Deventer: Richard Pafraet, between 1480 and 1485], Bod-inc. C-322, second-fifth copies. Binding 1: k_{2.7}, k_{3.6}, k_{4.5}, l_{4.5}; binding 2: m_{4.7}, m_{5.6}, A_{2.7}, A_{3.6}; binding 5: h_{4.5}, l_{2.7}; and binding 6: B_{1.6}, B_{2.5}, B_{3.4}, A_{4.5}.

⁴³ The sheet size is >305 x >390 mm. Only one watermark twin is found in the four pieces of paper with watermarks, it is centred on the left hand side of the sheet and reads correctly from the mould side of the paper. The watermark is 63 x 17.5 mm., with chain line spacing of | 2.5 [15.5 | 2] 16.5 |.

⁴⁴ The manuscript waste has been cut from folio leaves that have been written on both sides with arithmetic and financial calculations (chain lines vertical to page, no watermarks visible). The waste is >198 x >178 mm., giving a sheet size of >198 x >356 mm. pot or larger.

⁴⁵ For the different qualities of handmade paper, see Atkinson (1976), p. 54.

sheets of paper with the watermark of a double handled pot containing the letters ID.⁴⁶ The paper is a largish foolscap and half a sheet is just large enough to provide a flyleaf or paste-down with a hook, though the paste-down and flyleaf at the left of the volume are slightly shy of the trimmed fore-edge of the text-block and preserve their deckle edges. The half sheet is folded parallel to the short edge of the sheet to provide the hook and the chain lines are parallel to the text. In the final variant, one of the crown folio bindings (binding 8), the paste-downs and flyleaves are folded from full sheets of foolscap paper with the watermark of a single handled pot containing a reversed 6 over RO.⁴⁷ In this case each paste-down or flyleaf is a single sheet of paper, with the hook folded parallel to the long edge of the sheet and the chain lines perpendicular to the text-block. The use of paper to form these endleaves seems to be both logical and economical where waste paper is used for the paste-downs, however, the reasoning for using only the more expensive plain paper for the endleaves of two of the bindings is now unclear.

Techniques

If some variety is found in the materials used within these bindings then the techniques used to bind them are in contrast very consistent. This can be seen in the general description of the bindings above but is most noticeable due to the uniformity of habit found in the binding techniques, the customary practices which can be used to differentiate between otherwise similar bindings. Three examples have been chosen to illustrate these binding habits; the angle of sewing supports, the method of trimming the endleaf hooks, and the width of endband cores. In all of the seven surviving bindings there is a perceptible angle to the sewing supports, with a slight downhill slope from left to right of between one and three degrees, when looking at the upright spine (Fig. 6). The supports remain roughly parallel and do not converge, and this downhill slope must be the result of the binder's habitual method of sewing. Likewise, the hooks of the endleaves have all been trimmed in a similar manner. Although the width of the hooks varies from 25 - 90 mm., depending on the size of the available paper, the method of trimming them is the same. The corner of the hooks at their free edge is uniformly cut away from approximately half the width of the hook, at an angle of 50-60° (Fig. 7). Finally the surviving endbands are uniform and were worked with the same materials, blue and pink linen or hemp thread over a tanned leather core. They are all sewn with a single thread on the needle, with single winds of alternating colours, and a front bead. This is a common endband for this period but the method of cutting the endband cores is unusual. All of the surviving endbands are noticeably narrower than the width of the spine and the ends of the cores have been cut at an angle (Fig. 8). Where the endbands are now missing from the bindings, the position of the first and last tiedowns confirms that the endbands were also narrower than the width of the spine. This method might be seen as a shortcut, with the endbands being both quicker to produce and being kept from

⁴⁶ The sheet size is >318 x >392 mm. Only one watermark twin is found in the two half sheets of paper with watermarks, it is centred on the left hand side of the sheet and reads correctly from the mould side of the paper. The watermark is 62 x 17.5 mm., with chain line spacing of | 19.5 | 1 [17.5] 1.5 | 19 |.

⁴⁷ The sheet size is >290 x 440 mm. Both watermark twins are found in the three remaining full sheets. Twin one is centred on the right hand side of the sheet and reads correctly from the felt side of the paper, the watermark is 68 x 28 mm. (handle on left), with chain line spacing of 15.5 [4] 21 [3] 16.5 |. Twin two is centred on the right hand side of the sheet and reads correctly from the felt side of the paper, the watermark is 68 x 23 mm. (handle on right).

the joint where the leather is turned-in, but also reflects the habit of the binder, using a technique standardized over many years.

Discussion

This investigation into one consignment of books which were sent for binding in February 1624 does not greatly alter our picture of Oxford binding at this time, but it does throw light on the process by which these bindings were commissioned and the workings of one Oxford binder. As noted above, the majority of consignments sent out for binding by the Library which are recorded in the second day book were sent to four binders (William Spire, Richard Billingsley, Henry Bluett, John Allam), who bound 68 or 75% of the consignments recorded between 1621 and 1625. William Wildgoose was one of eight binders who seem to have been used only when these four main binders were busy and the consignment with the First Folio (17th February 1624) is listed between consignments sent to Billingsley on 16th and 19th February 1624. This pattern is repeated the following year when Wildgoose is sent a consignment on 23rd February 1625, after Spire, Bluett and Allam were all sent consignments on 29th January 1635. Spire and Bluett were sent consignments again on the 17th March 1625, presumably after they had finished the work given to them in January, and Allam is sent a further consignment on the 28th March 1625. It would seem that the Bodleian preferred to use a small pool of binders but were also aware of their capacity for work. This implies that binders were directly contracted to execute binding, rather than being contracted and then informally sub-contracting out the work if they did not have the capacity themselves. This picture of Wildgoose as a binder employed only when the main binders were too busy is consistent with the evidence drawn from his binding techniques. If this consignment was bound by more than one workman we would expect to see small differences in binding techniques within the consignment, unless the forwarding was divided into separate activities with these consistently being carried out by separate workmen. These bindings demonstrate a uniformity of technique and habit at each stage, and although it is possible that the bindings were executed by more than one workman they seem to indicate that Wildgoose was working by himself rather than operating a larger workshop.

This study of the materials and techniques used for one consignment of binding has shown that some variation is found in the materials used to bind the books even if the techniques used were consistent. The reasons for these variations do not seem to be related to either the size of the volumes, or the general specification issued by the Bodleian Library. The consignment consists entirely of books that were to be chained and were all bound in a standard manner. More expensive materials were used in some cases but the use of these materials is not in itself consistent. The First Folio (binding 6) uses the probably more costly covering leather whilst using the cheaper printed waste for its paste-downs, and the two bindings (bindings 3 & 8) which use the more costly plain paper for their endleaves are not covered with the more expensive covering leather. This seems to indicate that small differences in materials might not indicate a difference in either the cost of a binding or its status and this consignment demonstrates that other factors, unknown to us, might have resulted in variations in the use of materials. In 1907 Gibson published the surviving wills and testamentary documents for members of the Oxford book trade. It includes seven inventories of Oxford binders dating from 1588 to 1633 which list bookbinding tools, equipment and materials.⁴⁸

⁴⁸ The binders and the dates of their inventories are: Humfrey Archer, 13th February 1588; Robert Cavey, 20th March 1594; Robert Billingsley, 10th November 1606; Nicolas Smith, 7th September 1609; Francis Peerse, 27th

Of these seven inventories, only four have details of materials with two listing only 'pastbords' or 'past-boards, glue and hemepe'.⁴⁹ Two have supplies of skins or leathers; Humfrey Archer's inventory with only one bookbinding material, 'iij skinges of forel' and Francis Peerse's, the most complete, with 'hemepe yarne, parchment forrel & vellum, past-bords, leather and glewe'.⁵⁰ Board, the most common material found in these inventories, is probably present because Oxford binders manufactured pulp boards at this time. Four of the inventories list moulds and presses used for making pulp boards, a material made by binders rather than being purchased by them.⁵¹ The absence of other binding materials from the inventories is perplexing and might indicate that some binders purchased materials only as they were needed rather than keeping supplies in hand. It is tempting to think that the variations in materials used by Wildgoose might reflect supply or cash flow problems rather than directly indicating the status of the bindings. The relative costs of materials used for binding has changed over time, and care is needed when interpreting these differences to indicate status.

The Library's day books record only one part of the process for commissioning bindings. They acted as a method for ensuring that the right books were returned to the Library, and presumably were also used to ensure that the Library was correctly billed. Beyond designating how many volumes the list of titles should be bound as, the archival record does not tell us the process of specifying binding used by the Bodleian, or how much free rein binders were given. We know that the Library differentiated between books which were to be chained and smaller books which could be bound in parchment, but this consignment contained only books to be chained and therefore bound as inboard bindings. The order in which the titles of the two *Sammelbände* were bound is reversed from the order in which they are listed in the day book, but we don't know if this was a mistake by Wildgoose or merely a detail that did not matter to the Library. One volume was marked "Imperf." standing for imperfect (binding 7), when it was returned to the library. This is likely to record that one or more of the printed sheets sent to the Library in this copy were missing rather than any comment on the binding. Unfortunately this copy is no longer in the Library, and the exact cause of the imperfection is not known. It is unfortunate that there is not a clear correlation between the consignments sent to Wildgoose recorded in the day book and the payments to him for binding recorded in the Library's accounts; for this reason we do not know what was paid for the inboard bindings of this consignment or how they might relate to other known binding costs.⁵²

Gibson demonstrated over one hundred years ago that the methods needed to distinguish between the mass of surviving plain Oxford bindings relied on archival sources as well as the study of the methods, materials and tooling of the bindings themselves. The surviving archival records at the Bodleian Library have allowed us to group this consignment of plain bindings, and then to investigate the processes and materials which were used to bind them, to advance theories about the

December 1622; Roger Barnes, 24th February 1631; and Henry Bluett, 30th December 1633 (Gibson (1907), pp. 16-8, 20-3, 28-31).

⁴⁹ Gibson (1907), pp. 20, 31.

⁵⁰ Gibson (1907), pp. 22, 28-9. The majority of the listed skin materials are parchment (forel, vellum, parchment), there is only a single entry for leather.

⁵¹ Gibson (1907), pp. 18, 28, 30-1.

⁵² For comparison see *A generall note of the prices for binding of all sorts of books* issued in 1619, these Wildgoose bindings are probably closest to those listed as 'Bookes folio fillets' which range in price from 2s 4d to 6s depending on size, for folios. The *note* is reproduced and transcribed in Foot (1984).

specification for binding issued by the Library, and draw conclusions about the working methods of an individual binder. This has led us to think about workshop organisation, the supply of materials, and economics of binding in Oxford, and this paper may raise more questions than it answers. Much further work is needed to extend this study beyond one consignment. The minimal tooling found on Oxford bindings in this period means that decoration is less helpful in grouping the mass of surviving plain bindings, and archival information may be more useful, although the records are tantalisingly incomplete. Further work would focus on consignments bound by different binders, bindings bound for different purposes, and bindings made for other Oxford libraries, to enable comparison and more definite conclusions to be made. Wider research into the supply and costs of the materials used by binders, as well as the organisation of the workshops is also needed. The Bodleian Library is fortunate that such a large quantity of its early administrative records and the collections that they mention remain in the Library, giving the potential to compare the bindings in our collection and their makers, setting these in the context of the wider Oxford booktrade.

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Table 1 – Details by binder of the number of consignments of books sent for binding (19 June 1621 – 9 June 1625) and payments for binding (24 July 1621 – 28 July 1626), per academic year by the Bodleian Library. ⁵³

	1620-1	1621-2	1622-3	1623-4	1624-5	1625-6	Totals
John Allam	1	3 (£3-02-00)	2 (£1-18-06)		4	(£3-15-00)	10 (£8-16-00)
Roger Barnes		2 (£0-17-06)	1 (£0-13-00)				3 (£1-10-00)
Sampson Bele ⁵⁴					(£0-10-00)		(£0-10-00)
Richard Billingsley			4	10 (£2-15-00)	5		19 (£2-15-00)
Henry Bluett		4 (£1-10-02)	4 (£3-00-00)	2	9	(£6-07-02)	19 (£10-17-00)
Christopher Crouch			2 (£1-06-06)				2 (£1-06-06)
William Davies		4 (£1-12-00)					4 (£1-12-00)
Mr Jocksen ⁵⁵			1				1
William Johnson		3 (£1-12-02)	(£0-11-00)				3 (£2-03-02)
Elias Peerse		1 (£0-18-00)					1 (£0-18-00)
Francis Peerse ⁵⁶			(£0-06-00)				(£0-06-00)
John Rouse ⁵⁷					(£7-02-00)		(£7-02-00)
William Spire		7 (£2-13-00)	5 (£3-12-08)	2	6		20 (£6-05-08)
Robert Way		1 (£0-13-06)				(£1-05-00)	1 (£1-18-06)
William Wildgoose		1 (£0-15-06)		3	1	(£2-07-04)	5 (£3-02-10)
Totals	1	26 (£13-14-04)	19 (£11-07-08)	17 (£2-15-00)	25 (£7-12-00)	(£13-14-08)	88 (£49-03-06)

⁵³ The details of the consignments are taken from the Library's second day book (Bodleian Library, Library Records e. 528, fols. 2-64) and the payments from Hampshire (1983), pp. 48-67. The accounts were prepared for each academic year, with the new academic year beginning at the start of August. The spelling of the binders' names has been regularized.

⁵⁴ The payment to Sampson Bele "for binding books for the Librarie" is the only archival record for this Oxford binder (Hampshire, *The Bodleian Library Account Book*, 64).

⁵⁵ Jocksen was probably a servant to an Oxford binder, the entry in the day book is not signed (Gibson (1903), p. 49).

⁵⁶ Francis Peerse (d.1622) was the father of Elias Peerse (Pearson (2000), p. 135).

⁵⁷ John Rouse (1574–1652), Bodley's second Librarian (1620-52). The payment was for "monny laid out by him for binding, and paying for diverse books" (Hampshire (1983), p. 63).

Table 2 - List of titles sent to William Wildgoose for binding on 17 February 1624, from the Library's second day book (Bodleian Library, Library Records e. 528, fol. 45r).

"Deliured to William Wildgoose
These books following to be bound
17 Febre. 1623ⁱ

R 1 William Cowper works. fol

[Cowper, William, *The workes of Mr Willia[m] Cowper late Bishop of Galloway*, London: Imprinted [by Thomas Snodham and Felix Kyngston] for Iohn Budge, 1623. Crown folio: 349 x 233 x 86 mm. (binding), 336 x 216 x 66 mm. (text-block). Shelfmark: C 2.3 Th. Former Bodleian shelfmark: C 10.15 Th., listed as this in the 1635 and 1674 Bodleian catalogues. ⁱⁱ]

R 2 A Guide to Godlynesse by John Downham

[Downname, John, *A guide to godlynesse or a Treatise of a Christian life*, London: Printed by Felix Kingstone [and William Stansby] for Ed: Weuer & W: Bladen, [1622]. Foolscap folio: 293 x 203 x 78 mm. (binding), 287 x 185 x 58 mm. (text-block). Shelfmark: C 18.11 Th.ⁱⁱⁱ Former Bodleian shelfmark: D 2.13 Th., listed as this in the 1635 and 1674 Bodleian catalogues.]

R 3 Petr. de Arrubal Comment In 1^{am} partem
Thomae.

[Meigret, Aimé, *Questio[n]es Fratris Amadei Meigret Lugdunen[sis] Ordinis Predicatorum in libros De generatione [et] corruptione Aristotelis*, [Paris]: Venundantur a Joanne de Prato [Joannes Parvus], 1519. Shelfmark: H 4.9(1) Art. Former Bodleian shelfmark: M 3.7 Art., listed as this in the 1635 and 1674 Bodleian catalogues.
bound with: Araujo, Francisco de, *Commentariorum in universam Aristotelis metaphysicam*, Burgos and Salamanca: Ex officinis typographicis Ioannis Baptistae Varesij, & Antoniae Ramirez viduae, 1617. Shelfmark: H 4.9(2) Art. Former Bodleian shelfmark: M 3.7 Art., listed as this in the 1635 and 1674 Bodleian catalogues.
Chancery and foolscap folios: 300 x 216 x 72 mm. (binding), 289 x 198 x 50 mm. (text-blocks).]

R 4 Martinus de Espilla definitions rerum et
verborum quae tractantur de Sacra Theologica.

[Espilla, Martinus de, *Diffinitiones rerum et verborum, quæ tractantur de sacra theologia, & de rebus moralibus*, Burgos: Apud Ioannem Baptistam Varesium, 1612. Foolscap quarto: 211 x 163 x 85 mm. (binding), 198 x 144 x 68 mm. (text-block). Shelfmark: FF 64 Th. Former Bodleian shelfmarks: E 5.10 Th., listed as this in the 1635 and 1674 Bodleian catalogues; FF 63 Th.]

- R { Sermones et exhortations monasticae Authore
5 { Laurentio de Portel
R { Francis. Sanchez In Ecclesiastem Comment.

[Sanchez de Las Brozas, Francisco, *In Ecclesiasten commentarium, cum concordia Vulgatae editionis, et Hebraici textus*, Barcelona: Apud Sebastianum Mathevat Vniuersit. typogra., 1619.

Shelfmark: BB 12(1) Th. Former Bodleian shelfmark: S 4.16 Th., listed as this in the 1635 and 1674 Bodleian catalogues.

bound with: Portel, Laurent de, *Sermones et exhortationes monasticae: religiosis personis necessariae, & saecularibus proficuae*, Lisbon: Ex Officina Petri Crasbeeck, 1617.

Shelfmark: BB 12(2) Th. Former Bodleian shelfmark: S 4.16 Th., listed as this in the 1674 Bodleian catalogue, not listed in the 1635 catalogue.

Both foolscap quarto: 212 x 160 x 78 mm. (binding), 198 x 144 x 63 mm. (text-blocks)]

- R 6 William Shakespeares comedies histories &c.

[Shakespeare, William, *Mr. William Shakespeares comedies, histories, & tragedies*, London: Printed by Isaac Iaggard, and Ed. Blount [at the charges of W. Iaggard, Ed. Blount, I. Smithweeke, and W. Aspley], 1623.

Crown folio: 351 x 233 x 77 mm. (binding), 340 x 220 x 57 mm. (text-block).

Shelfmark: Arch. G c.7. This copy is listed in the 1635 Bodleian catalogue as S 2.17 Art., but it is not listed in the 1674 catalogue. The 1674 catalogue has "Will. Shakespear [...] Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies. Lond. 1664." at T 12.14 Jur., the Third Folio. ^{iv} The Wildgoose bound First Folio was probably disposed of as a duplicate after the arrival of the Third Folio, and was repurchased by the Library in 1906.]

- Re 7 The Theater of honor and Knighthood
Imperf.

[Favyn, André, *The theater of honour and knight-hood*, London: Printed by William Iaggard, 1623.

Crown folio.

No longer in the Bodleian Library. This copy is listed as F 3.3 Art. in the 1635 Bodleian catalogue, but it is not listed in the 1674 catalogue. Another copy now A 2.2 Art.Seld., which came to the Library in 1659 as part of the bequest of John Selden (1584-1654), is listed in the 1674 catalogue under its former Bodleian shelfmark of D 2.2 Art. Seld. The imperfect Wildgoose bound copy was probably disposed of as a duplicate after the arrival of the Selden copy.]

- R 8 Polyanthea noua Tom. 2^d fol.
~~Martini-Lexicon he(?)~~^v

[Gruterus, Janus, *Florilegii Magni, seu Polyantheae tomus secundus Jani Gruteri*, Strasbourg: Sumptibus Haeredum Lazari Zetzneri, 1624.

Crown folio: 364 x 231 x 125 mm. (binding), 353 x 218 x 107 mm. (text-block).

Shelfmark: P 7.14 Th. ^{vi} Former Bodleian shelfmark: P 4.15 Th., listed as this in the 1674 Bodleian catalogue, not listed in the 1635 catalogue. The Wildgoose bound copy was not identified by Gibson in

Early Oxford Bindings. The day book entry does not refer to Lang, Joseph, *Polyanthea nova, hoc est, opus suavissimis floribus celebriorum sententiarum refertum*, Lyon: Sumptibus Lazari Zetzneri Bibliopolae, 1604 (now P 1.15 Th.) which was in the library before 1620, where it is listed in the 1620 catalogue under its former Bodleian shelfmark of P 4.9 Th. ^{vii}]

William Wildegoose”

ⁱ Dates in the day book are recorded in the Old Style where the New Year begins on Lady Day (25 March), all dates have been silently amended in this paper to the New Style where the New Year begins on 1 January.

ⁱⁱ Bodleian (1635); Hyde (1674)

ⁱⁱⁱ The printed waste paste-downs of this volume were lifted in 1958 and are now housed in a modern guard-book of fragments, Bodleian Library, Inc. c. N97.1(10) (Cicero, Marcus Tullius, *De officiis, et al.*, [Deventer: Richard Pafraet, between 1480 and 1485], Bod-inc. C-322 fifth copy).

^{iv} Shakespeare, William, *Mr. William Shakespear's comedies, histories, and tragedies*, London: printed [by Roger Daniel, Alice Warren, and another] for P[hilip] C[hewind], 1664.

^v Possibly Martinius, Matthias, *Lexicon philologicum, præcipuè etymologicum, in quo Latinæ voces ex originibus declarantur*, Bremæ, 1623, now Bodleian Library, S 9.12 Th.

^{vi} The original plain paper flyleaf from the right of this volume is missing and has been replaced with the plain paper flyleaf from Bodleian Library, L 5.4 Th. (Le Mairat, Louis, *Ludovici Mæratii ... Disputationum in Summam theologicam s. Thomæ*, Paris: Sumptibus Sebastiani Cramoisy, 1633, vol. 1), whose missing right flyleaf has been replaced with a modern wove machine-made paper. The flyleaf was probably inadvertently swapped whilst the volumes were being rebacked in the second half of the twentieth century.

^{vii} James (1620), p. 398.