

**NEW
BOOKS FOR OLD**

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New books for old by Mary E. Wheelock

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MARY E. WHEELOCK

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Some binders were prompt in returning work, while others whose work was apt to be superior, were much slower, perhaps because other work crowded the Library binding aside. Books for which there was urgent call seldom could be had without delay.

Above all, the quality of materials could not be supervised, although the binders followed the general specifications closely. Intelligent co-operation between the binders and the supervisor was difficult because of the remoteness of the binderies.

Rosy tales of money saved by binderies owned and operated by libraries were eagerly listened to, for few things appeal more strongly to librarians than the possibility of saving money. There had been for



BINDERY; LARGER ROOM

some years a rather indefinite plan for a bindery, and the time came when conditions seemed to warrant an investigation to determine the initial expense of installing a plant and the advantages to be derived from its operation by the Library. After some correspondence with other libraries operating binderies, one of our former binders was engaged as foreman, a careful estimate of actual needs was made and a few pieces of machinery and some other equipment were assembled in a basement room 30 by 40 feet, opening on the court. A staff of four was at work late in January, 1913, and the force was gradually increased until at the close of the first year it consisted of thirteen persons.

1 to 4, Mending and Sewing Tables; 5, Stabbing Machine; 6, Press for Sawing in backs of books; 7 to 9, Staxding Presses; 10 to 17, Forwarding Tables; 18, Finishers' Tables; 19, Embossing Machine; 20 to 22, Job Backers; 23, Board Shears; 24, Power Cutting Machine; 25, Gluing Machine; 26, Hand Cutting Machine; 27, Punching and Eyeletting Machines; A, Tables; B, Shelving; C, Men's Lockers; D, Women's Lockers; E, Foreman's Desk.

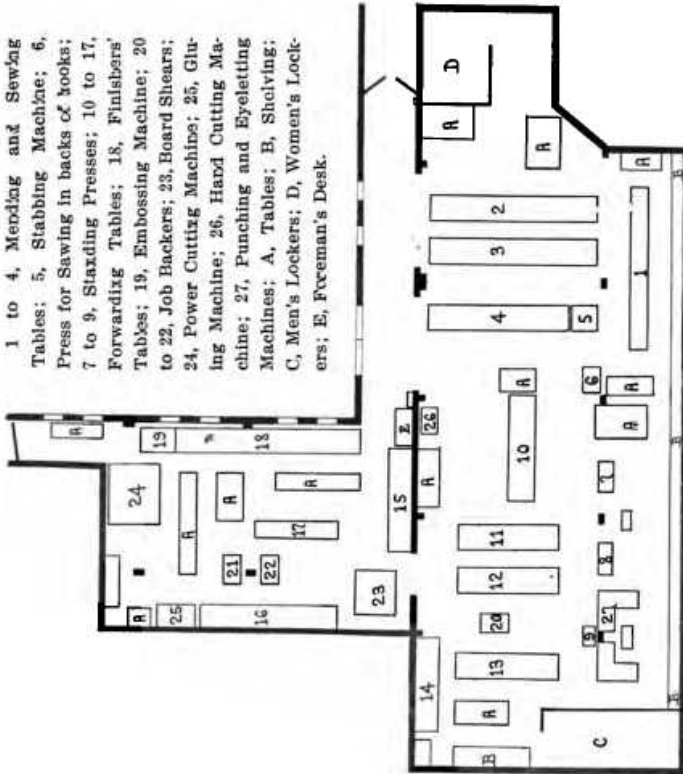


DIAGRAM OF BINDERY.

EQUIPMENT AND STAFF.

The arrangement of the quarters is shown clearly on the accompanying plan.

The cost of the original equipment, not including the fitting of the room and binding supplies, was but little more than \$300, for it was only experimental. By careful management the work was gradually systematized, and before the end of six months a considerable saving was realized.

Early in 1914 the Board of Directors authorized an expansion of the bindery quarters to include a large room adjoining the space originally occupied, in order to provide more favorable conditions for the increasing volume of work and for the addition of new members to the bindery staff.

The present equipment includes the following, purchased as needed and as the binding appropriation permitted:

Sheridan cutter (second hand).....	\$100.00
Electric motor for cutter.....	65.00
Perforating machine (second hand).....	49.00
Board shears	135.00
Gluing machine with motor.....	225.00
Embossing press	150.00
Standing press (second hand).....	15.00
Standing press (new).....	72.00
2 Stuart's finishing presses.....	24.00
3 job backers (second hand).....	55.00
65 brass bound press boards.....	177.00
Type	276.00
18-inch card cutter.....	10.00
16-inch wringer	7.00
6 sewing benches	14.00
Gas stoves, glue pots, binders' hammers, shears, etc.	28.00
Cost of present equipment.....	\$1,402.00

A plough-press, a hand-power cutter, finishing tools and other tools, the property of the bindery foreman, Mr. Haeckel, and the donation of the partial outfit of her private bindery by Miss Mary E. Bulkeley, complete the equipment.

The bindery staff now numbers twenty-three persons—fourteen women and nine men. The average output per month during the year, including all books, large and small, has been more than 3,260 volumes, besides job work amounting to more than \$400 in labor and material.

GENERAL POLICY.

The bindery is an outgrowth of the need for closer co-operation between library and binder. Questions of materials and methods are decided by the department-head and the bindery foreman, and supplies are purchased in sufficient quantities to last for one to three months at a time, often directly from the manufacturers on favorable terms.

If it seems worth while to try some materials which have not been tested, small quantities are bought, the Library serving as a laboratory for such tests. Records are kept of certain books upon which some new method has been tried, and the books are looked up after a time to see how the experiment has worked. This plan is followed also in connection with testing certain details of binding. The books that are returned to the Binding Department for slight repairs, or as worn out, give opportunity for determining whether the methods or materials in general are satisfactory with the various classes of books. A previous library experience of several years elsewhere enables the department-head to understand better the Library's needs and forecast with some accuracy the kind of treatment that certain classes of books are likely to receive at the hands of readers. This familiarity with the situation from the library standpoint is of constant service in selecting materials and in other ways.

To bind a book better than is necessary for its probable use, is no economy. Unnecessary expenditure, either in methods or materials, is merely waste, and the prevention of such waste is one of the possibilities where a library bindery exists. A book should

be bound, as nearly as may be, so that under ordinary conditions the cover and sewing shall last as long as the paper is respectable.

In Holmes' verses about "The Wonderful One-Hoss Shay" the Deacon's general specifications for the construction of that vehicle apply admirably to book-binding:

"Fur," said the Deacon, "'t's mighty plain
That the weakes' place mus' stan' the strain;
'N' the way to fix it, uz I maintain,
Is only jest
T' make that place uz strong uz the rest."

It is a regrettable fact that there are some books, notably those printed on heavy or calendered paper, which require more than their share of care and expense in rebinding, and whose durability after all is uncertain.

Good taste in binding is as much an obligation which the Library owes to the users of the books as good taste in the selection of the furniture and decorations of the building. But unlike these, instead of having an initial expense in the original equipment which is to last for years or may be increased as conditions demand or as funds are available, the amount of binding grows each year with the increase and use of the Library's collection of books, and a proportionate increase in the binding fund is imperative or the library suffers at one of its chief sources of supply. As all the books are represented in the catalogue and the newer books are listed in the late library bulletins, the readers who are asking for them are not always satisfied with the information that they are "out of repair" or "have gone to the bindery."

Rarely if ever will there be a surplus in the binding fund even with the most careful calculation, and that there will be more work than it will be possible to accomplish with the money available for binding is more than likely. A consistent course may, however, be attempted, which includes in its general aim dura-

bility, economy and artistic appearance, and to some extent combines all these features.

Variety in style and color is an important consideration in this connection, making it possible in some small degree at least, to give books an individuality even in their second bindings. Often this individuality in bindings may serve as an aid, however slight, in recognizing the book quickly on the shelves. This policy is directly opposed to the custom followed to some extent a few years ago, of making library bindings uniform, or of binding each class of books in a different color—children's books in red, for example. This new policy of variety does not apply, of course, to volumes of sets nor to files of periodicals and continuations, which obviously should be bound uniformly, though with whatever variations may be deemed advisable in the case of individual sets.

HOW BOOKS ARE DAMAGED.

The sight of the ambulance trucks bearing the poor disabled books to the book hospital after the desperate onslaught of the readers, is suggestive of the ravages of war.

It is remarkable how quickly valuable things may be damaged or even ruined; the time required to repair the injury is often quite out of proportion to the damage done. A cut or bruise on the hand is carefully attended to by Mother Nature without much thought on our part, but these injuries to inanimate things often require considerable care and skill. Erasing pencil marks, mending tears, removing ink-spots and other spots, sometimes even washing the soiled leaves; the removal of notices which were pasted in the books in other days with the vain hope of lessening the trend toward destructiveness on the part of some users of the library—all these are necessary to the respectable appearance of the books to be bound.

The use, or misuse, of the books by some of the children is one of the most discouraging aspects from

the point of binding and repair. True, children who have no clean, comfortable places in which to sit and read need the books more than those who are more fortunate. And it must be said that not all of these children are deliberately destructive. But for them the too free access to books may not be an unmixed blessing, and the expense of maintaining a collection of children's books in a section of the city convenient to these classes of readers must be far out of proportion to the number served.

In this Library the use of envelopes in which advertising matter is received through the mails, helps to protect the books en route between the Library and



FOND OF BOOKS

the homes. And when the suggestion that the book is clean or new or that it would be spoiled by the rain accompanies the use of the envelope, the child may acquire some feeling of responsibility in the matter. But if the book is returned in bad condition and a fine is charged or his card is withheld, or both, he is likely to feel a keener sense of his obligation than before.

A story-hour campaign of education bearing on the care and treatment of books might be worth trying. Children who have never bought a book nor owned one, and to whom the library books are as free as water, cannot be expected to be interested in making