

Winchester's binder: Beatrice Forder at work, 1947-1948

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The present paper investigates the work of Beatrice Forder (1901-1976), a largely unknown pioneer of manuscript conservation who lived and worked in Winchester.ⁱ Notably, Forder conserved and rebound the Winchester Bible in 1947-1948, and my paper looks at her work on the Bible while also attempting to answer the following questions: how did she learn to do the work she did, and why don't we know more about her? Finally, the paper will compare her work on the Winchester Bible with conservation carried out in England at the same time on two other iconic manuscripts.

The Winchester Bible was made at and for Winchester Cathedral in southern England in the later twelfth-century and has remained at the Cathedral for over 900 years.ⁱⁱ It is the largest of the giant English twelfth-century lectern Bibles, with some 468 leaves, each 59 × 40 cm. Planned on a lavish scale, it has the text copied by a single scribe in two columns and large historiated initials at the start of each of the books of the Bible. The manuscript is rightly famous and has been described by Christopher de Hamel as having 'illumination as rich and as sophisticated as was ever attempted in medieval England'.ⁱⁱⁱ

The Bible was conceived and bound in two volumes in the twelfth century, then rebound as three volumes in the 1820s, before being repaired and rebound by Beatrice Forder in 1947-1948 in four volumes (Fig. 1). Forder's work was exemplary and ahead of its time in many ways and will be the main subject of my paper. Her work concentrated on parchment repair and rebinding with less attention being given to treatment of the illuminations within the manuscript. Although her bindings functioned well they restricted somewhat the opening of the manuscript, and her full-length guards also obscured some of the annotations and corrections hidden in the spine margins. In 2012 Winchester Cathedral started a major building conservation project with a planned new area for the display of the Bible. Concern was raised about the condition of the Bible, and although the manuscript was in generally good condition, small areas of loss as well as loose and vulnerable gilding and paint were visible to the naked eye in some of the initials. These condition concerns prompted the Cathedral to commission a conservation project for the Bible alongside the building work in 2014. This project would see each of the four volumes of the Bible disbound, conserved, digitised and then rebound. Christopher Clarkson (1938-2017), the pre-eminent book conservator and father of modern book conservation, was asked to undertake the work. Sadly, he died after completing only the conservation and rebinding of the first volume (I.i) and the conservation of the second (I.ii). Between 2016 and 2019 I completed the binding of the second volume and conserved and rebound the remaining two (II.i and II.ii), work which I have described elsewhere.^{iv}

In my earlier paper I noted that 'the opportunity to continue [Chris's] work on this exceptional manuscript is proving to be a kind of posthumous masterclass [... leading] towards a greater understanding of Chris's work, both its execution and aims'.^v Completing the work on the Bible has also given me a deep appreciation of an earlier conservator's work – Beatrice Forder's – and this paper is a start to investigate her methods and also more importantly and hopefully her aims.

It is very unusual for a medieval manuscript to come down to us untouched by later hands. The earliest reference to the Bible at Winchester Cathedral dates from 1622, when it was described as being in two volumes 'large and faire' – that is still in its first two-volume medieval binding. It

remained in this condition until 1820 when a payment to ‘Lewis for cleaning and rebinding the MS. Bible: £27. 0. 0’ was recorded in the Cathedral Treasurer’s accounts. This is the work of the London bookbinder Charles Lewis (1786-1836), who repaired and rebound the Bible in three volumes.^{vi} Beatrice Forder carried out the next repair campaign in 1947-1948. Forder produced four accomplished, matching inboard bindings, sewn on double raised supports with oak boards and quarter covered in tanned goatskin. The recent conservation and rebinding work between 2014 and 2019 followed Forder’s four volume divisions, rather than reverting to the earlier two and three volume incarnations.

The process of book conservation, especially when a manuscript is to be rebound, begins with careful excavation, and it is through this process that one of the remarkable features of Forder’s work immediately became clear – its reversibility. The ease with which each volume of the manuscript could be disbound without causing any damage to the leaves was remarkable – and is rarely encountered in book conservation. When Forder sewed the manuscript she used narrow loose sewing guards of parchment around the spine fold of each quire. When she subsequently glued up the spine during the binding process, the sewing guards had a protective function and no adhesive from the binding came into contact with the spine folds of the manuscript. While working her endbands, Forder tied down at each quire, but rather than doing this in the centre of the quire, she tied down within the centre of the loose sewing guard only (Fig. 2). Both of these decisions made the disbinding of the each volume very easy, the sewing threads could be cut and each quire gently pulled away, leaving each of her bindings as an intact case (Fig. 3). This approach to reversibility in 1947-1948 seemed remarkable and forward thinking, especially by a bookbinder whose work was largely unknown.

As my work to complete the remaining conservation and rebinding of the Bible progressed, my appreciation of Forder grew volume by volume. The functional qualities of her bindings were different to those that Clarkson and I would strive for – in our case using board-leverage and flexibility of opening to allow the manuscript to open widely without placing the leaves under unnecessary stress. By contrast, the spine of her bindings, covered as tightbacks, were solid and inflexible and did not begin to move when a volume was opened. Although each volume opened widely, the leaves at the beginning and end needed to flex and curve around the endleaves, resulting in stress to the leaves and illuminated areas (Fig. 4). Her endleaves and their sewn-in leather joints are of a particular design, as are the endbands worked over leather cores with pronounced shaping of the covering leather over them (Fig. 5). All of these features were carefully considered, however, and their execution highly accomplished. The date of her work prompted me to begin to wonder where she might have learnt these techniques and where she found inspiration to bind a very large twelfth-century parchment manuscript. These questions led me to consider where Beatrice Forder sits within the longer tradition of manuscript conservation.

Forder was born in 1901 to a well-known Winchester family of wool merchants and was an active calligrapher as well as a bookbinder. Sadly, very little has been published about Forder or her conservation, and nothing in her own words. For her work on the Winchester Bible we have to rely on an inscription written on the right endleaf of volume four (II.ii) describing her work and a series of five photographs taken during the treatment by Charles Hewitt for *Picture Post*, four of which were published in March 1948 (Fig. 6).^{vii viii} The Cathedral reported her work in 1948: ‘During recent months Miss Forder has been engaged, under Mr Oakeshott’s direction, and in conjunction with the authorities in the British Museum, in preparing the *Vulgate* for rebinding in four volumes.’^{ix} Walter Oakeshott (1903-1987), Honorary Cathedral Librarian at the time of the rebinding, briefly described her work on the Bible in a short piece marking her retirement from the Cathedral Library in 1973,

though he confused some details; a later biography of Oakeshott provides some further incidental details.^x David Rymill, Cathedral archivist, is currently working on an article which will expand on the brief details given in an anonymous obituary of Forder published in 1977.^{xi} Oakeshott explained in his 1973 article that ‘the very delicate task of the actual binding was done entirely by Miss Forder; though she had taken the endless trouble she always does to seek out the best advice and look up the best examples before she began’, the ‘best advice’ presumably coming in part from the British Museum ‘authorities’.^{xii} But can this connection account for her exemplary work? Without an account in her own words, it is only by looking very closely at her work on the Winchester Bible, by comparing it with possible prior examples and with other contemporary work, that her pioneering place in the history of manuscript conservation begins to emerge.

We are fortunate to be able to see Forder at work on the Bible in the *Picture Post* of 1948. One of the photographs shows her in a dark overall sewing a quire within a wide loose sewing guard. The needle is emerging between the double linen parachute cords of the third sewing support, and above her hand can be seen ‘Dixit autem Helchias’, the beginning of verse 8 of 4 Kings, chapter 22. This is f. 129r, the first leaf of quire 17, that is the first quire of volume two (I.ii) as the Bible was bound in 1948. The photograph shows her almost completing the sewing on seven raised double-cord supports, and it is evident that she has sewn in an all-along pattern from the end of the volume to the start, with only the endleaves left to sew when the photograph was taken. There are two other photographs of her sewing; in these Forder is wearing a white overall. The initial at the start of Isaiah can be seen in both photographs, showing the Bible was open at ff. 130v-131r, the same quire as the previous photograph and blue overall. The opening is not in the centre, however, where the sewing would have been done, possibly indicating that the photograph was staged. These three photographs with Forder changing her overall may have been staged, rather than actually showing her at work, and there is a decidedly stilted quality about them that makes this seem likely. They do show us Forder’s working environment, however, the historic Morley Library at Winchester Cathedral, and capture details of her working arrangements. There is one more photograph of Forder, again in her dark overall and working on the table where the sewing frame had been. It shows her posed as if preparing the covering leather, though not actually paring it. These four photographs taken in a single session are fascinating but, like many conservation photographs, appear to have been carefully staged rather than recording actual work. They tell only a partial story, and a fuller understanding can be gained only by studying her work.

One of the features of Forder’s bindings that was most immediately evident and unusual to my modern eyes were the pronounced endband cores that sit proud of the spine, equal in size to the raised sewing supports. They had puzzled me until I remembered the binding designed by William Morris (1834-1896) for his Kelmscott Press edition of *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer Now Newly Imprinted* (Hammersmith, 1896).^{xiii} The large folio edition is mostly printed on handmade paper, but a small number of copies were printed on parchment, and copies were offered by the press in a blind-tooled tawed pigskin binding with oak boards. These bindings also have endband cores that are very pronounced on the spine, of equal size to the raised sewing supports. This might indicate that Forder had a knowledge of Arts and Crafts Movement bookbinding, and possibly used the Kelmscott Chaucer as a model or was influenced by it. Although the binding was designed by Morris and bound at the Doves Bindery, which was operated by Thomas James Cobden-Sanderson (1840-1922), it was executed by Douglas Cockerell (1870-1945), and this may point to another more direct influence on Forder.^{xiv}

Cockerell published his *Some notes on bookbinding* in 1929. It has a short chapter on ‘Binding books of value’ with one very short suggestion as to their binding: ‘for the binding of valuable old

manuscripts I like to use wooden boards with clasps and alum-tawed pigskin as the covering material. Such a binding forms a little press that keeps the leaves of the manuscript lightly compressed.^{xv} This is not a direct influence on Forder's work on the Bible, but I believe his earlier work, *Bookbinding, and the care of books*, first published in 1901 and still in print today, was.^{xvi} It is the bookbinding text-book most likely to have been available to Forder, and although it does not have a section on how to bind a medieval manuscript it does have a number of techniques scattered throughout that can be found in her work. It would seem that she was a close and attentive reader who used Cockerell not as a step-by-step guide but rather as the source of a range of techniques that she was able to draw upon in intelligent and thoughtful ways.^{xvii} By way of an example, when describing headbands, Cockerell said 'where leather joints are used, the headbands may be worked on pieces of soft leather sized and screwed up', a technique that Forder used for the endbands on the Bible.^{xviii}

Cockerell famously went on to conserve and rebind the Codex Siniaticus for the British Museum Library in 1935, publishing a brief account of the work in 1938.^{xix} The complex conservation needs of the mid-fourth-century Greek Bible required that 'some method of preservation must be adopted which would make it easy to consult without inconvenience or risk of damage'.^{xx} Cockerell repaired the individual leaves before guarding their spine-folds with fine linen. The desire that 'every part of the leaf should remain available for examination' prompted Cockerell to 'throw out the quires'.^{xxi} He achieved this by sewing 'one thickness of parchment, two thicknesses of hand-made paper and a strip of the guarding linen' to each quire – a method later described by Flavio Marzo as 'sewn on paper and parchment guards in a "meeting guards" sewing structure'.^{xxii} Bernard Middleton has noted that although the inventor of the meeting-guard method is unknown, Cockerell was the first binder to use the structure for an important book, the Codex Siniaticus, and probably developed the technique.^{xxiii} For his new bindings, in two volumes, the folded guards were bound as inboard quarter bindings with tawed-goatskin over oak boards. This is not the direct model for Forder's work, but some Codex Siniaticus features appear in Forder's Winchester Bible bindings. Cockerell notes for example that 'the headbands were worked over single cords with yellow purse-twist and stand out on the spine like other bands'.^{xxiv} It appears that Forder was aware not only of Cockerell's 1901 *Bookbinding, and the care of books* but also his work on Codex Siniaticus. Douglas Cockerell died in 1945, before Forder began her work, but he continued to have a profound influence on approaches to the rebinding of medieval parchment manuscripts until the ground-breaking work by Roger Powell (1896-1990) on the Book of Kells in 1953.^{xxv} One wonders whether Cockerell's work on Siniaticus influenced the British Museum bindery, who may have been consulted by Forder as 'authorities' or witnesses to this important work.

Frustratingly, the very ease with which the Bible's quires could be removed from Forder's bindings meant that details such as board shaping, sewing support lacing and spine linings remained hidden and covered by the leather joints and covering skin of the intact 'cases'. There was no need to further dismantle the bindings for my work, and they were preserved intact as important evidence of the Bible's previous binding and Forder's work. Forder's fourth and final volume contained a flyleaf with a calligraphic note describing the 1947-1948 repair and rebinding campaign. At the suggestion of Reverend Canon Dr Roland Riem this has been transferred and sewn within the endleaves of the new binding to ensure Forder's work continues to be recognised and appreciated, with another of the 1948 flyleaves also being transferred with a new inscription recording the recent work. This disruption of the final binding prompted the Cathedral to allow a partial excavation, and I was able to peel back the covering leather and to lift the leather joint from one board to investigate and document her methods.

Forder used separate endleaves of a standard format: two single hooked parchment leaves with an outside leather joint. The first leaf facing the board is a full skin of pigmented goatskin, the second, facing the manuscript leaves, a whiter calfskin. The parchment leaves are folded at the spine as a concertina to provide two 'valley' folds for sewing, with the leather joint hooked around the outer valley fold of the endleaf. The main sewing thread was taken through both valley folds. The idea for this structure can be pieced together from Cockerell's *Bookbinding, and the care of books*, though you need to read his section on endleaves closely to extract each of these design features found in different parts of the text: 'Ends may be made of thin vellum. If so, unless the board is very heavy, it is best to have leather joints. [...] For large manuscripts, or printed books on vellum, which are bound in wooden or other thick boards [...], thicker vellum may be used for the ends; that with a slightly brown surface looks best [...]; with leather or cloth joints, the sewing should go through both [...]', that is sewn at both valley folds.^{xxvi} Cockerell describes the purpose of this endleaf design, 'the zigzag allows play for the drag of the board'.^{xxvii} This feature, with its built in play, was employed by Forder; her boards open widely without any board-leverage or movement of the manuscript leaves (fig. 5).

The fourth published photograph by Charles Hewitt shows James Laverty and another unnamed man within a workshop at Winchester Cathedral preparing the quarter-sawn and rebated oak boards used by Forder, with the lacing holes already drilled. Great care was obviously taken to source materials for the Bible, and the inscribed flyleaf notes: 'It was bound in oak boards, the wood coming from Herriard Park, Basingstoke.' Sourcing quarter-sawn wood must have been difficult, and large and wide boards that would remain flat were carefully selected. Cockerell took similar care sourcing and preparing oak boards for *Codex Siniaticus*, though without the woodworking expertise of a Cathedral workshop to draw on. He notes 'the boards presented some difficulty, as unsupported oak of the dimensions required is apt to warp. Some thirteen or fourteen boards of thoroughly seasoned wood were prepared [...]; four of these that stood the test were ultimately selected'.^{xxviii} Forder's boards have minimal gentle shaping and there is no shaping at the spine edge. Forder frayed out the linen parachute cords of the sewing supports which pass over the back edge of the board into channels on the exterior face before being laced through two holes, the second at an angle (Fig. 7). This follows Cockerell's instruction: 'To lace slips into wooden boards, holes are made with a brace and fine twist bit, and the ends of the frayed out slips may be secured with a wooden plug', though Forder merely pasted her slips in the second hole and then filled the channels with a glass-hard putty.^{xxix} Forder's spines were lined with a transverse linen linings stuck to the spine with the lining extensions stuck to inner face of the boards within the rebate, similar to Cockerell's instruction that 'very heavy books are best further lined up between the bands with linen, or thin leather'.^{xxx}

I noted earlier that Forder's endbands were similar to Cockerell's on *Codex Siniaticus*. In *Bookbinding, and the care of books*, Cockerell described the lacing of the endband cores, saying 'If the ends are left long [...] they may be conveniently let into grooves in the boards before the leather joint is pasted down'.^{xxxi} Forder's endband slips were laced through the turn-in of the covering leather and then ran in a channel on the inner face of the board before exiting at a single hole (Fig. 8). This conforms to Cockerell's method, but may be either a change of plan by Forder or evidence of miscommunication with James Laverty, as there are additional unused endband channels on the outer faces of the boards with second lacing holes. I have not found in the literature a model for her unusual endbands, sewn with stepped double endband cores, or for her deliberate sewing of the structural tiedowns outside of the quires through the loose guards, but these were clearly carefully thought out features selected by Forder doubtless to improve on the models or information she had access to.

Her bindings were covered as tightbacks and quarter covered in 'unstained Niger goatskin', with restrained blind-tooled decoration based on the 'initial letter of the book of Exodus' from the Bible as the inscribed leaf states. The skin selection can be traced to Cockerell: 'The leather that I have found most useful is the Niger goatskin, [...] it is a very beautiful colour and texture, and has stood all the tests tried, without serious deterioration.'^{xxxii} There is further evidence of Cockerell's influence: the oak boards, quarter tanned goatskin and design of tooling appear to have been modelled on another of his bindings, another Kelmscott Chaucer which is illustrated in *Bookbinding, and the care of books*.^{xxxiii} The influence of Douglas Cockerell on Forder's work is clear, both for the design and for technical details. His published work on Codex Siniaticus and the scattered hints found in his earlier text-book would not provide enough information to allow anyone to rebind the Winchester Bible, however. My conclusions are not that Forder was binding 'by numbers', or slavishly following Cockerell's instructions – this would not have been possible. Rather, I think we must conclude that Forder was a talented binder and craftsperson able to make her own decisions and innovate, taking the best from the sources and examples available to her.

My exploration of Beatrice Forder's work can be usefully compared to similar binding work being carried out in two major British Institutions at roughly the same time, a comparison that I think demonstrates just how remarkable a figure Forder was in the period after Douglas Cockerell's death in 1945 but before Roger Powell's work on the Book of Kells in 1953. The first binding is the late sixth-century Gospels of St Augustine at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.^{xxxiv} Christopher de Hamel has recently described this binding in less than flattering terms: 'It is bound in plain oak boards slightly bevelled on their inner edges, with a spine of creamy alum-tawed goatskin, in the style beloved of the Arts and Crafts Movement in England [...].' He further notes that 'the manuscript was rebound for the college at the British Museum bindery in 1948-9 [...]. The British Museum binders stitched the gatherings onto the tips of separate and protruding paper guards, fanning them outwards, so that the manuscript can be opened safely at 90° without bending the original parchment. This was fashionable conservation practice at the time, now no longer recommended because it rather unnaturally alters the original integrity of a book and, as the pages are turned, it can result in friction between gatherings.'^{xxxv}

I have not been able to study the Corpus St Augustine binding in person, but Dr Alexander Devine, sub-librarian at the Parker Library, has provided photographs for study.^{xxxvi} The binding broadly follows the model of Cockerell's Codex Siniaticus. It is quarter covered in tawed-goatskin, has shaped and cushioned oak boards, and uses meeting guards. However, this has not been carried out with the same careful consideration as Cockerell's work. The meeting guards caused swelling at the spine which was then accommodated by thinning the inner face of the boards, and the width of the meeting guards are staggered to maintain a round at the fore-edge. As de Hamel noted this follows the 'fashionable [...] practice at the time', but it would appear that there was a lack of appreciation of the finer points of Cockerell's work on the part of the British Museum binder and of the needs of the manuscript.

The other iconic manuscript, or rather pair of manuscripts, that were rebound in the period were Great and Little Domesday at the Public Record Office by T. E. Hassall (d. 1953) in 1952.^{xxxvii} The binding work is illustrated and briefly described by Sir Hilary Jenkinson in *Doomsday re-bound*: 'The gatherings sewn not to sewing bands but to reversed guards [...], a volume thus made up is then bound in the ordinary way and when fully opened at any point reveals every scrap of the guarded sheets. In the present instance figure-of-eight sewing has been used on split leather bands which are laced into boards [...] and a considerable portion of these boards (a deliberately modern device [...]) has been left exposed: the back being quarter-bound in white-tawed pig-skin.'^{xxxviii} Again, Cockerell's

work on Codex Siniaticus was clearly the model. However, where Cockerell divided that manuscript into two, and Forder divided the Winchester Bible into four, the Public Record Office bound Little and Great Domesday each as single very thick volumes. Cockerell had sewn Codex Siniaticus on supports of stout hemp cord and Forder used linen parachute cord for her supports. In 1901 Cockerell noted: 'Old books were sometimes sewn on bands of leather, but as those sewn on cord seem to have lasted on the whole much better, and as, moreover, modern cord is a far more trustworthy material than modern leather, it is better to use cord for any books bound now.'^{xxxix} T. E. Hassall at the Public Record Office used tawed sewing supports for both volumes of *Domesday*, surely an unusual and regrettable choice for a manuscript on meeting guards.

The two very thick bindings on Great and Little Domesday survived until 1984, when the 900th anniversary of its compilation and the demand for a new facsimile led to pulling, conservation and rebinding. Of the 1952 meeting-guard structure Helen Forde notes in *Domesday preserved* that 'through no fault of their own the conservators [...] had been obliged to use materials which were not of the quality available in the 1980s. The choice of parchment was limited then and the constraints in expenditure were considerable.'^{xi} She further explains that 'the folios were not thrown up for satisfactory display, and the meeting guards caused the original folios to bend over'.^{xii} These two important repair and rebinding campaigns carried out by the British Museum bindery and the Public Record Office both closely follow the look of Cockerell's Codex Siniaticus with meeting guards, wooden boards and quarter covering in tawed skin. Although the exterior matches Cockerell's Codex Siniaticus, they are very different manuscripts, with different conservation needs – ones that are perhaps not suited to the structures chosen.

For her Winchester Bible bindings, Beatrice Forder appears to have drawn on the same Cockerell models, but rather than copying the structure of Codex Siniaticus, she makes intelligent use of a broader range of binding work. Her careful consideration of the needs of the Winchester Bible and its future display are evident even as she grappled with the challenges posed by binding such a large parchment manuscript. Beatrice Forder's work on the Winchester Bible, particularly her non-adhesive and entirely reversible structure, was ahead of its time. I'm pleased that the remains of the bindings are preserved in the Cathedral Library and that the inscribed leaf describing her work and extracted from vol. II.ii, has been transferred to one of the new bindings as a reminder of her craftsmanship.

Forder should be seen as a pioneer of the field of book conservation – her considered approach to the binding of manuscripts with its thoughtful use of suitable techniques and the very careful choice of materials speaks across the decades to me as a conservator. After working on the Winchester Bible she continued to work for Winchester Cathedral Library and later for Winchester City Archives, before her death in 1976. In some ways she was fortunate to have received her training outside the bindery apprenticeship system, which appears to have given her the space to view problems with fresh eyes. Had accounts of her work in her own voice come down to us, we would have been the richer for it. Beatrice Forder was a pioneer in manuscript conservation who deserves recognition.



Fig. 1: Winchester, Winchester Cathedral MS. 17, Volume II.ii, ff. 341v-342r, bound by Beatrice Forder in 1948.



Fig. 2: Winchester, Winchester Cathedral MS. 17, Volume I.ii, intact case after removal of the manuscript leaves with endleaves, loose sewing guards, sewing thread, endband and endband tiedowns.

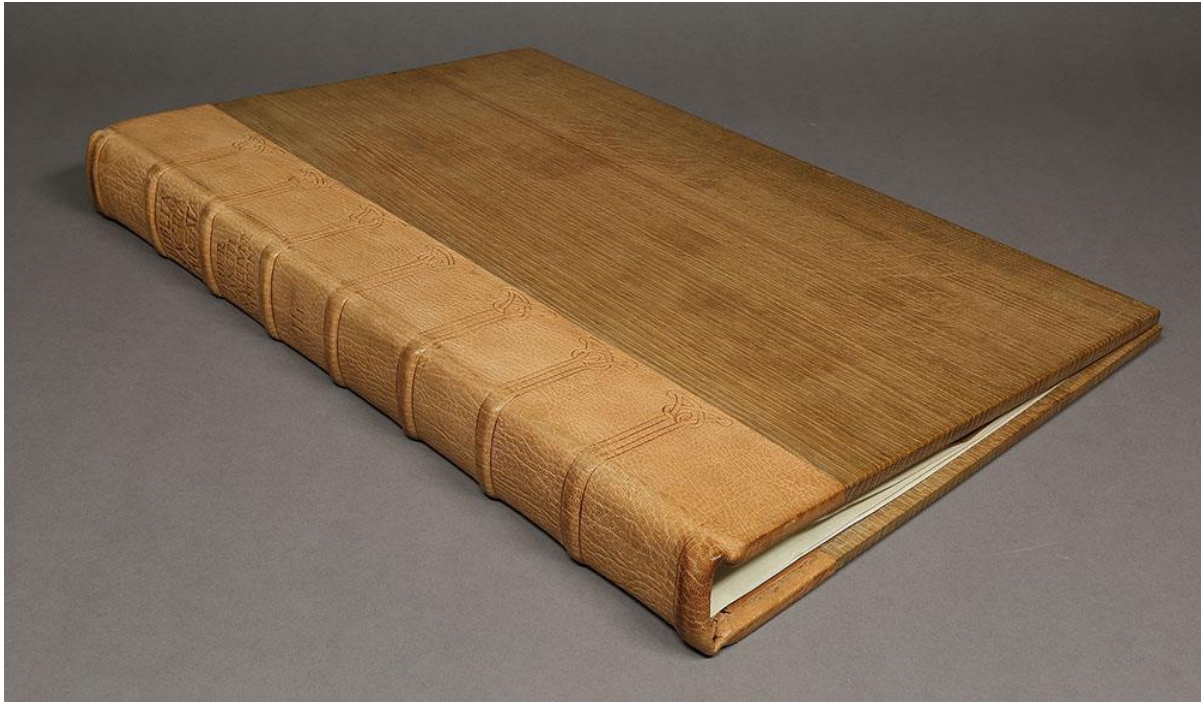


Fig. 3: Winchester, Winchester Cathedral MS. 17, Volume II.i, intact case after removal of the manuscript leaves.



Fig. 4: Winchester, Winchester Cathedral MS. 17, Volume I.ii, endleaves and opening characteristics of Beatrice Forder's binding.



Fig. 5: Winchester, Winchester Cathedral MS. 17, Volume I.ii, details of endband, leather joint and endleaves.

Picture Post, March 6, 1948

A Modern Craftswoman Works on a Medieval Masterpiece
 The Winchester Bible is the finest of the large illuminated bibles produced in England in the 12th Century. Miss Beatrice Forder has spent six months in the Cathedral Library at Winchester, preparing it for its covers, to replace the now-worn originals.

The WINCHESTER BIBLE is Rebound

Photographed by CHARLES HEWITT

The Oak Boards Are Cut
 James Laverty has been a long time finding good timber wide enough for the job.

The Leather is Shaped
 It will hold the assembled sheets to the wooden covers when they are completed.

The 'Gatherings' are Stitched
 They were inscribed by at least six people. Note one person protects them for posterity.

THE Winchester Bible has delighted the eyes of all who have looked at it for the past eight hundred years. The beginning of every book is marked with decorated initial capital letters so magnificently beautiful that though the artists who designed and illuminated them are anonymous, they have become known by such names as 'The Master of the Genesis Initial.' Miss Beatrice Forder, who is now rebounding the Bible, has been handling valuable books in the Cathedral Library at Winchester for the past fifteen years. And now that her materials have been tested for durability she is confident that, given time, she can produce a binding worthy of the pages it will hold together.

Fig. 6: Beatrice Forder and James Laverty at work in March 1948 illustrated in *Picture post* (Oxford University, Bodleian Libraries, N. 22893 c.3, p. 5).



Fig. 7: Winchester, Winchester Cathedral MS. 17, Volume II.ii, details of the exterior face of the rebated oak boards, with endband and sewing support lacing and textile spine lining.



Fig. 8: Winchester, Winchester Cathedral MS. 17, Volume II.ii, details of the inner face of the rebated oak boards, with endband and sewing support lacing and textile spine lining extensions.

Manuscripts

Dublin, Trinity College, MS 58 (Book of Kells)

Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS. 286 (Gospels of St. Augustine)

London, British Library, Add MS 43725 (Codex Sinaiticus)

London, The National Archives, E 31/1-2 (Little and Great Domesday)

Winchester, Winchester Cathedral, MS. 17 (Winchester Bible)

ⁱ A recording of the conference paper delivered 14 April 2021 is available online: Andrew Honey, 'Winchester's binder: Beatrice Forder at work in 1947-8', <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x-tWQdNcFE4> [accessed 26.2.2022]. The images in Figs. 1-5, 7-8 are reproduced by permission of The Chapter, Winchester Cathedral. I am grateful to Jane Eagan for her comments on this paper.

ⁱⁱ Winchester, Winchester Cathedral, MS. 17, known as the Winchester Bible. For details of the manuscript with a bibliography of the earlier literature see Claire Donovan, *The Winchester Bible* (Winchester, 2008).

ⁱⁱⁱ Quoted in Claire Donovan, 'Bishop Henry's Bible', *Henry of Blois: New interpretations*, ed. William Kynan-Wilson (Woodbridge, 2021), pp. 145-84, at p. 150.

^{iv} Andrew Honey, 'Practice makes perfect?: Lessons learnt from the binding of the Winchester Bible', *Care and conservation of manuscripts* 17 (2021), pp. 415-30. Clarkson in a posthumous article describes some of his work: Christopher Clarkson, 'The Winchester Bible: Notable features observed during conservation, 2012-15', *Journal of paper conservation* 20.1-4 (2019), pp. 49-55.

^v Honey, 'Practice makes perfect?', p. 427.

^{vi} Donovan, 'Bishop Henry's Bible', p. 149.

^{vii} The three paragraph inscription has one paragraph detailing the rebinding: 'The book was sewn, in 1948, on seven double bands of linen parachute cord, the previous binding having six bands only. It was bound in oak boards, the wood coming from Herriard Park, Basingstoke, with half-back and joints of unstained Niger goatskin. The old flyleaves and end papers were replaced by new. No paste-down paper was used. The book was bound in four volumes in order to bring the division between the original volumes I and II into place at the end of a volume. The book was lettered in Sangorski's Trajan style letter. The tooling of the bands was to a design based on the initial letter of the book of Exodus.' Winchester, Winchester Cathedral MS. 17, now sewn within the unfoliated right endleaves of volume II.ii.

^{viii} 'The Winchester Bible is rebound', *Picture post* 38.10 (6 March 1948), p. 5; the fifth unpublished photograph by Charles Hewitt is available online, 'Bookbinder Beatrice Forder restitches the pages of the Winchester Bible, produced in the 12th century, which is being painstakingly restored at the Cathedral Library in Winchester, Hampshire', <https://www.gettyimages.co.uk/detail/news-photo/bookbinder-beatrice-forder-restitches-the-pages-of-the-news-photo/3379514> [accessed 23 February 2022].

^{ix} Quoted in an unpublished article dated 12 March 2019, David Rymill, 'Beatrice Forder and Winchester Cathedral', p. 2.

^x Walter Oakeshott, 'Beatrice Forder', *Winchester Cathedral record* 42 (1973), p. 5, and John Dancy, *Walter Oakeshott: A diversity of gifts* (Norwich, 1995), pp. 195-96 and footnote 37.

^{xi} Rymill, 'Beatrice Forder' and 'Beatrice Forder: 1901-1976', *Winchester Cathedral record* 46 (1977), p. 18.

^{xii} Oakeshott, 'Beatrice Forder', p. 5.

^{xiii} For the *Kelmscott Chaucer*, with details of bookbindings, see William S Peterson & Sylvia Holton Peterson, *The Kelmscott Chaucer: A census* (New Castle, DE, 2011), where a parchment copy in a Doves binding from 1897 (1.15) is illustrated on p. 22. A Doves binding on a paper copy from 1899 is available online (Oxford, Bodleian Library Broxb. 67.7: <https://digital.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/objects/e1aaf53a-6e8b-423c-b6c0-ae7e74b7ec5/> [accessed 25.2.2022]).

^{xiv} For the complicated history of the binding see Mariane Tidcombe, *The Doves Bindery* (London, 1991), pp. 46-53.

^{xv} Douglas Cockerell, *Some notes on bookbinding* (Oxford, 1929), pp. 72-77, at p. 76.

^{xvi} Douglas Cockerell, *Bookbinding, and the care of books* (London, 1901).

^{xvii} This approach echoes the aims outlined by Cockerell in his author's note: 'It is hoped that this book will help bookbinders and librarians to select sound methods of binding books. It is intended to supplement and not supplant workshop training for bookbinders. No one can become a skilled workman by reading text-books, but to a man who has acquired skill and practical experience, a text-book, giving perhaps different methods from those to which he has become accustomed, may be helpful' (Cockerell, *Bookbinding*, p. xi).

^{xviii} Cockerell, *Bookbinding*, p. 151.

^{xix} Now London, British Library, Add MS 43725; H. J. M. Milne & T. C. Skeat, *Scribes and correctors of the Codex Sinaiticus, including contributions by Douglas Cockerell* (London, 1938), 'The new binding' pp. 83-86.

^{xx} Milne and Skeat, *Scribes and correctors*, p. 81.

^{xxi} Milne and Skeat, *Scribes and correctors*, p. 85.

^{xxii} Milne and Skeat, *Scribes and correctors*, p. 85; Flavio Marzo, 'Codicology: The history of the structural features of the Codex Sinaiticus', https://codexsinaiticus.org/en/project/conservation_codicology.aspx [accessed 25.2.2022].

^{xxiii} Bernard Middleton, *A history of English craft bookbinding technique* (London, 1988), pp. 28-29.

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- ^{xxiv} Milne and Skeat, *Scribes and correctors*, p. 86.
- ^{xxv} Dublin, Trinity College, MS 58 (Book of Kells), for Powell's work see Anthony G. Cains, 'Roger Powell's innovation in book conservation: The early Irish manuscripts repaired and bound, 1953-1981', *Roger Powell, the compleat binder: liber amicorum*, ed. John L. Sharpe (Tournhout, 1996), pp. 68-87.
- ^{xxvi} Cockerell, *Bookbinding*, pp. 84 and 87.
- ^{xxvii} Cockerell, *Bookbinding*, p. 83.
- ^{xxviii} Milne and Sleat, *Scribes and correctors*, p. 86.
- ^{xxix} Cockerell, *Bookbinding*, p. 135.
- ^{xxx} Cockerell, *Bookbinding*, p. 152.
- ^{xxxi} Cockerell, *Bookbinding*, p. 151.
- ^{xxxii} Within his long chapter dealing with leather Cockerell notes the 'want of durability of modern bookbinding leather', and Niger goatskin is the only type he recommends. However, his appreciation of its qualities are negated by his prejudices, the full quotation is: 'The leather that I have found most useful is the Niger goatskin, brought from Africa by the Royal Niger Company; it is a very beautiful colour and texture, and has stood all tests tried, without serious deterioration. The difficulty with this leather is that, being a native production, it is somewhat carelessly prepared, and is much spoiled by flaws and stains on the surface, and many skins are quite worthless' (Cockerell, *Bookbinding*, pp. 263-78, at pp. 264 and 278). For the history of the supply of this soft vegetable tanned goatskin see A. G. Adebayo, 'The production and export of hides and skins in colonial northern Nigeria, 1900-1945', *The Journal of African history* 33.2 (1992), pp. 273-300 ; for Cockerell's role in popularising it Middleton, *History*, p. 122.
- ^{xxxiii} Cockerell, *Bookbinding*, p. 330, plate V, 'Niger morocco, with sides of English oak'. Cockerell bound four copies of the Kelmscott Chaucer to his own designs, the copy he illustrated in 1901 without clasps is thought to be one of three he bound with oak boards, quarter covered in tanned goatskin, though all of these now have clasps (Peterson & Peterson, *The Kelmscott Chaucer*, copies 1.5, 1.7 and 2.262, pp. 8-9, 10, 130).
- ^{xxxiv} Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS. 286 (Gospels of St. Augustine). Available at the Parker Library On the Web, <https://parker.stanford.edu/parker/catalog/mk707wk3350> [accessed 25.2.2022].
- ^{xxxv} Christopher De Hamel, *Meetings with remarkable manuscripts* (London, 2016), p. 18, the binding is illustrated on pp. 11 and 17.
- ^{xxxvi} Personal communication 19 February 2021.
- ^{xxxvii} Now London, The National Archives, E 31/1-2 (Little and Great Domesday).
- ^{xxxviii} *Domesday re-bound* (London, 1954), p. 22, plate II illustrates the bindings.
- ^{xxxix} Cockerell, *Bookbinding*, pp. 135-136.
- ^{xl} Helen Forde, *Domesday preserved* (London, 1986), p. 33, the 1952 bindings and their opening characteristics are illustrated on pp. 34-35.
- ^{xli} Forde, *Domesday preserved*, p. 33.