



Conservation of paper and parchments based prints, documents and records - Fine Bookbinding

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Conservation Report

Two Gweedore Hotel Guest books

Contents

Objects description.....	2
Condition general.....	2
Condition detailed.....	2
Conclusion.....	2
Conservation proposal.....	2
Conservation.....	3
About leafcasting.....	4
Photographs Gweedore1.....	5
Photographs Gweedore2.....	6
Materials list an suppliers.....	7
Recomendations.....	7

Client

**Archives Service, Donegal County Council
Niamh Brennan
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Objects description

Title:	Gweedore Hotel Visitors Book (1 & 2)
Date:	Gweedore 1: 1842-1856 Gweedore 2: 1856- 1874
Object:	Two 19th century handwritten bound volumes. Tight back (flexible) bindings in half sheep skin and cloth. Sewn on two tapes.
Dimensions:	Gweedore 1: 312 x 200 x 35 mm Gweedore 2: 310 x 196 x 40 mm

Condition general

1: Fair and 2:Poor

Condition detailed

Textblocks

Due to heavy use and poor past storage conditions the binding structure is collapsed with dislodged sections and leaves as a result. The double leaves have suffered a literally wear and tear on the edges, with marginal tears, and the centrefolds, with partly torn folds or entirely split doubles. A number of leaves have suffered losses from wear or tear outs. Emergency repairs have been applied to patch up the textblocks. Gweedore 2 has suffered from past microbial/mould attack, notably along the spine.

Endpapers

Only the paste downs are or appear to be present. There is no functional endpaper section.

Bindings/Covers

The covers appear to be warped.

Conclusion

Volume 2 can not be consulted in this condition. To make it accessible for the reading public conservation is required. Volume 1 can be consulted with restraint.

Conservation proposal

Paper conservation

1. Prepare for conservation
2. Dismantle textblock, dryclean, including removing emergency repairs where applicable and foliate
3. Wash by immersion in a water bath ¹
4. Manual paper repair of double leaves – *applies to pages that have not suffered losses*
5. Prepare leafcaster
6. Leafcast repair of double leaves – *paper in-fills applies to pages that have suffered losses*
7. Collate and trim

Rebinding

1. Prepare sewing frame
2. Sew textblock – *sew the textblock following its original sewing positions*
3. Add spine lining – *aero-linen spine reinforcements*
4. End paper repairs – *add new cloth endpaper joint and new flyleaves*
5. Reattach boards
6. Tone leather – *to create a colour match with the original*
7. New leather re-back



8. Paste back original leather – *the old leather will sit on the new preserving the bindings original appearance*
9. Corner repairs – *reinforce frayed corners add leather patches where required*
10. Cover consolidation – *reshape warped boards consolidate cover material with wheat starch paste*
11. Phase box – *create a custom made phase box for storage*

Conservation

Conservation as per proposal with the following amendments:

Paper conservation

2, 3. All emergency repairs have been removed during the washing process. These repairs have been replaced by leafcast and/or manual tissue repairs

4. All leaves have suffered some degree of losses. All pages have therefore been leafcasted.

Weak areas and leafcast repairs have been sized with tylose (methyl cellulose) solution of 1% in water. Weak margins and centrefolds and tears that have missed out on leafcast repairs have been manually repaired with 9 gsm Mitsumata Japanese repair tissue applied with wheat starch paste.

7. The leaves have been trimmed by hand. Orphaned leaves have been attached to the textblock with a leafcasted or manually attached paper hook.

Binding conservation

2. Two extra sewing positions are added to improve stability of the textblock, making a total of four. Because of the leafcast and additional repairs in the centrefolds some unintended swell has occurred which is compensated by sewing two sections in one go (sewing 'two on').

3. Griffen Mill paper spine linings are added using rabbit skin glue and flour paste.

4. New Griffen Mill paper two double endpaper sections are sewn on. The original marbled paste downs and back flyleaf (Gweedore 2) are reused in the binding. The suggested cloth joint is omitted as there was no evidence of cloth joint being used.

5. The original boards are reattached onto the sewing tapes and the new endpaper pastedowns

7. Both volumes were originally tight back bindings with no spine hollows. Due to the better preserved state of the leather on Gweedore 1, this volume is being kept as a tight back. The brittle nature of the original leather of Gweedore 2 did not allow for a re-use on a tightback (flexible) spines. Gweedore 2 is therefore converted into a hollow back binding. The spines have been rebacked with new sheepskins using flour paste.

8. The original leather spines are pasted back with flour paste / reversible PVA mix.



About leafcasting

Leaf casting, a method of filling in missing parts with paper pulp. After washing the pages are placed in a leaf caster on a fine mesh like in a paper makers mould. The leaf caster is filled with water and paper pulp. The pulp then flows through the missing parts of the pages and the mesh underneath leaving new paper in-fills in the pages.

The water used for the leaf caster will be buffered with calcium carbonate thus de-acidifying the pages in the course of the leaf casting process.

After the leafcasting process the pages with their new in-fills are, following the paper makers tradition, couched on felts, after which excess water is pressed out.

The pages are then sized with methyl-cellulose and in case of very poor paper quality an extra support of fine Kozo tissue is added. The Kozo tissue is required to give the weakened parts of the pages their strength back. The paper fibres of the mould affected parts are shortened and have therefore a poor internal bonding. The Kozo tissue will act as a support and also help to bond the new paper in-fills onto the existing paper edges.

The pages are finally left to dry in drying racks.

Leafcasting is reversible. A newly casted paper repair can be peeled away by wetting or washing the page. The glues used methyl-cellulose (Tylose) and wheat starch paste are also reversible.



Photographs Gweedore1

Before conservation	After conservation
	
	
Lower edge	
	
Page 14 and 15	



Photographs Gweedore2

Before conservation	After conservation
	
	
Back (right) endpapers	
	
Front pastdown with missing flyleaf	New flyleaf (left)



Materials list an suppliers

Material	Supplier
Leafcasting pulp, Western style conservation paper	Griffen Mill, Co. Roscommon, Ireland
Tylose Japanese tissue paper: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mitsumata 9 gsm• Kozo 25	Gabi Kleindorfer, Vilsheim, Germany
Rabbit skin glue	Thomas Lenehan, Dublin, Ireland
Sheep skin	Relma Materiaux pour Reliure, Paris, France
Wheat starch paste	On the Edge, Wicklow. Ireland
1300 micron boxboard	On the Edge, Wicklow. Ireland
Reversible PVA	Hewit, Edinburgh, Scotland

Recommendations

Store the Visitors Books in their designated phase boxes away from direct sunlight in an environmentally stable place with the RH limited between 50 and 65%.

When consulting the volumes use a reading support and open Gweedore 1 to an angle of 90 and Gweedore 2 at an angle of 120 degrees