Manuscript Production

Peter Stokes

dixit-mmsda@uni-koeln.de

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1. Skin and bleed the animal
2. Soak the skin
3. Scrape the skin
4. Stretch the skins on a frame to dry
5. Scrape the skins again while still on the frame
6. (Optionally) pounce
7. (Optionally) treated with liquid chalk
Skin and bleed the animal:
- Remaining blood reacts and stains parchment
- Usually bad, can be used for bindings

Soak the skin:
- For up to two weeks in an alkaline solution of brine, lime, or similar
- Removes hairs, loosens fibres, and cleans skin
Stretch the skin:

- Breaks and realigns fibres in the dermis
- Makes the skin thinner and more supple
- Distinguishes parchment from leather
Scrape the skin:

- Use a lunette, a half-moon shaped blade
- If not done carefully then parchment can be torn
Parchment

Can pounce the skin: roughen with pumice

- Takes up ink more easily
- Less difference between hair and flesh sides
- Distinctive (usually) of Irish and Anglo-Saxon

Can treat with liquid chalk before drying

- Makes parchment whiter
- Most common in late medieval Italy
Animal skins: cows, sheep, goats
  ‘Vellum’ strictly calf skin
  S Europe: often goat;
  N Europe calf or sheep
NB ‘hair’ and ‘flesh’ sides
NB useful images at http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts/glossary.asp
1. Boil material then beat into pulp
2. Add water to form a suspension,
3. Pour into a rectangular frame of wires
4. Cover then shake to distribute evenly
5. Stretch resulting material on a ‘couch’
6. Build up layers of pulp and felt, then press
7. Hang sheets paper to dry
8. Treat with animal gelatin
Different materials used at different times

- Early: mostly rag, generally very very resilient
- From C19: wood-pulp; very bad due to acidity
Chain lines, laid (or wire) lines, watermarks…

- **Chain lines**: thicker lines, lengthwise in folio
- **Laid lines**: thinner lines, crosswise in folio
- **Watermarks**: designs created by adding wires bent into particular shapes
- All useful for identifying format of book, place and date of paper manufacture
Medieval & Modern MS Studies in the Digital Age

Translated Keywords:

'fabulous creature' | Fabelwesen, animal fabuleux, animal fabuloso, creatura, fantastica, фантастическое животное
'dragon (wyvern)' | Drache, dragon, dragón, drago, дракон
'in circle' | im Kreis, au cercle, en círculo, in cerchio, в круге

No further systematics available.
Geographical view

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Places of paper use from a selection in the Memory of Paper databases

| legend |
- known records number
- 0 / unknown records number

| abstract |
These locations represent places where papers were used, like handwritten or printed, as it results from historical analysis, mostly from inscriptions on the papers. The source are the databases connected to the Memory of Paper website, according to search criteria provided by the user.

| search terms |
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119963 in source datasets
3350 search matches
3104 georeferenced

http://www.memoryofpaper.eu:8080/BernsteinPortal/appl_start.disp
Modern Paper

- Changed from rags (etc) to wood-pulp in mid-19th cent.
- Changed from couch to moving belt
  - Main identifying features gone!
- Many different types, grades, weights, colours, textures…
Pricking and Ruling

- Pricking only relevant to parchment!
- Very much variation in the details:
  - Prick before or after folding
  - Prick with knife, wheel, ...
  - Rule with pencil, hard-point, ...
  - One or two vertical bounding-lines
  - Above or below top line
A folio, a page, a bifolium...

- NB that ‘folio’ here is not the same as folio, quarto etc. in reference to paper!

Recto and verso

- NB possible ambiguity:
  is fol. 43 the same as fol. 43r?
- For some (e.g. BL): yes. For others: no.
- Parchment folded as gathering or quire.
- Number of pages can be very irregular
  - Ten in Britain and Ireland until about saec. ix
  - Eight in Cont. Europe and late A-S England
  - Early Coptic one enormous gathering!
Gall + Iron
Can soak gall in wine or vinegar
Can add gum arabic
Can add colouring (carbon, indigo, etc.)

Problems

- Not enough gallic acid: ink doesn’t burn into support and can flake off
- Too much gallic acid: ink corrodes support

Both (relatively) common, but especially the second.