

**University of Texas at Austin
Kilgarlin Center
Book Lab III**

DESCRIPTION AND CONDITION REPORT

Date: 9/10/08

Temporary ID #: 2008.2

Conservator: Kathy Lechuga

Instructor: Chela Metzger

Call Number/Collection: Personal collection

Author: Victor Hugo

Imprint: 1887

Title: *Les Misérables, Vol. 1*

Format:

Collation/Foliation:

Dimensions (binding): 20.2 H x 13.7 W x approximately 4.2 T (cm)

Dimensions (text block): 19.8 H x 13.0 W x 3.3 T (cm)

Description

The textblock consolidation makes it difficult to discern the sewing pattern, however it seems to be an abbreviated sewing around two sawn-in cords. The boards are laced onto the textblock. The boards are made of Davey board or some other laminated paper board and measure approximately 3 mm thick. The binding is a half-style binding with light brown calf, and a red, gold, and brown marbled paper. There are remnants of gold stamping on the spine panels. The gold tooling is abstracted floral and leaf motifs, stamped between the sewing stations to create 4 stamped panels. There appear to be false bands inserted behind a hollow tube to create a slightly raised band spine profile.

The spine of the textblock has been lined with what appears to be cheesecloth, followed by a hollow tube constructed out of fairly thick brown paper. Machine made stuck on endbands have been adhered at the head and tail underneath the textile lining. The adhesive is animal hide glue, and is easily visible along the exposed spine. The spine's profile is rather gently rounded with small shoulders that barely accommodate the width of the board. The end sheets are made from a thicker machine made paper, 5 pages, the fly leaf being laminated to a folio of the same marbled paper that was used for the boards. In the front sections, there is an illustration that has a piece of tissue weight interleaving that is similar to glassine in thickness and physical appearance, separating it from the title page. The endsheets have a fairly heavily tipped edge. The edges of the text block have been trimmed and left undecorated, except for the head which has been painted gold. The text block paper is machine made, lightweight, light cream in color. There are illustrations printed on clay coated paper that appear to be tipped in throughout the textblock. The text has been relief printed with black printer's ink.

On the first page after the marbled fly leaf, in the upper right corner, there is a signature written in what looks like black permanent ink.

Condition

The front board has completely detached, and the back board is only held on only by two cords in an area measuring approximately 4.5 cm. The back marbled flyleaf is also detached and the spine is completely exposed and accessible. Most of the spine leather is still intact except for at the very top where a section measuring 3.3 x 4.2 cm has been lost. There are cracks along the leather on the spine that run the width of the textblock. Most of the covering material is still intact, except for tiny areas that have been lost at the tips of the board corners. The leather on the boards still feels somewhat supple; however it exhibits severe red rot with powdering suede. Abrasion is very prevalent throughout all areas of the covering materials.

The sewing still seems to be in tact and sufficiently holds all the sections together. The textblock is in good condition and clean, except for the head which is slightly dusty. The spine linings are intact except for one folded edge of the hollow tube which has delaminated from its adhered edge.

Treatment Proposal

Consolidate red rot on the spine and covers.

Mend and reinforce endsheets on the inside of the joint with appropriately toned long fiber paper.

Re-attach boards with long fiber paper.

Re-attach the spine section with a new hollow tube.

University of Texas at Austin
Kilgarlin Center
Book Lab III

TREATMENT REPORT

Date: 9/10/08

Temporary ID #: 2008.2

Conservator: Kathy Lechuga

Instructor: Chela Metzger

Call Number/Collection: Personal collection

Author: Victor Hugo

Imprint: 1887

Title: *Les Misérables, Vol. 1*

Format:

Collation/Foliation:

Dimensions (binding): 20.2 H x 13.7 W x approximately 4.2 T (cm)

Dimensions (text block): 19.8 H x 13.0 W x 3.3 T (cm)

Treatment Conducted

1. Consolidated red rot on boards and spine leather using Cellugel thinned with isopropanol.
2. Mended the leaves and illustration at the beginning of the book by mechanically separating the original tip line and mending with Lascaux 498HV and heat set tissue.
3. Hinged the detached marbled paper fly leaf at the front of the book by hinging onto the spine using long fiber paper and 1:4 precipitated wheat starch paste in deionized water.
4. Toned a medium weight long fiber paper (Kozo natural, Hiromi International) with Liquitex acrylics for the board re-attachment and new hollow tube.
5. Re-attached boards with toned long fiber paper strips and Lascaux 498HV. The paper strips were placed under the lifted leather of the boards and wrapped onto the spine of the textblock.
6. Constructed and adhered a one-on two-off hollow tube with Lascaux 498HV.
7. Re-attached the original leather spine fragments to the new hollow tube with Lascaux 498HV.
8. Constructed an infill for the missing head cap using the same toned long fiber paper as the hollow with a piece of cord placed at the top of the new head cap to mimic the original. The infill was adhered on top of the new hollow about 1 cm under the original leather remnant with Lascaux 498HV.
9. Inpainted exposed areas of new infill material with Windsor & Newton watercolors to more closely match the original leather color.