

Girdle books

By Lady Isabell Winter

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For this research I have chosen to focus on the leather bound books that have a tail to allow them to be tucked into ones Girdle.

What is a girdle book

The term Girdle books (in reference to leather bound books with a tail) was first used in English in 1939 but is now the common description for a bound book which can be hung from or by the girdle (belt). Girdle books are also known as girdle pouches, pouch napkin, pocket books, Hakenband, Posebind (bag or a binding bag in Danish). In German Beutelbuch (pouch book) and Buchbeutel (book pouch) have often been used interchangeably (Smith, 2004). The two German terms describe two different concepts, pouch book is more of an accurate description of the book than book pouch by which one would envision a separate pouch into which the book was dropped (like a chemise cover) Smith (2004). Sofus Larsen coins the term in Danish for this type of binding as Bogpunge or bag tie.

The English term of girdle book was used before 1939, but more in reference to precious books illuminated with miniatures during the 1500's and 1600's. These precious books were often worn by noble ladies on gold chains (see examples Appendix 2.).

Fine specimens of girdle books with tooled leather work on the cover have been preserved but these tooled books are often covered by the girdle book cover.

Similar but not quite a girdle book

Girdle books are just one type of covering that has been used to cover books since the first flat book began to be bound in leather, Chemise covers (like a full dust jacket for a book, but without a tail) are another example of a different type of book cover (Diehl, 1980). In the later middle ages bags of cloth or soft leather (camisia, chemise) had a similar function and were called chemise bindings (see Appendix 4).

A casket book is one where the covers and sides of a casket are firmly attached to the binding of a book. A book casket or capsule was often made of wood or metal or appropriate size and ornamented. Examples can be seen in Ireland and Scotland and are often referred to as Cumdach (a metal slipcase or box) up to the 12th century. There is reference to a Cumdach being taken into battle by being hung around a warrior's neck and served as a breastplate (Marks, 1998).

Vervliet mentions wrapper bindings – these were books that had flaps of leather or cloth hanging down on three sides so that the book could be wrapped up, these were intended only for protection and not for transport. These did not have a tail.

The British Library and Brown both mention Vade Mecum: The phrase means 'goes with me' in Latin and refers to a portable book (often suspended from the belt), frequently consisting of leaves folded in a concertina or fold out format. Such 'books' could be consulted easily by physicians, for example, and often contain calendars, almanacs, and medical information (see Appendix 3).

The Italian pugillaria or calendar booklets of the 13th - 15th centuries were carried at the belt. Their pages could be folded into small compass, laid between the leather covers, and made fast by a metal clasp with a ring for securing to the owner's belt (Vervliet).

Research

There is very little research and documentation on girdle books in the public domain unfortunately with no comprehensive inventory or description of the surviving girdle books available. Some researchers have started to undertake this as a project primarily Margit Smith (recently retired) as part of the Medieval Girdle book documentation project. The lack of research could be due in part to the very few surviving extant girdle books, but given the large representation of girdle books in artistic areas it is a shame that there is not more research.

I have started my own quest to try and collate what images I can of extant books using the list and descriptions collated by Ursula Bruckner (German). In 1890 only four girdle books had been documented and it was not till 1926 (Loubier and Glauning) that the list grew, and then in 1995 thanks to the efforts of Ursula Bruckner we have a documented list of 23 examples. There may well be more extant girdle books but they would most likely only be those where the tail was removed and as such they may be difficult to document as a girdle book. I have found a girdle book held by a museum in Vienna which is not of the list compiled by Ms Bruckner so I wonder if this is a 24th example or if the museum detail is incorrect on the list by Ms Bruckner. I have found reference during my research to there being 24 extant girdle books but as there is no comprehensive list other than the 1995 list by Ms Bruckner that I can find, means I cannot confirm at this stage which is correct.

Why have a girdle book?

The girdle book was according to Diehl, peculiarly adapted for the use of the monks and clergy who needed not only to carry books from one place to another but to have them conveniently near for the purpose of reciting their offices. We can however see from visual illustrations of the time period during 1400 – 1650 that girdle books were not just restricted to monks and clergy, with images of noble ladies for example possessing a girdle book.

Diehl mentions that the fashion of the girdle book not only served to be convenient for clerics, but that it offered excellent protection from soil and wear when carrying the book about. The leather would be folded over at the head of the book is left about two inches long; that at the tail extends for nearly a foot beyond the book, and is gathered together at the end into a braided button like knob. Effecting a sort of hooded gossamer bag convenient both for carrying the book by hand or fastening it to a girdle. Hence the english name “girdle book”. The tail could be folded across so that the book might be attached to the belt (Vervliet, 1972).

When and Where

Girdle books were made from the 14th century and are known to have been used until the 16th century (Vervliet, Szirmai). Diehl further defines this period to not more than 150 years beginning in the second half of the fourteenth century and limited in region from the Netherlands to the valley of the Upper Rhine. However as Szirmai notes, Germany had the highest percentage but examples are also seen from France, Spain, Italy, Scandinavia and England.

Girdle books in art

There are thought to be approximately 813 observations of girdle books represented in the visual arts (Szirmai 1999, pg 236), this most likely references the 1450 – 1600 time period. Most owners or carriers of girdle books are biblical figures or clergymen with approximately a third (33%) of those being Apostles (John being the most prevalent), saints, monks and nuns are also seen. Diehl mentions that Monks “must have been consoled by the ever presence of their breviaries, made possible by the girdle book”.

Diehl and Kup (1939) makes the comment that Magistrates have been pictured carrying girdle books, but scholars who have made a study of the history of these books have come to the

conclusion that they were probably used only by the clergy or by someone connected with the church. I disagree with Kup's comments here as we have seen evidence of extant girdle books that did not just contain material pertinent to the church.

In the images of girdle books observed, Szirmai notes that the majority (66%) hold the book in the hand by its pouch/tail, only 12% have it hanging from their girdle, the remaining are on tables etc. Approximately half of the girdle books in these images can be referred to as a pouch napkin (no knot in the tail) and have the pouch/tail being left loose at the end. This observation is however inconsistent with extant girdle books which have a far greater occurrence of a knot or fastening of some description. The artistic images also show approximately a quarter having a knot and or having a hook as the fastening at the tail (Szirmai). The images of girdle books discussed by Szirmai appear to cover the period from 1400 to 1600 with approximately 60% during the fifteenth century.

Extant girdle books

Of the known extant girdle books (Szirmai, Smith, Bruckner)

- ⤴ There appear to be 23 original extant girdle books (some online references mention 24)
- ⤴ 19 contain religious work and four that contain legal texts.
- ⤴ 11 cover manuscripts on parchment, seven manuscripts on paper, five are on printed paper.
- ⤴ 9 are made/bound into girdle books from an already existing book.
- ⤴ The earliest datable example of a girdle book is New York public library spencer MS 39 written in 1454 in Kastl, Bavaria. (Number 14, Appendix 1)
- ⤴ The latest has a primary covering dated 1579 (Stockholm KB MS C 109). (Number 10, Appendix 1)
- ⤴ The open tail girdle book appears to be limited to Holland and Germany. *This may be because the so-called Brothers of Common Life, Fratres Vitae Communis, which was founded in the late 1300s in Deventer by disciples of Geert Groote (died August 20, 1384). The movement created in early 1400-century, several brothers and sister houses in Holland and Germany. They emphasized the education of poor children in the History of the Book in the form of depreciation of manuscripts and binding of books. Some of napkins for sale. Pose napkin can be an invention from these workshops. Translation from Danish website <http://da.wikipedia.org/wiki/Posebind>*

In contrast to the books represented in artworks,

- ⤴ the majority of the extant examples (16) have a knot at the end of the pouch often known as a turks head knot.
- ⤴ Three have hinged brass hooks,
- ⤴ Two have an open pouch with loose ends.
- ⤴ 14 extant books are made of simple unadorned chamois leather,
- ⤴ seven are of brown calf or sheep with minimal blind tooling,
- ⤴ two have a velvet covering (one with silver furnishings).
- ⤴ A luxurious girdle book of note is Nuremberg GNM MS 17231 (Number 7, Appendix 1), dating from 1471 with furnishings that carry the coat of arms of the Nuremberg patrician family of Kress.

Size of Girdle books

Szirmai notes most of the girdle books with devotional content are small and light volumes which indeed could easily be carried on the girdle (mean weight of the 15 examples is 490g, ranging from 132 to 900g).

The four girdle books on legal texts represent a category on their own, as they tend to be larger in size: The largest 292 x 204mm and weighs 1624gm; it has a split pouch and would have been carried as a shoulder bag rather than at the girdle. Vervilet (1972) describes this way of carrying books was in a leather wallet, hung from the shoulder by a strap and was designed for carrying

books on journeys.

Leather binding

14 of the 23 extant girdle books have a single (primary) covering whose extension (to form the pouch) is ordinarily at the tail, but further protection can be seen in some where the covering may also protrude at the head and front edges. Any edge of the boards left uncovered by the protruding covering received a narrow edging strip (Note this same style of protection for edges can be seen in the 4th century Nag Hammandi codices). This edging strip also gives clear evidence that the book was bound originally and was always intended to be a girdle book, rather than a book that was then rebound into the girdle pouch. Examples are Erlangen UB MS B17 (Number 21, Appendix 1), Halle ULB ThSGV 3148 (Number 22, Appendix 1), BSB Clm 19309 (Number 3, Appendix 1), Nuremberg GNM MS 17231 (Number 7, Appendix 1) and the Hague MMW 1 F 50 (Number 12, Appendix 1).

9 of the 23 extant girdle books have a secondary covering applied over what appears to be a complete primary binding. Examples are Goteborg Rohsska Konstslogdmuseet Inv. no. 519-15 (Number 16, Appendix 1), New Haven Yale UL MS 84 (Number 23, Appendix 1), New York Public Library Spencer MS 39 (Number 14, Appendix 1) and BSB Cgm 8950 (Number 2, Appendix 1). The way they have been put together allows for the possibility that they were made into a girdle book at a later date. Stockholm KB MS C 109 (Number 10, Appendix 1) is a clear example of this due to its brown calf covering being meticulously decorated with panel stamps and rolls (dated 1579), as can be seen in appendix 1, this girdle book has had a flap cut into the outer leather covering on both sides of the book so that the tooling can be seen underneath.

Why are there so few extant girdle books?

Szirmai notes that many authors writing about girdle books are eager to explain the small number of extant examples with the assertion that their pouch has been cut off when upright shelving was introduced, Kup was a firm believer of this comment and may have been the original suggester for it. Szirmai goes on to say that he has only come across one instance which supports this argument – GS Cod. 512, a paper manuscript of German Prayers dating from c. 1500 (158 x 110 x 60mm weight 524gm, calf binding with blind tooling characteristic of southern Germany) It originally had a single covering which is now cut down to some 15mm at the head and flush with the boards at the tail.

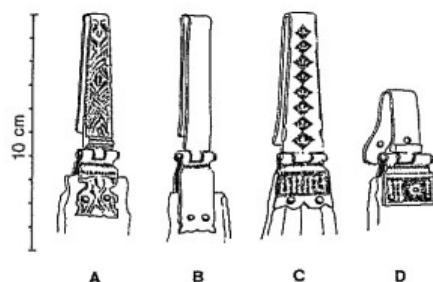
Girdle books by their nature were used and as such wear, negligence and other factors most likely played a range of roles into the limited number of surviving extant examples.

Szirmai mentions London PRO E. 36/282; is an example of a girdle book without its contents, providing evidence that in England genuine girdle books must indeed have been used (an example of a decorated binding later made into a girdle book). While I have been unable to find an image yet, I expect Szirmai is referring to a girdle book covering, one in which you can remove/replace the book by removing the book and putting a new one into pockets that have been sewn into the leather outer wrapping. I have made a few girdle books in this fashion.

Girdle books without a knot in the tail

There is a hinged hook style book known as “Hakenband” (hook binding) that does not have a pouch but instead a hook is mounted directly onto the tail edge of the lower board of the book.

(Image to right from Szirmai)



9. Comparison of brass hooks of four girdle books. A. Halle, Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Sachsen-Anhalt (cf. n. 23). B. Erlangen, Universitätsbibliothek (cf. n. 24). C. The vanished girdle book of Von Helmer-Altenbeck, based on his drawing of 1883 (cf. n. 36). D. The Hague, Museum Meermanno-Weverianum.

Personal experience making girdle books

I have experimented with a mixture of closures/fastenings for the girdle books I have made. As I generally use pasteboard on these books when I make them (to help keep the weight down – average weight 100gm with pasteboard) it limits some of the options for closures to be historically correct. I have used buckles (which I have not found any historical information for yet) on some of the books I have made, but will be resisting using more in future unless specified by a person as I am wanting to focus on historically correct. I have also used a leather toggle and loop closure on one book as a trial (based on findings and styles of various books including late coptic codices, see figure 3.8 and 3.9 Szirmai, pg 40 & 41)

There does appear to be evidence of ring and peg fastenings being used on girdle books as found in carolingian bindings (figure 7.31 Szirmai, pg 133) and brass clasps are very common as a fastening. Not all extant books have a fastening however so they are not a vital part of a girdle book but do make it easier to keep it closed. I have found that using leather folded in such a manner as seen in extant girdle books that the leather itself will keep the book closed.

Making the turks head knot can be time consuming, particularly if you are using leather strapping/thonging to make the turks head. This is due to trying to get the leather to lay flat around the head of the tail and getting the right circumference. I find that folding over the end of the tail if you are going to encapsulate the end in the turks head is vital (as well as securing the fold) so that the turks head does not just slide off the tail.

Girdle books are fun to make and very practical if you find yourself wanting to take notes (if a blank book).

The biggest advantage to binding a book into a girdle book with pockets is that you can change the book once you have filled it, or you can bind more written books into the same size so that you can interchange the contents.



Examples of some of the books I have made with girdle books I have made below.



Above: Girdle book bound into its covering, not you can just see the leather strip at the bottom of the book (tail end) that is to protect the otherwise exposed edge while being bound. One of the key ways to know if a book was originally intended to be a girdle book. Brass corners and buckle closure (not technically correct for medieval girdle books).

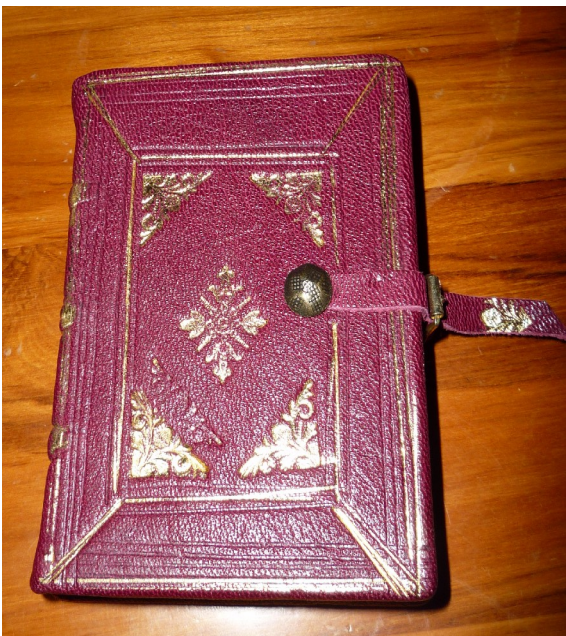
Below: A small girdle book based on some of the small books of hours that ladies of nobility wore, shown here with a trail of a loop and toggle closure (not correct for girdle book but I was experimenting with closures).



Three small girdle books above made with buckles (not historically correct) and studs. The two on the left would be hung from the girdle with either a chain or ribbon/cord. The one on the right is hung from the girdle by the chain attached.



Girdle book made by binding a small note book and then this being put into the pockets in the cover to become a girdle book. This book was made to act as a girdle book on its own in addition to the outer cover which is why it has a buckle (not historically correct). Image of the book itself below.





Girdle book with pockets (and book that fits into the cover shown to the right of it) so book can be changed inside (first attempt at girdle book), buckles not historically correct (also learnt to sew smaller pockets as was difficult to insert the book. If you take care to get the fold in the tail correct you do not require a closure on the cover.



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<http://www.scribd.com/doc/32989680/The-Archaeology-of-Medieval-Bookbinding>—By-John-A-Szirmai

Vervliet, H D. 1972. *The Book thru Five Thousand years*. Phaidon Press, London. ISBN 0714815335

<http://larsdatter.com/girdlebooks.htm>

<http://buchwerkstatt.blogspot.co.nz/2010/06/girdle-book-part-2.html> (has some nice photos from a museum in Lubeck with details from 1509 altar carvings.

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/racaire/4124525489/in/set-72157622854595920/> Photos of a girdle book found at the Schottenstift museum in Vienna Austria.

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/racaire/4124456455/in/set-72157622854595920/> photo of a painting with a small girdle book hanging by an interesting chain style at the Schottenstift museum in Vienna Austria.

http://www.aneira.org/books_for_travelers.pdf Books for travelers: Girdle books 1400-1600 written by Lady Gwerfyl verch Aneirin. (SCA)

http://libweb5.princeton.edu/visual_materials/hb/cases/largeandsmall/index.html shows some images of 16th century books

<http://levitabooks.wordpress.com/2011/04/18/girdle-books/>

<http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts/GlossV.asp#VADEMECUM>

<http://www.aneira.org/resources.html>

http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Girdle_books

<http://da.wikipedia.org/wiki/Posebind>

http://www.guildofbookworkers.org/events/documents/2000-Spitzmueller_Pamela.pdf

collection of scanned images from several books.

Images and more information.

Prophet Jeremiah and Christ 1443-45 Master of the Aix Annunciation – oil on panel Brussels – shows a girdle book on the shelf above the prophet

http://www.wga.hu/html/m/master/aix_annu/jeremiah.html

St Jerome in his study. C 1460 oil on wood National gallery london. Antonello da Messina. Shows the tail of a girdle book on the shelf above his head (also shows many other books)

<http://www.wga.hu/frames-e.html?/html/a/antonell/stjerome.html>

Saint Anthony Tormented by Demons ca 1470 – 75, Martin Schongauer (german) engraving. Shows a girdle book hanging.

<http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/20.5.2>

The Visitation c. 1480-1490

<http://tarvos.imareal.oeaw.ac.at/server/images/7000678.JPG>

detail white girdle book with gold <http://tarvos.imareal.oeaw.ac.at/server/images/7000680.JPG>

Decent from the cross c 1490 – 1500, shows girdle book hanging from main figure

<http://tarvos.imareal.oeaw.ac.at/server/images/7000941.JPG>

St John the Evangelist in Crucifixion with the Muller family 1462. Shows a girdle book hanging off the girdle of the person on the right

<http://tarvos.imareal.oeaw.ac.at/server/images/7006353.JPG>

Weingartener Alter by Hans Holbein the Elder 1493

http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hans_Holbein_d._Ä._008.jpg

detail shown here <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Mann-mit-beutelbuch.jpg>

The Apostles farewell from an alterpiece at the Franciscan church at Bozen c 1495 – 1505

<http://tarvos.imareal.oeaw.ac.at/server/images/7005634.JPG>

The Apostles farewell from an alterpiece at Bam berg c 1495-1505. Girdlebook shown on person on left

<http://tarvos.imareal.oeaw.ac.at/server/images/7006303.JPG>

St James the greater and Hermogenes by Simon won Taisten c 1495 – 1505 girdle book shown in hand in white leather

<http://tarvos.imareal.oeaw.ac.at/server/images/7005707.JPG>

detail shown here <http://tarvos.imareal.oeaw.ac.at/server/images/7005708.JPG>

Last Judgement Triptych (left outer wing) 1504-08 Hieronymus Bosch

<http://www.wga.hu/frames-e.html?/html/b/bosch/8lastjud/4lastjud.html>
exterior view of triptych here <http://www.wga.hu/frames-e.html?/html/b/bosch/8lastjud/>

Christ and Pilate by Hans Schaufelein c 1500-1505
<http://tarvos.imareal.oeaw.ac.at/server/images/3004259.JPG>

St Joachim c 1500-1510
<http://tarvos.imareal.oeaw.ac.at/server/images/7003567.JPG>

Virgin and child with St Katerines, St Dorothy, St Barbara, and St Mary Magdalene 1505.
<http://tarvos.imareal.oeaw.ac.at/server/images/3000648.JPG>
detail here in hand <http://tarvos.imareal.oeaw.ac.at/server/images/7000643.JPG>

The Apostles farewell by Jorg Breu the elder 1514. Centre of paining
<http://tarvos.imareal.oeaw.ac.at/server/images/7016885.JPG>

Cruicifixion c 1508 – 1517. Book shown on person on left hanging
<http://tarvos.imareal.oeaw.ac.at/server/images/7012442.JPG>

The passion by Hans Schaufelein c 1525 – 1530, shown on left
<http://tarvos.imareal.oeaw.ac.at/server/images/7016897.JPG>

Altarpiece with St Martin, St Elizabeth of Thuringia, and St Katerine from St Florian c 1510 – 1520
<http://tarvos.imareal.oeaw.ac.at/server/images/7000171.JPG>
detail here in hand <http://tarvos.imareal.oeaw.ac.at/server/images/7000172.JPG>

National library of scotland, Borthwick MS Acc. 12059
<http://www.nls.uk/catalogues/online/cnmi/inventories/acc12059.pdf>

The death of mary from the altarpiece at Karnten Austria c. 1445-1455. Girdle book shown on desk beside bed plus several pictures of books in general
<http://tarvos.imareal.oeaw.ac.at/server/images/7002020.JPG>
detail of the girdle book here <http://tarvos.imareal.oeaw.ac.at/server/images/7002028.JPG>

<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/videos/p/video-printing-and-binding-a-handmade-book/>
A video on the printing and binding of a hand made book -gives a nice overview of techniques.

Appendix 1: List of extant Girdle books

<http://da.wikipedia.org/wiki/Posebind>

Listed below are based on Sofus Larsen 1920, Viggo Starcke 1949 and JA Szirmai 1999. It should be compared with Bruckner 1995. Books are listed alphabetically by the name of the institution in possession of the books.

1. **Anhaltische Landesbücherei, Dessau, Saxony-Anhalt (Dessau Anhalt Regional Library)**

Catalog no.: Georg 276 16 °

Dating: 1500-century

Place of origin: the Principality of Anhalt-Dessau and Leipzig

Contents: breviary Magdeburgense, inkunabel suppressed by Marcus Brandis in Leipzig in the 1480s

Dimensions: 12.5 x 15 cm

Provenance: The book belonged to the Duchess Margarete von Münsterberg (1473-1530), wife of Ernst von Anhalt-Zerbst (1474-1516), and here come the so-called Georgsbibliothek - founded by her son - who in 1926 was purchased for Anhaltische Landesbücherei.

Online resources: -

2. **Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich**

Catalog no.: CGM 8950

Dating: -

Place of Origin: -

Contents: -

Dimensions: 29.2 x 20.4 cm

Provenance: -

Online resources: -

3. **Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich**

Catalog no.: Clm 19309 16 °

Dating: 1503

Place of origin: Tegernsee

Contents: vellum with the prayer book

Dimensions: 11.5 x 8.5 x 4.5 cm

Provenance: -

Online resources: -

4. **Bethmann Museum, Frankfurt am Main - the museum was destroyed during the second World War and the book must therefore today either located elsewhere or be lost**

Bag book from Bethmann Museum

Catalog no.: -

Dating: second half of the 1400s

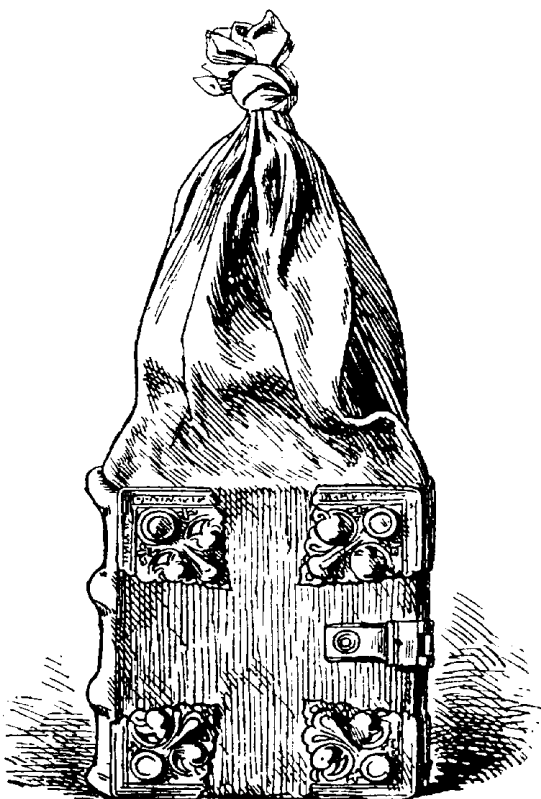
Place of origin: Augsburg (?)

Content: Manuscript

Size: -

Proviens: -

Online resources: - <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Girdlebook-Frankfurtam-BM.png>



Girdle book from Bethnamm Museum in Frankfurt (most likely the book was lost during World War II since the museum was destroyed).

5. Biblioteka Uniwersytecka w Toruniu (University Library in Torun), Torun, Poland

Catalog no.: Ob.6.II.4498-4500

Dating: 1527

Place of origin: Wittenberg or Königsberg

Contents: Vier tröstliche psalm, an die Königin zu Hungern ausgelegt durch Luther palæotyp from Wittenberg 1527

Size: 8 °

Provenance: The book belonged to the Duchess Dorothea of Prussia (1504-1547), who was married to Duke Albrecht of Prussia (1490-1568) and daughter of Frederick first. It was at Staats-und Universitätsbibliothek Königsberg in Königsberg (Silberbibliothek 25), but after the second World War it was transferred to the Library in Torun.

Online Resources: Oprawa sakwowa modlitewnika księżny Doroty - website in Polish about the book and the photo. <http://www.bu.umk.pl/cymelia/sakwowa.html>



6. British Library, London

Catalog no.: Add. Mss. 15700 12 °

Dating: 1485

Place of origin: Germany

Contents: Handwriting with German prayer book and kalendarium written by John vom Wald. It is also equipped with two colored etchings.

Size: 8.8 x 5.8 x 5.0 cm

Provenance: Unknown. It should be noted that according Viggo Starcke Starcke 1960 in the spring of 1949 was the first to identify the book as a really girdle book.

Online Resources: Girdle book

7. Germanisches National Museum, Nuremberg

Hs 17231

Catalog no.: Hs 17231

Dating: 1471

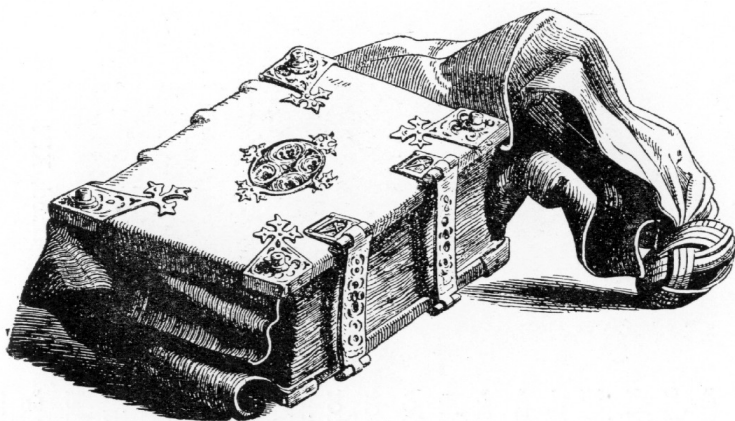
Place of Origin: Nuremberg

Contents: with vellum Book of Hours

Dimensions: 13.5 x 10.5 x 5.2 cm

Provenance: An inscription indicates's owner in 1471 having been Hieronymus Kress, Mayor of Nuremberg 1452-1477.

Online resources: - <http://picasaweb.google.com/lh/photo/7TNXXB7REGrKUUGAf6htRQ>



Girdle book from Germanisches National museum in Nuremberg (HS. 17231).

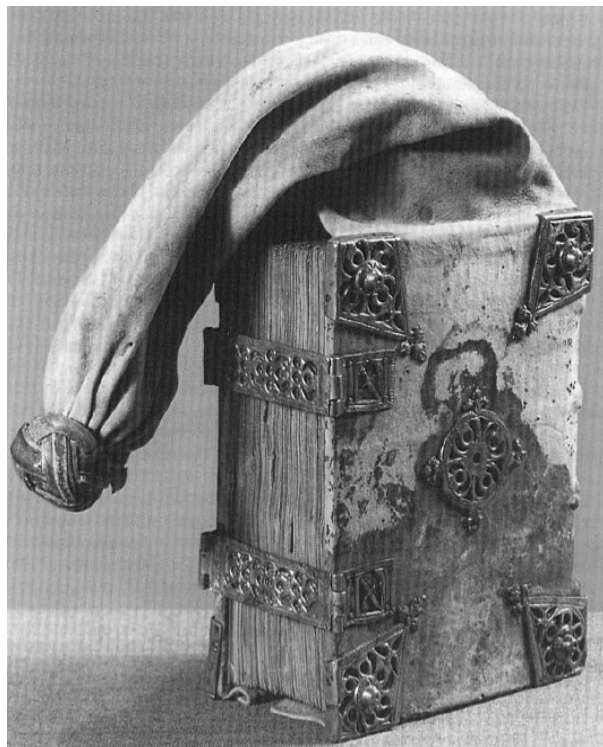


Figure 9.40 (pg 238) from The archaeology of medieval bookbinding, Szirmai. A Breviary written on parchment, commissioned by Hieronymus Kress, mayor of Nuremberg from 1452 to 1477. Covering of chamois leather, pouch ending in a leather knot; brass corner and centre pieces decorated with openwork tracery and engraving, underlaid with blue parchment; two brass all metal fastenings, similarly decorated, clasps backed with red parchment, catch and anchor plates carrying the coat of arms of the Kress family (135 + 235 x 105 x 55mm).



<http://picasaweb.google.com/lh/photo/7TNXXB7REGrKUUGAf6htRQ>

8. The Royal Library, Copenhagen

Old Royal Collection 3423

Catalog no.: Old Royal Collection 3423 8 °

Dating: 1400-century

Origin: Probably Nuremberg

Contents: Paper Handwriting with Low German andagtsbog from 1400-century kalendarium, Mary psalter, or Book of Hours and prayers to the Virgin Mary. An etching of the Virgin Mary with baby Jesus is pasted into the book. This etching is signed WP, probably Wilhelm Pleydenwurf from Nuremberg.

Size: 15 x 11 x 4.5 cm

Provenance: -

Online resources: - <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Girdlebook-Copenhagen-KB-GKS3423.jpg>

<http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Girdlebook-open-Copenhagen-KB-GKS3423.jpg>



Girdle book from Det Kongelige Bibliotek (The Royal Library) in Copenhagen (Gammel Kongelige Samling 3423). book open



Girdle book from Det Kongelige Bibliotek (The Royal Library) in Copenhagen (Gammel Kongelige Samling 3423).

9. The Royal Library, Copenhagen

Rostgaard 6 (The Law of Jutland)

Catalog no.: Rostgaard 6 8 °

Dating: approx. 1540

Place of origin: Denmark

Contents: vellum with Jyske Law, Erik Klipping Regulation of 1284 and 13 of Thords articles in Danish. The first two were written by Johannes Nicholas (Hans Nielsen) in the first half of 1400-century, while Thords articles are added later, probably around 1500.

Size: 13 x 9.6 x 4.5 cm

Provenance: Hans Jensen was given the book 20th July 1545 by the heirs of Donald Tinker in Copenhagen. Later acquired Frederik Rostgaard it and then came to be included in the University Library's collection (as No. 32) and since the Royal Library.

Online Resources: http://wayback.kb.dk:8080/wayback-1.4.2/wayback/20100107153228/http://www2.kb.dk/elib/mss/treasures/bogbind/rostgaard_6.htm



The Law of Jutland Rostgaard 6 – in a repaired state.

Seen here photographed before repairs, note the missing sections of leather from the tail.



Rostgaard 6 open.

The law of Jutland Denmark c 1490 Rostgaard 6 8. Parchment, 135 fols. This is a so-called girdle book, a kind of binding that was in use in the 15th and 16th centuries and was well suited for carrying books. The book has an extended covering of soft leather that ends in a knot made in such a manner that the book can be hung from the girdle or belt and swung upward for reading while still attached to the girdle, or be hung from a saddle horn. This binding is from about 1540 whereas the manuscript itself is a little older. The manuscript can be traced back to the scribe Jens Nielsen. It contains legal manuscripts – the Law of Jutland i.a. – and it has probably been useful for judges and others who travelled to local outdoor things to bring their texts in a girdle book. The book: 13 x 9.6 cm. The binding is c. 30 cm long.

10. Royal Library, Stockholm

C 109

Catalog no.: C 109 8 °

Dating: 1589 (bag towel is then been placed outside a volume of 1579)

Place of origin: Denmark

Contents: Quedam breues expositiones a legum a iurium concordantie a alligationes circa toyed iucie per reuerendum in Christo patrem ac Dominum Kanutum Episcopum vibergensem a venerabilem vtriusque iuris doctorem super iutorum legisterium, palæotyp from 1508 published by Geoffrey of Ghemen in Copenhagen. This is the Royal Law with Bishop Knud Mikkelsen's explanations and register and an appendix of Thord Degn's articles on latin and some charters and regulations. The first six and last three pages missing and out from the pad dimensions, there must have been a few more pages in the book when it was bound. Whether it has been blank pages or other work can not be said.

Dimensions: 19.4 x 13.5 x 4.5 cm

Provenance: The napkin from 1579 is stamped with the initials IP and the year, but this owner is not known.

Online resources: -<http://www.flickr.com/photos/25300312@N08/4998163144/in/photostream/> view above

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/25300312@N08/4998163446/in/photostream/> top edge

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/25300312@N08/4997558125/in/photostream/> spine

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/25300312@N08/4998163024/in/photostream/> back cover

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/25300312@N08/4998163542/in/photostream/> fore edge

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/25300312@N08/4998163690/in/photostream/> bottom edge

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/25300312@N08/4998163808/in/photostream/> book with tail flat
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/25300312@N08/4998163956/in/photostream/> front flap detail 1570
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/25300312@N08/4997558951/in/photostream/> knot
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/25300312@N08/4998164466/in/photostream/> back flap
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/25300312@N08/4997559469/in/photostream/> detail corner fore edge
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/25300312@N08/4998164980/in/photostream/> detail edges
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/25300312@N08/4997559747/in/photostream/> detail clasp
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/25300312@N08/4998165278/in/photostream/> book open
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/25300312@N08/4997560149/in/photostream/> corner detail



Stockholm KB MS C 109. Girdle Book from Kungliga bibliotket (Royal Library) in Stockholm. Photo scanned by Sofus Larsen: "To minder fra de aabne Ting" in Carl Dumreicher (ed): *Ex Bibliotheca Universitatis Hafniensis*, Copenhagen 1920. This appears to be the same book as below.



Stockholm KB MS C 109. Girdle book National Library of Sweden (photo: Istvan Borbas)
 Portable volume, girdle book of leather with a knot to be tucked under a person's girdle or belt, from which the book hung upside down so that it could be picked up and read at any time. The printed book is from 1508, the blind-tooled leather binding from 1579 and the exterior knotted leather cover was added ten years later, in 1589. At some point in the book's life, flaps were cut into the front and back of the exterior cover so that the imprint on the leather binding underneath became visible. Girdle books were common in the Netherlands and Germany between about 1400 and 1550. There are few preserved girdle books, only a handful of which are in the Nordic countries. The book was rebound in 1579, as indicated by text which has been cut away. The many annotations suggest that the book was much read over a period of about half a century (Larsen). Oldest dateable version of a girdle book.

11. Kunstmuseum Düsseldorf (Düsseldorf Stiftung museum kunst palst)

Catalog no.: Inv no. 8309

Dating: -

Place of Origin: -

Contents: -

Size: -

Provenance: -

Online resources: - <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:KunstpalastDSCF6454.jpg>



Kunstpalast, Düsseldorf

Showing hammered corner pieces and a closure over the fore edge.

12. Museum Meermanno-Westreenianum, The Hague

Catalog no.: 1 F 50

Dating: -

Place of Origin: -

Contents: -

Size: -

Provenance: -

Online resources: -

13. National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh

Catalog no.: Acc.12059 / 3

Dating: 15th century

Place of origin: England

Contents: Handwriting with table sliding festivals, calendar, astrological tables and zodiac signs, solar and lunar eclipses 1387-1462, notes and diagrams on bloodletting and material on the planets. The calendar includes a number of saints from the north of England, and also the feasts of SS. David, Chad and John of Beverley which were introduced in 1398. The MS. Probably belonged to a doctor and was designed to be hung from the owner's girdle.

Size: -

Provenance: The book came in 2002 to National Library of Scotland, where it and two other manuscripts represent Borthwick Manuscripts. They come from the estate after 23 Lord Borthwick, John Henry Stuart Borthwick (1905-1996).

Online Resources: <http://www.nls.uk/catalogues/online/cnmi/inventories/acc12059.pdf>

14. New York Public Library, New York

Catalog no.: Spencer Collection MS. 039

Dating: 1454 (some say 1459)

Place of origin: Kastl Abbey, a Benedictine monastery in Kastl in Bavaria

Contents: Handwriting with breviary in Latin, written by Frater Sebaldu in Monastery Kastl.

Dimensions: 10.4 x 7.5 cm

Provenance: -

Online resources: [http://digitalgallery.nypl.org/nypldigital/dgkeysearchresult.cfm?](http://digitalgallery.nypl.org/nypldigital/dgkeysearchresult.cfm?keyword=girdle+book&submit.x=0&submit.y=0)

[keyword=girdle+book&submit.x=0&submit.y=0](http://www.artnet.com/magazineus/features/karlins/karlins1-13-06_detail.asp?picnum=2)

http://www.artnet.com/magazineus/features/karlins/karlins1-13-06_detail.asp?picnum=2

[http://app.cul.columbia.edu:8080/exist/scriptorium/individual/NN-Spncr-172.xml?](http://app.cul.columbia.edu:8080/exist/scriptorium/individual/NN-Spncr-172.xml?showLightbox=yes&text_num=1)

[showLightbox=yes&text_num=1](http://app.cul.columbia.edu:8080/exist/scriptorium/individual/NN-Spncr-172.xml?showLightbox=yes&text_num=1) also shows images of inside the book.



Avignon, France ca 1390 – 1400 This chunky breviary, or book of daily prayers and readings, is covered in leather that forms a pouch for the book and extends over the ends in flaps that are tied into a knot. Originally, the small book hung with text upside down from the belt of its maker, Brother Sebaldu Sachs, prior of a Benedictine monastery in southern Germany. He needed only to reach down, lift up and right the text in order to read his prayers. New York public library, spencer collection MS 39). Earliest dateable example of a girdle book).



Written in May 1459 by Friar Sebadus in the Benedictine monesery of Kastl near Nuremberg, diocese of Eichstadt. Back 2 heavy double bands. The covering of this chunky little book is constructed very much like its larger counterpart, no 128, except that there is no overlapping flap at the fore edge. Doeskin is stretched closely over the bevelled wood boards, and then covered again by a larger skin, stained green. The skin extending about 11 inches from the tail, is knotted so that, when hanging from a belt, the book was upside down, ready to be lifted into reading position while still attached. Five brass bosses (several missing) studded each side, and two brass clasps on long straps fastened over pins in the upper cover. (Karl Kup, in Bulletin of the New York Publick library, XLIII (1030) pp 471-84 cf O. Glauning, "Der Buchbeutel in der Bidenden Bunx" ie Archiv fur Buckgewerbe und Gebrauckspaphik, LXIII (1926).

- 15. Bibliotheca Qvarnforsiana No. 262. Qvarnfors - discussed at Starcke 1960 as a book of Thore Virgin collection Qvarnfors. The book was, according to Szirmai 1999 sold at Sotheby's in London in June 1997 to a private collector in Germany.**

Catalog no.: Bibliotheca Qvarnforsiana No. 262

Dating: approx. 1515?

Origin: Southern Germany

Content: from about vellum. 1515 with the South German prayer book

Size: 13 x 10 x 6 cm. Starcke 1960 indicates mistakenly size to 10 times as much.

Provenance: -

Online resources: - <http://da.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fil:Girdlebook-Qvarnfors-kat262.jpg>



Girdle book from Thore Virgin's Bibliotheca Qvarnforsiana. The book is in a private collection in Germany. Photo scanned from J. Victor Johansson: *Fran Gutenbergbibel till Gosta Berlings Saga. Vandringar i Bibliotheca Qvarnforsiana*, Stockholm 1952.

16. Röhsska Museum, Gothenburg

Röhsska Museum 519-15

Catalog no.: 519-15

Dating: 1400-century

Place of origin: England (?)

Contents: Two manuscripts in Latin: *Synonyma Ysidori* from late 1200-century and a collection of maxims from mid 1300-century.

Sizes: Small 8°

Provenance: In the 1600s the book was owned by the Earl of Westmoreland and later found it in the Earl of Melville's library. Shortly before 1914 bought the Swedish baron Per Hierta book in England, and it is thus described in *Festschrift Ex Bibliotheca Fræmmestadiensis* from 25 October 1914. Shortly after, bag book and other books purchased by Hjalmar Wijk from Gothenburg, who in 1915 gave the book bag and most of it purchased from Hiertas Röhsska collection to the museum.

Online Resources: Gather Ingar on Röhsska - <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Girdlebook-Gothenburg-RM-519-15.jpg>



Girdle book from Rohsska Museet in Gothenburg, Sweden (Inv. No 519-15).

17. Stadtmuseum Bautzen, Bautzen in Saxony

Catalog no.: -
 Dating: 1497 (?)
 Place of Origin: -
 Contents: The Bible in Latin, a palæotyp printed in Venice in 1497
 Size: -
 Provenance: -
 Online resources: -

18. Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Berlin

Catalog no.: Ms. Lat. oct. 217
 Dating: -
 Place of Origin: -
 Contents: -
 Size: -
 Provenance: -
 Online resources: -

19. Staats-und Universitätsbibliothek Königsberg, Königsberg - the book disappeared after the second World

Catalog no.: Silberbibliothek 24
 Dating: 1525
 Place of Origin: Nuremberg or Königsberg
 Contents: Psalter von Martin Luther palæotyp from Nuremberg 1525
 Size: 8^o
 Provenance: The book belonged to the Duchess Dorothea of Prussia (1504-1547), who was married to Duke Albrecht of Prussia (1490-1568) and daughter of Frederick first. It was at Staats-und Universitätsbibliothek Königsberg in Königsberg, but disappeared after the second World War II.
 Online resources: -

20. Stiftsbibliothek Kremsmünster, Kremsmünster

Catalog no.: CC 391

Dating: late 1400-century

Place of origin: Kremsmünster

Contents: Handwriting with prayer book

Size: -

Provenance: -

Online resources: -

21. Universitätsbibliothek Erlangen-Nuremberg, Erlangen

Catalog no.: B 17 (formerly 1744)

Dating: 1530

Place of origin: Germany

Contents: Paper Manuscripts from the second half of the 1400s with a German prayer book.

Dimensions: 15.3 x 10.5 cm

Provenance: -

Online resources: Die deutschen Handschriften there Universitätsbibliothek Erlangen. Neu beschrieben - catalog description

22. Universitäts-und Landesbibliothek Sachsen-Anhalt, Halle

Catalog no.: ThSGV 3148

Dating: -

Place of origin: Germany

Content: Manuscript entitled THOSE nachgeschribn gepete hat gemacht ain erwirdiger hayliger Mon The hat gehaissen Petrus Damiani below which was etwan ain Cardinal und ward ain guter aynsidel uf das das is gotte desterbaz gediene möcht.

Dimensions: 11.4 x 8.3 x 2.4 cm

Provenance: -

Online resources: -

23. Yale University Library, New Haven

MS084

Catalog no.: MS084

Dating: The beginning of the 1400s (15th century)

Place of origin: England, but the binding may not be out there.

Contents: vellum with Boëthius: De consolacione philosophiae

Size: 105 x 75 mm

Provenance: The book belonged to A. Edward Newton, who probably bought it from Antikvariatet II Davis & G. M. Orioli in London. The book was certainly up for sale here in 1916. It was sold from Newton's collection of 14th May 1941 and later that year was donated to Yale University.

Online Resources: MS084 - catalog description. <http://webtext.library.yale.edu/beinflat/pre1600.MS084.htm>
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/exhibitions/golittlebook/girdle.html>



MS 84 Girdle book 15th century, The Yale “girdle book” Boethius, De consolacione philosophiae, England. Was rebound into a girdle book. Some great photos from the Beinecke library.

Back raised bands. Wood boards covered with rose doeskin and unstained sheepskin. This example is similar to No 129 in bulk and general character, except that flaps of the skin have been left at the fore-edges of the boards, as well as at the head and tail; the long strap laced to the inside of the five inch overhang on the fore-edge of the upper cover, carries the wrapper over the leaves of the book when it is clasped. This is identical in construction with No 128.



MS 84 England [?], s. XV
Boethius, *De consolazione philosophiae*

1. ff. 1r-169r *Carmina qui quondam studio florente peregi. Flebilis heu mestos cogor inire modos...cum ante oculos agitis iudicis cuncta cernentis. Explicit.* ff. 169v-170r ruled, but blank
L. Bieler, ed., CC lat. ser. 94 (1957) pp. 1-105.
2. ff. 170v-171r Short notes (in Latin and English) on medical recipes, including "Medicyn for the Colyck". f. 171v ruled, but blank

Parchment, ff. iv (contemporary parchment, iv=stub) + 171 + iv (contemporary parchment, i=stub), 100 x 80 (68 x 41) mm., trimmed in a very irregular manner. Written in 12 long lines; single bounding lines full across. Ruled in pale brown ink; remains of prickings (slashes) in outer margins, and occasionally in upper and lower margins.

I¹⁰, II¹², III¹² (-7, no loss of text), IV⁸, V-XVII¹⁰. A few signatures on recto. Written by three scribes in informal gothic scripts. 1: ff. 1r-33v, with running titles, in red, on f. 4v and 28r; catchwords, underlined in red, with paragraph marks preceding each; this is the only section of the text with rubrication. 2: ff. 34r-60v, 112v-169r (in a style of writing verging on anglicana), catchwords in gutter, often surrounded by rectangles. 3: ff. 60v-112v (many erasures and corrections by 2), no visible catchwords. Marginal and interlinear glosses in several contemporary hands, one of which added the notes on ff. 170v-171r. First initial in red penwork, 4-line, with crude portrait of Boethius. Simple red initials to mark sections of text. Binding: s. xv, possibly German or Dutch. Although early, it is not the original binding. Resewn on three narrow, tawed, double thongs. The endbands do not seem to have laced cores, but a primary sewing may have been sewn to the head and tail of the chemise, underneath the braided secondary endbands. The thongs are laced into grooves in beech boards, the pattern reversed; one horizontal above one V lacing on the upper board and a V above a horizontal on the lower. The thongs are pegged. The outer wrapper of tawed skin, now grey, is sewn to a tawed, pink, inner chemise around the outer edges of the boards. The wrapper extends about 130 mm. to a Turk's head knot at the tail, about 25 mm. at the head, and has an overlap of about 50 mm. on the upper board. The edges of the wrapper are turned in and hemmed. The book hung upside down when attached to the girdle by having the knot slipped under it, but was right side up when picked up (still attached to the girdle) to be read. A strap and pin fastening, the pin on the upper board, consists of a thick, brown leather strap nailed to the lower board and tacketed to the cover with a leather thong ending in an anthropomorphic brass clasp, the head of which catches on the pin. A glued repair was made before, a sewn one after 1973. "Girdle-book". Cf. exhib. cat., *The History of Bookbinding, 525-1950 A.D.*, The Walters Art Gallery (Baltimore, 1957), p. 56 no. 130.

Written in England in the 15th century, as is suggested by the style of writing (especially of Scribe 2) and by the recipes in English. It is, however, questionable whether the codex was bound there as well, since "girdle-books" were produced primarily in the Low countries and Rhine Valley; no examples of these bindings seem to survive from England. Evidence of trimming, with some loss of marginalia, may indicate that the codex was written in one place and bound in another. Belonged to A. Edward Newton (*The A. Edward Newton Collection of Books and Manuscripts* [New York, 1941] v. 2, p. 28); his sale (New York, 14 May 1941, no. 105) to Stonehill's. Presented to Yale in 1941 by the Yale Library Associates.
secundo folio: Qui cecidit

Bibliography: Faye and Bond, p. 27, no. 84.

E.T. Silk, "The Yale 'Girdle-Book' of Boethius," *Gazette* 17 (1942) pp. 1-5 (plate facing p. 1).

24. A 24th example?



<http://www.flickr.com/photos/racaire/4124525489/>

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/racaire/4125297772/> knot detail

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/racaire/4124531021/> clasp detail

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/racaire/4124529963/> top detail

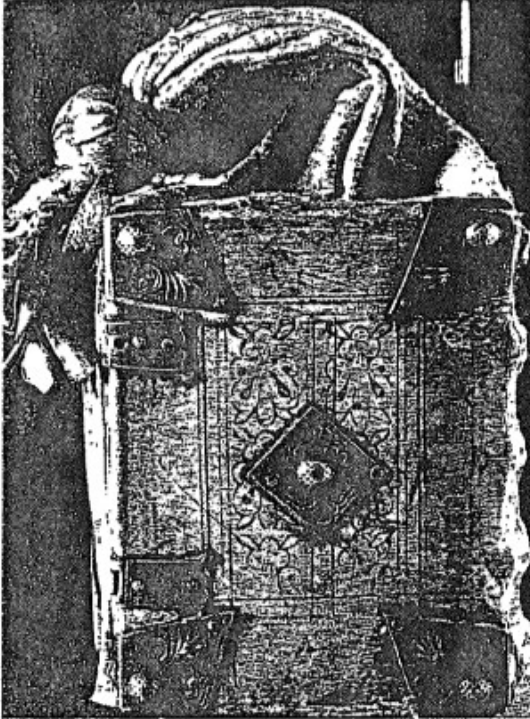
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/racaire/4125296286/> spine detail

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/racaire/4125294742/> fore edge – showing all of book

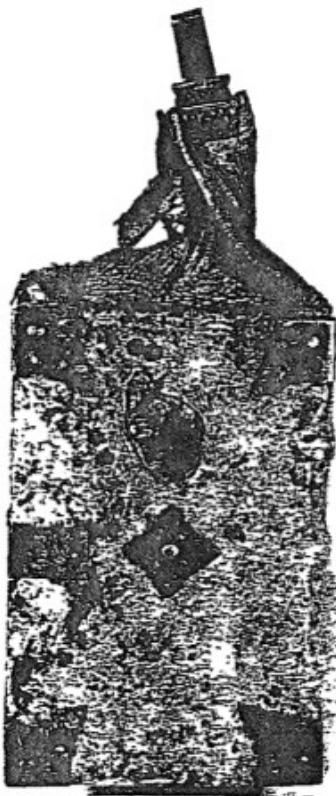
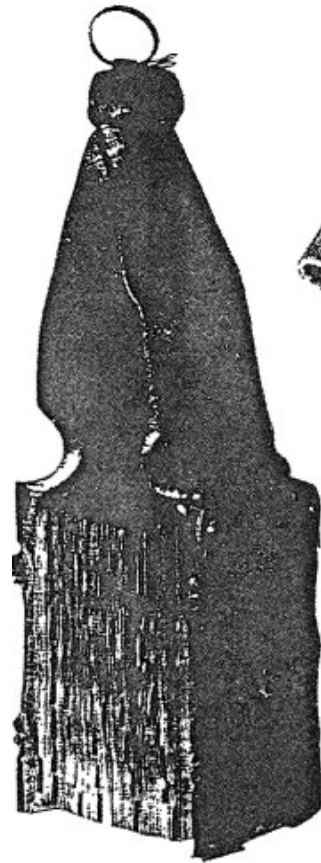
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/racaire/4125299140/> museum label for the book

Beutelbuch (german term for book bag/girdle book) (Diurnal monasticum). Venice. 1515. Lucas Anthony de Giunta printed the book in Venice for the Viennese publisher Leonard and Luke Alante. The book is itself a contract for printing the abbey scotland. Photos of a girdle book taken at the Schottenstift museum in Vienna Austria.

Images from “The medieval girdle binding and beyond” which is not referenced so I cannot at this stage attach to the list above. Hopefully further research will allow me to reference this image.



J. A. SZIRMAI



From one of Szirmai's papers but not referenced as above.

Appendix 2

Girdle books – precious books illuminated with miniatures 16 and 17th centuries worn by noble ladies on gold chains.

1. Metal girdle book; British Museum 1540-45



Girdle prayer book – metal 1540-45 London England Made by Hans von Antwerpen (known in England as John of Antwerp) a Flemish goldsmith and friend of Hans Holbein the younger. The front cover of the enameled gold binding depicts the biblical scene of “The Brazen Serpent”. The inscription in black enamel around the border can be read: “Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it up for a sign, that as many as are bitten, may look upon it, and live” (Numbers, 21:8). The text derives from the English language printed bible of 1539/40. The scene is based on a large silver gilt book cover dated 1543 by the leading Renaissance goldsmith of Antwerp, Hieronymus Mamacker. The back depicts “The judgement of Solomon”. The inscription around the scene can be read “Then the king answered and said, Give her the living child, and slay not; for she is the mother thereof”. (1 Kings, 3:27). The British Museum.
http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight_objects/pe_mla/g/girdle_prayer_book.aspx

1. Stowe MS 956



Stowe MS 956, ff 1v-2 – metal girdle book with picture of Henry VIII inside (British library), owned by Anne Boleyn London 1509 – 46.

<http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts/GlossG.asp>

<http://www.bl.uk/treasures/festivalbooks/stuartengland.html>

2. **16th c Metal girdle book. British galleries.**



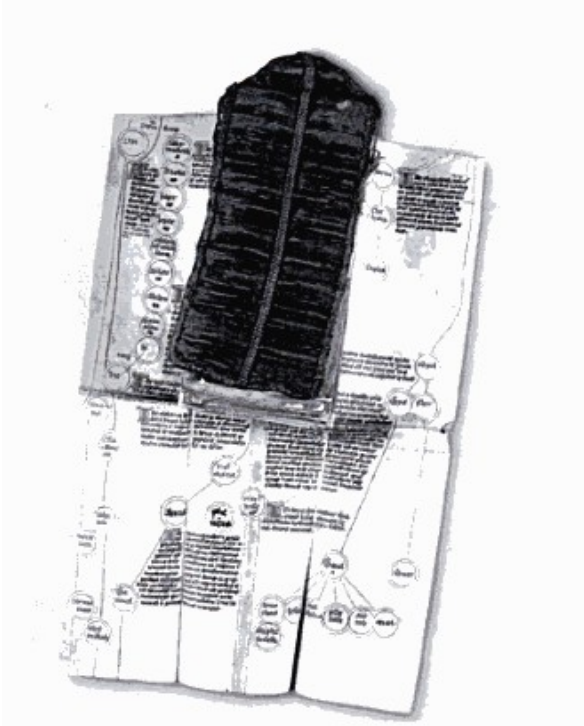
16c Girdle Book (metal) Victoria and Albert Museum – British Galleries
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/kotomi-jewelry/3516586874/>

3. **Metal book cover 1540 (not a girdle book)**



Book cover, (not a girdle book -but as it shows some of the edges I thought it worth including. Italy ca 1540 Gilt bronze
Victoria and Albert Museum 634-1865
<http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O93450/book-cover/>

Appendix 3



Vade Mecum: The phrase means 'goes with me' in Latin and refers to a portable book (often suspended from the belt), frequently consisting of leaves folded in a concertina or fold out format. Such 'books' could be consulted easily by physicians, for example, and often contain calendars, almanacs, and medical information

British Library Add. MS 17358 England? Early 15th century. 15 x 6.3cm.

Appendix 4



Valencia? C 1460. Book of Hours. Vellum, 167 leaves, 150 x 100mm. Prov: Nico Israel's antiquarian bookshop, Amsterdam, 1988. 135 J 55, fol. 13v-14r.

<http://www.kb.nl/galerie/100hoogtepunten/014-en.html>

Dark brown morocco, blind-tooled (inner cover) over wooden boards. Chemise of velvet (outside), dark brown-carmine fading to lavender-red, and of lavender-red silk (inside) with trimmings and pellets in red and gold thread; silver fastening. The chemise, of which the overhanging part is c. 2.5 cm all around, is only tied to the binding by its fastening.

The chemise binding might be called the refined, textile version of the Hülleneinband. Instead of one covering (leather or textile) it has two, of which the outer textile covering has supple flaps all around. The nails of the fastening are the only means of attachment of the chemise to the binding. As the lining over the insides of the covers continues into the shoulders, it would be extremely difficult to unfasten the chemise. The second covering has disappeared in almost all cases and this will certainly be due to the fact that textile is a very vulnerable material. Its makers may even have foreseen this problem, and this would explain the blind-tooling on the inner covering of this binding, which would, of course, only be fully visible without the chemise.

Chemise bindings are even rarer than Hülleneinbände: there are only seven extant items. Although no Dutch originals have survived, they must have been especially popular in the Netherlands with the upper middle classes and the nobility. They are depicted on many panel paintings and miniatures from the Flemish and Northern Netherlandish school. A good example is the binding held by Mary on the polyptych of the Adoration of the Lamb in St. Bavon in Ghent, by Jan and Hubert van Eyck. Chemises are mostly found in the hands of the Virgin and other female saints, which indicates that the books must have been meant especially for the private worship of ladies.

The manuscript in the chemise binding is a Book of Hours which, judging from its decoration, must have been made in Valencia. The miniatures have been executed by two artists. The most talented of the two painted the Annunciation at the beginning of the Hours of the Virgin, reproduced here on the opposite page. His style reveals a strong influence of fifteenth-century Flemish panel painting, as can be seen, for instance, in the hairstyle - smooth hair across the head and fanning out below - and the sumptuous hang of the folds in the gowns.