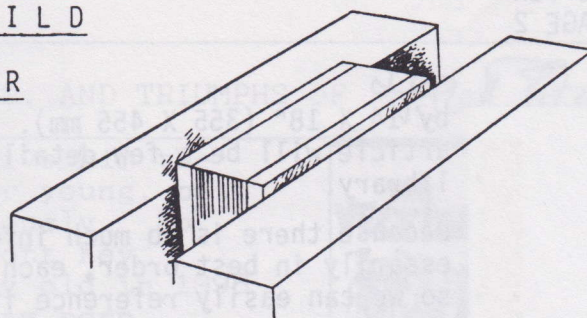




EDGE GILDING - John Mitchell (see picture next page). We return to material presented at the 14th Guild of Book Workers Seminar on standards of excellence in Bookbinding. The following article will be somewhat of a challenge. Our tape recorder was non-functioning and this was exactly the type of presentation where it was needed; a lot of material was presented by the speaker, and he spoke very rapidly. Also, he would think of new things, not in exact order.

Mr. Mitchell has written a book on this subject: *A CRAFTSMAN'S GUIDE TO EDGE DECORATION* (with Nolan Watts), The Standing Press, 1993 and some of you may already have it. John said his book contains all information presented during his session, but in my opinion that is not entirely true. John's book also covers many other forms of edge treatment and represents an excellent reference source. On the other hand, illustrations in the book cannot compare with seeing a job done. Possibly following descriptions can draw on that experience and add helpful material. Please let me know if there are corrections or additions that should be made.

Here is what the Guild of Book Workers had to say about Mr. Mitchell's session:

"This presentation will cover the necessary equipment, the types of liquid adhesives that are available, the most effective gold leaf to use and the most efficient techniques require to produce solid gilt edges.

John Mitchell was apprenticed to the W.H. Smith bindery in 1947 as a gold finisher. His career progressed through The War Office, The British Museum, The house of Lords and the Foreign Office. In 1964 John commenced his teaching career at the London College of Printing and was later appointed Senior Lecturer in charge of bookbinding. For eighteen years John has acted as Chief Examiner for the City & Guilds of London Institute and is himself a silver medalist. John is also the author of two books on Edge Decoration and Gold Finishing."

And we also learned (toward the end of the presentation) that John is the President of our "sister" society, the Society of Bookbinders!

For a period John Mitchell was a full-time teacher but now has his own business and teaches one day a week. His bindery is about 30 miles south of London and he does some work for the Queen and other royalty (more on that later). He does general bookbinding but is known for edge gilding and gold finishing.

Edge gilding is usually found on books costing 500£ (prox. \$750) and up. John charges 8£ per edge, unless a book is large. He had just finished one for Queen Elizabeth that cost 140£ for three edges; it was about 4" (100 mm) thick