

ID Edrich

Abbreviations & Glossary of Terms

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Condition	2
Library & book club	2
Common abbreviations	3
Glossary of terms	5

Summary

The terms that we use are based on those used by the Antiquarian Booksellers Association of America, which we have adapted to suit our needs. Most of the terms that we use are included in this document.

Condition

The terms we use to denote condition are as follows:

As New
Fine
Near Fine
Very Good
Good
Fair
Poor

Condition

As New: the book is in the state that it should have been in when it left the publisher.

Fine (F or FN): As New. but allowing for the normal effects of time on an unused book that has been protected. A Near Fine book shows no damage.

Near Fine (NF): As New, but allowing for the effects of time on an unused book. A Near Fine book shows no damage, but may be slightly worn..

Very Good (VG): worn but un-torn. Any defects are usually noted using otherwise very good (owvg).

Good (G): not very good. An average used worn book that is complete. Any defects are usually noted using otherwise good (owg).

Fair: shows wear and tear but all the text pages and illustrations or maps are present. It may lack endpapers, half-title, and even the title page. Any defects are usually noted using otherwise fair (owf).

Poor: has the complete text but is so damaged that it is only of interest to a buyer who seeks a reading copy.

Binding Copy: the pages or leaves are perfect, but the binding is very bad, loose, off or non-existent.

Library & book club

Ex-library copies are usually designated as such no matter what the condition of the book.

Book Club copies are usually designated as such no matter what the condition of the book.

Important note

Please note that whilst we try to describe a book's condition in as definitive manner as possible, there is, inevitably, a degree of subjectivity. Where a client feels that a book's condition has not been properly described we will take the book back and refund the books cost. See our Standard Terms & Conditions.

Common abbreviations

ABA: Antiquarian Bookseller's Association (UK).

ABAA: Antiquarian Booksellers Association of America.

ADS: Autograph document signed.

aeg: All edges gilt.

aem: All edges marbled.

ALS: Autograph letter signed.

ANS: Autograph note signed.

DAB: Dictionary of American Biography.

DNB: Dictionary of National Biography.

dw: dust wrapper/jacket:

fep: front end paper

gt: Gilt top.

Lim Edn: Limited edition.

LS: Letter signed.

Mss: Manuscript

nd: This abbreviation means "no date" provided in the imprint.

np: "No place" of publication provided in the imprint.

op: Out-of-print.

rep (rear end paper)

teg.: top edge gilt.

TLS: typed letter signed.

v.5/3: 5th volume, part 3, for example.

waf: with all faults.

Wraps: Wrappers.

(name); indicates contributors (C Lee, TS Eliot) for example.

Glossary of terms

Antiquarian Bookseller's Association: (U.K. antiquarian booksellers association).

Antiquarian Booksellers Association of America: (U.S. antiquarian booksellers association).

Autograph document signed: document signed by the document's author.

All edges gilt: gilt applied to top edge, bottom edge & fore edge of the volume.

All edges marbled: marbling applied to top edge, bottom edge& fore-edge of volume.

Autograph letter signed: letter handwritten by the person signing the letter as opposed to LS, which is a manuscript letter written by someone other than the signer.

Autograph note signed: note signed by the note's author.

Advance copy: a copy of a book usually sent to reviewers prior to publication, may be in a different format and may or may not be bound.

Advance sheets: the unbound sheets of a new book, often galleys, distributed prior to publication.

Advertisements: many books & pamphlets, especially of the 19th century contained ads, especially ones advertising others books by the same publisher, often located at the back of the volume, following the text pages.

All published: the book or set is complete as is, and any additional parts or volumes were never published.

Annotated: Including critical and explanatory notes

Binding: the method of holding pages or sheets together; may be simply stapled or sewn, or sewn and enclosed in wrappers, but most often refers to a "hard" binding or covers. This type of binding may be covered with cloth, various leathers, or paper over boards or other more exotic materials. The binding can be done by hand or by machine as in a publisher's "trade binding". The following terms relate primarily to leather bindings:

Full binding: volume is entirely encased in leather (calf, sheep, morocco, etc.)

Three quarter binding: volume has leather spine and corners which occupy approx. 3/4 of the space along top edge of board (cover). The remainder of the board is covered with marbled paper, plain paper, cloth, different leather, etc.

Half binding: the spine and corner leather occupy only approx. 1/2 of top edge.

Quarter binding: usually lacks leather corners and leather of the spine occupies only approx. 1/4 of the top edge.

Binding copy: a book lacking the original binding or with a binding in poor condition, i.e. a book in need of a new binding. It can also be referred to as a reading copy.

Boards: the covers of a hard bound book; the boards are the stiff cardboard or paperboard which is usually covered with cloth or leather; and when covered with paper, the covers are properly referred to as "boards". Many pre-1850 books were issued by the publishers bound in boards (paper covered), allowing for an inexpensive binding which could later be replaced with leather by a hand book binder. Early (medieval) manuscript volumes were often bound between two oak boards, hence the probable origin of this term.

Book club edition: usually an inexpensive reprint utilizing poor quality paper and binding and sold by subscription to members of a book club; in general, of little interest to book collectors and of low monetary value.

Book jacket: the paper, often with illustrations and information about the book and author, used as a protective covering over the book; usually referred to as a "dust jacket" or "dj", sometimes called a "dust wrapper". Dust jacket art work is used to promote and sell the book.

Book formats: the traditional terms in use for describing book formats are derived from early printing methodology and the size of early handmade sheets of paper. When two leaves (four pages when printed on both sides) were printed on a sheet so that it could be folded once, collated with other folded sheets and bound, the format of the volume was a "folio". When four leaves (eight pages) were printed on the same size sheet, which would later be folded twice, the format of the resultant volume was a "quarto" (four leaves). The term "octavo" relates to the sheet having eight leaves printed on it. Today some booksellers are providing the height of a book in inches or centimeters rather than using these early terms which do not relate directly to the sheet size or process used for printing today. The following is offered as a guide to convert book formats to approximate book sizes:

Folio: more than 13 inches tall

Quarto (4to): approx. 10 to 13 inches tall, average 12 inches

Octavo (8vo): approx. 8 to 10 inches tall, average 9 inches

Duodecimo (12mo): approx. 7 to 8 inches tall, average 7.5 inches

Sextodecimo (16mo): approx. 6 to 7 inches tall, average 6.5 inches

There are smaller and larger books, i.e. many miniatures are 64mo, and most hard bound books are either octavo or duodecimo in size.

Book sizes: see Book formats.

Bookworm: any of a number of moth or fly larvae which tunnel through the pages of books leaving behind small channels, holes in individual leaves. Very early books often have some evidence of bookworm damage.

Broadside: a printing, often an official announcement or poem or music, which occurs on a single sheet of paper and only on one side; the verso (other side) is blank. When printed on both sides, the sheet becomes a "broadsheet".

Broadsheet: a printing which occurs on both sides of a single leaf (see also broadside).

Buckram: a stiff, coarsely woven, filled cloth used for less expensive, but stronger wearing, cloth book binding material; often used for library books.

Calf: book binding leather from a calf hide or cattle hide; a commonly used material for leather binding (see also morocco, sheep, and vellum).

Cancel leaf: a new leaf, often the title page, to which changes have been made, which is glued onto the narrow stub left by the removed leaf which has been excised.

Cloth: book binding material woven from cotton, linen, wool or synthetic fibers.

Collation: used in descriptive bibliography as the term which describes the non-binding portion of the book, verifying the proper sequence and completeness of pages & their gatherings (signatures).

Colophon: a statement occurring at the rear of a volume following the text, relating information about the printing history and physical aspects of the book; often includes name of printer, type of paper, typeface, size of edition, date of printing, etc. Early books often had a colophon instead of a title page imprint and modern private press or other examples of fine printing often use a colophon.

Conjugate leaves: leaves which are physically attached, part of the same sheet.

Covers: the binding of a book; i.e. cloth, calf, morocco, boards, wrappers, etc.

Cut edges: the most common type of book edges, trimmed even with a large binders knife prior to finishing the binding process (see also uncut, unopened, and deckle edges).

Dictionary of American Biography: a useful 20 volume reference, especially when collecting manuscripts and autographs and attempting to learn about the authors.

Dictionary of National Biography: multi-volume (number of volumes dependent upon the edition) reference of biographies of British citizens (the U.K.).

Dampstain: stain often of a shade of tan or gray resulting from water or other liquid damage to a volume; tolerated by collectors when it is minimal and occurs in very old, scarce volumes; its presence does lower the monetary value.

Deckle edge: natural or sometimes artificial rough edge of page, left uncut (see also cut edges, uncut, and unopened).

Disbound: descriptive term for a book or pamphlet or ephemera which has been removed from its binding.

Dummy copy: book made to appear like a soon to be published title, but with a text block of blank pages (see also salesman sample).

Duodecimo: (see definition under "Book sizes")

Dust jacket: the paper, often with illustrations and information about the book, used as a protective covering over the book; sometimes called a book jacket (dj) or a dust wrapper (dw). Collectors of literary first editions usually insist on having a fine copy of the original dust jacket with the book.

Dust wrapper: (see above definition of dust jacket).

Edition & Printing edition: includes the copies of a book or other printed material which originate from the same plates or setting of type. If 500 copies of a book are printed on Oct. 5 and 300 copies are printed from the same substantially unchanged plates on Dec. 10, all 800 copies are part of the same edition. Printing: the copies of a book or other printed material which originate from the same press run or from the same plates or setting of type at one time. In the example given for "Edition" above, the 500 copies would be the first printing and the 300 copies comprise the second printing. In the 19th century some publishers labeled later printings as if they were later editions, i.e. a second printing would be called a "second edition" on the copyright page.

End paper: paper, often of coated stock or marbled paper or otherwise "fancy" paper, with one half pasted to the cover; used primarily to give a finished appearance to the binding.

Ex-library: legitimately removed (discarded/deaccessioned) from an institutional library, such as a public library, university library, historical society, etc. Often has catalog numbers inked or painted on the spine, library bookplates, embossed or rubber-stamped identification on the title page and plates, library card pockets and often shows considerable wear and/or rebinding in a plain buckram. Referred to as "ex-lib" and of considerably lower

monetary value than the respective book which has never been the property of an institutional library.

Ex-libris: a Latin phrase meaning "from the books" or to paraphrase, "from the library or collection of"; the phrase is frequently used on bookplates.

Extra-illustrated: usually a volume made into a unique copy with additional illustrations, autographs, or manuscripts added by carefully gluing or tipping-in this extra material.

First Appearances: this term can refer to several different concepts:

The first time an author appears in print, i.e. Henry D. Thoreau's first appearance in print was as an anonymous obituary in a Concord newspaper.

The first time a specific writing of an author appears (in a magazine or newspaper or anthology), Emily Dickinson's poem "I'm nobody Who are you" appears first in "Life", March 1891.

The first time a specific subject is treated in book form, i.e. the first American book on the subject of dry fly fishing was written by Emlyn Gill and published in 1913.

First Books: the first book appearance by an author (usually refers to a book entirely by the author, not merely a first appearance of a poem or short story in an anthology). Frequently an established, well known author's first book is not widely known; i.e. James Fenimore Cooper's "Precaution".

First Edition: All of the copies printed from the first setting of type; can include multiple printings if all are from the same setting of type. Every printed book has a first edition, many never have later editions. A later edition would have substantial changes in the printing plates or type such as the addition of a new preface or new chapter or major changes throughout the text and often is printed from a complete resetting of the type. When book collectors use the term first edition, they are usually referring to the first printing and if there are different states or issues, the earliest of those.

First Edition some related terms:

Issue: a portion of an edition printed or published deliberately by the printer or publisher in a distinct form differing from the rest of the printing relative to paper, binding, format, etc. The distinction between "issue" and "state" is that the former relates to changes done on purpose by the publisher and intentionally treated as a separate unit, i.e. a large paper issue.

State: a portion of a printing with changes such as minor alterations to the text either intentional or accidental; insertion of cancels, advertisements, or insertions; copies on

different paper without intention of creating a separate issue; and other changes other than folding or collating or binding. An example would be when a pressman discovers battered or broken type, stops the presses and resets that portion of the page by replacing the broken type and then resumes the printing.

Variants: usually refers to differences in bindings or end papers (paper located just inside the front and rear covers, one half of which is glued to the cover) within an issue or printing. One variant may have a title stamped on the front cover in black and another may be stamped in red.

Flyleaf: a blank leaf (or leaves) inserted during the binding process between the free end paper and the beginning or end of the printed pages.

Foxing: rust coloured spots which occur on paper resulting from oxidation of both organic and iron impurities left behind during the paper making process. Only when these impurities exist in the paper, given exposure to the right humidity and temperature factors, will foxing occur. This process is intrinsic to the paper; some paper will never have the rusty, brown, yellow spots known as foxing.

Folio: see Book size.

Frontispiece: an illustration or plate inserted immediately in front of the title page, with the illustration facing the title page, often abbreviated as frontis.

Full Binding: usually refers to leather binding, see Binding.

Gilt top: gilt applied to the top edge of the text block (see also a.e.g.)

Gathering: a folded printed sheet of leaves prior to binding; referred to as a signature after binding.

Gutter: the inner margin of the leaves of a bound book; adjacent inner margins of facing pages when book is open.

Half title: a page which precedes the title page and the text, with the title (often abbreviated) usually centered on the page.

Hinge: the inside portion of the flexible area where book cover meets the book spine; often used interchangeably with the term joint, which should be used to designate the outside or exterior portion of the "hinge". A volume which has received heavy or rough use often has cracked or broken hinges.

Holograph: Anything handwritten entirely by the writer; i.e. a letter written entirely in the handwriting of the correspondent is a holograph of that person.

Imprint: when used as a noun refers to the publication data located at the base of a title page, usually includes the city of publication, name of the publisher (sometimes the printer), and the year of publication. Sometimes this information is located in a colophon at the back of a book. Imprint can also be used to refer to a printed piece from a certain location or period of time, i.e. the university has a collection of 18th century Massachusetts imprints.

Incunable: anything printed during the 15th century, the first century of printing with "moveable type"; from the Latin, meaning "from the cradle"; can also be used in a relative sense to refer to other early printings, i.e. incunables from the Pacific islands.

Inscribed: a book, or other printed piece, with a handwritten and signed statement usually written for a specific named person(s) and often located on the end paper or title page.

Issue: a portion of an edition printed or published deliberately by the printer or publisher in a distinct form differing from the rest of the printing relative to paper, binding, format, etc. The distinction between "issue" and "state" is that the former relates to changes done on purpose by the publisher and intentionally treated as a separate unit, i.e. a large paper issue. (see also first edition, state, variant).

Joint: the exterior flexible "hinge" where book cover meets book spine; "hinge" is usually used to designate the equivalent inside or interior flexible area. The joint is often an area that splits or cracks or otherwise shows wear in an older cloth or leather volume.

Letter signed: a letter written by another, usually a secretary, but signed by the correspondent, as opposed to an ALS which is written entirely in the hand of the correspondent.

Large paper copy: a special edition printed with the pages reconfigured to result in larger leaves with very wide page margins; the text of the individual pages remaining the same as the normal edition; usually large paper copies are printed in small, limited editions.

Leaf (leaves): refers to the smallest, standard physical unit of paper in a printed piece; in the case of books and pamphlets, usually with a printed page on each side of a leaf; a broadside is printed on a single side of a single leaf.

Marbled edges: usually the top, bottom and fore-edge of a book with a multi-coloured, swirled design, somewhat resembling the coloration pattern of marble stone.

Marbled paper: paper decorated with a multi-coloured, swirled design or pattern. Often used for end papers or for paper covered boards, especially with 3/4 or 1/2 leather bindings.

Morocco: leather binding made from goat hides; usually used in high quality or fine bindings for the interesting texture of the leather; originally tanned with sumac in the country of Morocco (see also calf, sheep and vellum).

No date: no date provided in the imprint.

No place: No place of publication provided in the imprint.

Octavo: see "Book sizes".

Out-of-print: no longer available from the publisher (o.p. or op).

Plate: an illustration(s) printed on a separate sheet of paper (usually heavy and better quality than the text pages) and added to the book during the binding process.

Pre-publication price: When a new title is first offered for sale, often this special lower price is promoted and available for a limited time before publication.

Presentation copy: a copy of a printed item inscribed and signed by the author (or publisher) and provided as a gift; see "inscribed".

Printing: the copies of a book or other printed material which originate from the same press run or from the same plates or setting of type at one time. In the example given for "Edition", the 500 copies would be the first printing and the 300 copies comprise the second printing. In the 19th century some publishers labeled later printings as if they were later editions, i.e. a second printing would be called a "second edition" on the copyright page. (see also edition).

Prospectus: printed material, often in the form of a leaflet or broadside, which describes a forth-coming title in detail, often including information on ordering the book including pre-publication price.

Quarto: see "Book formats".

Reading copy: well worn, usually abused copy of a book, often in need of rebinding; i.e. suitable for reading, but unlikely to be included in a book collection unless rebound; sometimes refers to a copy that can be read, but is not of a quality worth rebinding.

Rebacked: the spine or backstrip has been replaced with new material, in some cases the original worn backstrip is saved and glued over the new material.

Rebound: copy of a book which has had the original binding removed and a new binding attached; when there is no need to resew or trim the book, the term "recased" is sometimes used to indicate that a new binding and new end papers have been added.

Recto: the front side of a leaf or in the case of an open book the page on the right, with the page on the left being the verso.

Salesman sample: volume made for door-to-door sales of a forth-coming title, usually has examples of several binding styles, the title page, a few pages of text and some illustrations (if any) and often a few ruled leaves bound in the back to be used to record the sales transaction including the name and address of those ordering the book.

Self-wrappers: the wrappers of a pamphlet consist of the first leaf of the first signature and the final leaf of the last signature; i.e. no special or distinct paper wrappers have been added; often government pamphlets and almanacs have self-wrappers.

Sewn-as-issued: a pamphlet which has been sewn together and exists in its original state relative to binding; normally a pamphlet with self-wrappers.

Shaken: indicates that sections (signatures) of a book or pamphlet are becoming quite loose, but remain attached to the binding.

Sheep: a common leather binding material from sheep hides; used like calf for a less expensive binding than morocco, appears to have been frequently used for text books and law books in the 19th century (see also calf, morocco, and vellum).

Shelfback: another term for spine or backstrip.

Signature: a group or gathering of leaves printed together on a sheet of paper which is folded, bound with other signatures and trimmed to form a book or pamphlet; i.e. a section or grouping of pages in a book resulting from printing and binding methodology; also refers to a person's self handwritten name (autograph signature).

Signed: refers to a printed item on which the author (or illustrator or publisher) has written their name, usually on the end papers, title page, or in the case of pamphlets on the wrappers.

Slipcase: a box with one open side, into which a volume or a multivolume set is "slipped" for protection; publishers often issue a slipcase with two and three volume sets.

Solander case: a box in which a book is stored for protection which has one end (often leather) which resembles the spine or backstrip of a book.

Spine: the back portion of a book's binding which is visible when a book is shelved in a bookcase; the portion which is attached at the joints to the front and rear covers.

Started: indicates that one or more signatures of a book are protruding beyond the rest of the fore edge, i.e. beginning to pull away from the binding to which they are still attached; not as loosened as the term "shaken" indicates.

State: a portion of a printing with changes such as minor alterations to the text either intentional or accidental; insertion of cancels, advertisements, or insertions; copies on different paper without intention of creating a separate issue; and other changes other than folding or collating or binding. An example would be when a pressman discovers battered or broken type, stops the presses and resets that portion of the page by replacing the broken type and then resumes the printing. (see also first edition, cancel, issue, and variant).

typed letter signed: as opposed to a handwritten letter signed by the writer.

Three quarter binding: see "Binding".

Unbound: indicates that the item has never been bound, i.e. unbound sheets; not the same as disbound which indicates that the binding has been removed.

Uncut: refers to the edges of a book in an untrimmed state, edges are somewhat uneven, also see "Deckle edges".

Unopened: a book with signatures which have never been cut as opposed to untrimmed and uneven (see "Uncut"); unopened books retain the folds of the original gathering and contain many pages which cannot be read without first opening the pages with a knife. Some collectors prefer an unopened book because it indicates that the book has never been read; other collectors who read their books would rather not have the task of cutting open pages and risking tears and jagged leaf edges.

Variants: usually refers to differences in bindings or end papers (paper located just inside the front and rear covers, one half of which is glued to the cover) within an issue or printing. One variant may have a title stamped on the front cover in black and another may be stamped in red. (see also first edition, issue, and state).

Vellum: true vellum is a thin specially treated untanned "leather" from calf skin, also known as parchment (high quality parchment from calf skin is called vellum; general quality parchment is made from calf, goat or sheep skin) ; used for documents and for book bindings; many early books (of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries) have vellum bindings; paper makers have produced parchment and/or vellum papers also used for book bindings.

Verso: the reverse or opposite or left-hand side, especially used in reference to a leaf which has a recto and verso side; in an open book the recto is the right hand page and the verso is the left hand page; in the case of a broadside only the recto is printed and the verso is blank.

With all faults: indicates a book or other item which is being offered without careful delineation of its condition or without careful collation; usually indicates a less than "very good" copy, which probably does have faults, often including excessive wear or missing leaves, plates or maps.

Wrappers: abbreviated as "wraps", wrappers are the paper covers of a pamphlet, often of a paper of heavier weight than the text paper; when you see "wrappers" you know the item is not a hard bound book, but is instead a pamphlet or magazine with paper covers; usually not used to refer to 20th century paperback books which are called "soft bound" (with paper covers).