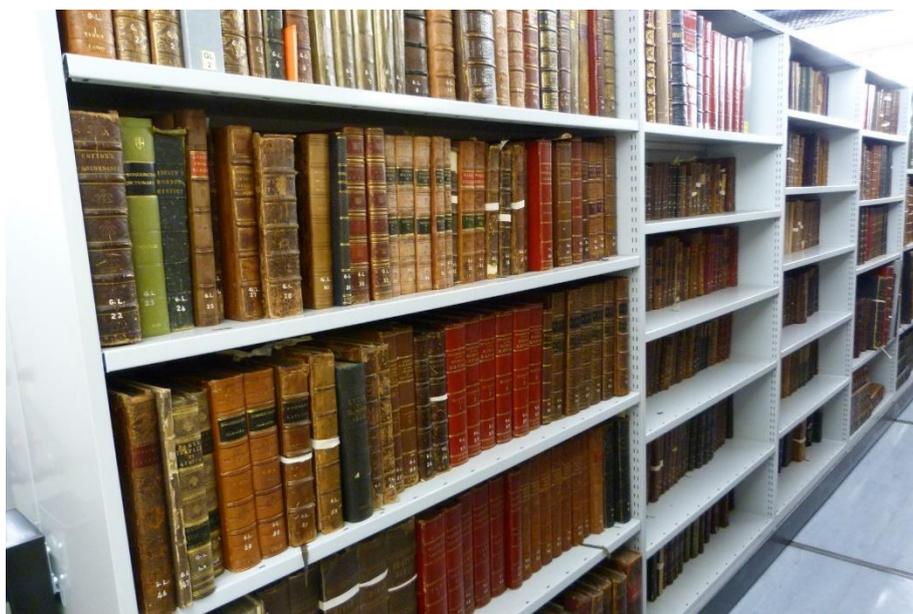


# Gresham Collection (Travel, History etc.) Condition Report and Treatment Proposal

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## Introduction

The aim of the survey was to verify the condition of the items and their suitability for display and consultation.

Where the items present damage in critical areas a conservation intervention is suggested. The purpose of the treatments is solely to consolidate damaged areas which could worsen during handling.

The minimal intervention proposed will not modify the existing situation but stabilise the material and delay the degradation caused by chemical reactions and physical strains during handling. A good packaging solution will also mitigate risks caused by environmental factors and provide for the long-term preservation of the items.

All the conservation materials proposed to repair the books are well established and tested to meet conservation standards, have good ageing properties, will have minimal chemical interaction with the original material, and be removable many years after their application.

## Description

Excluding the already conserved Music books and manuscripts, the remaining items in the collection mostly cover travel and topography, with some history. Many are illustrated, some with hand-colouring and others with fold-out maps. The core of the material dates from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The collection presents an interesting variety of bindings which identify the style used in a specific period. Most books are bound in leather, with the cover and the spine gold and/or

blind tooled, with raised or false bands, with a tight or hollow back book structure. The Nineteenth and twentieth century books are bound mostly in clock case bindings.

### **Condition :**

**Overall, the collection is in stable condition and most of the books can be safely accessed by readers.**

From the entire collection 105 books have been identified as unfit for consultation as it would cause further damage to the binding and the text-block.

The damage found in the volumes assessed is mainly on the binding rather than the text-block. Typical damages found on the books are:

- Detached boards either one or both from the text-block leaving it exposed to further risk of damage during handling.
- Detached spine exposing the sewing structure to further damage
- Broken joints
- Broken sewing
- Torn or missing caps
- Torn or missing end-bands as a result of inappropriate handling
- Scuffed leather
- Natural degradation of the constituent material
- Scuffed board corners
- Torn cover
- Book distortions

### **Treatment proposal**

The conservation work should be prioritised to the 105 books found unfit.

Different techniques will be used to reattach the boards according to the style of the binding. The losses of the leather and the cloth missing on the cover will be integrated with the most appropriate material.

### **Packaging**

Fragile and weak bindings should be housed in bespoke archival boxes. The box board is of pure cellulose, lignin free and buffered.

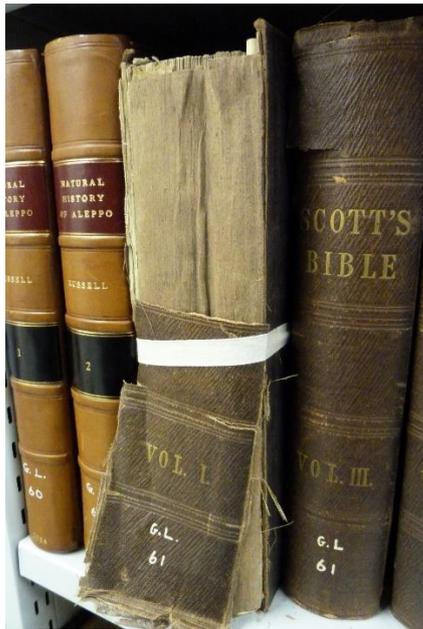
### **Time estimation and costs:**

We had previously reported that this part of the collection was in general in better condition than the Music collection. This remains true as the total needing repair is a smaller percentage of the remaining volumes than was found in the Music Collection.

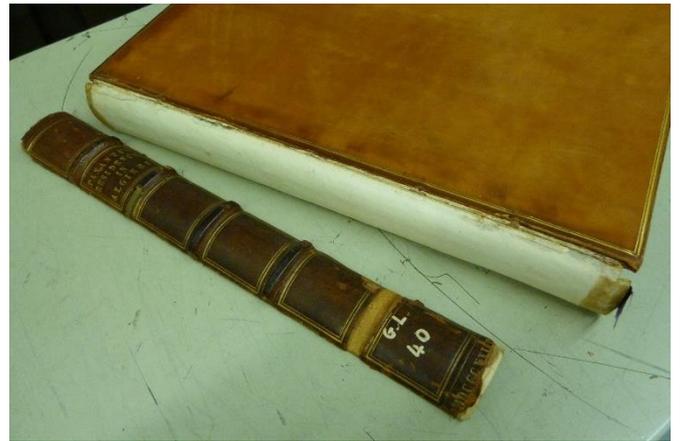
To repair the identified 105 volumes would require 16 months, employing a full-time conservator on a fix term contract (the 16 months includes annual leave and potential sick leave of up to 10 days).

The salary including on costs for a suitably qualified Grade D conservator currently stands at £68,767. Cost for Materials is £2,285 +VAT

### Photographic documentation of typical damage found in the collection



Torn cloth spine



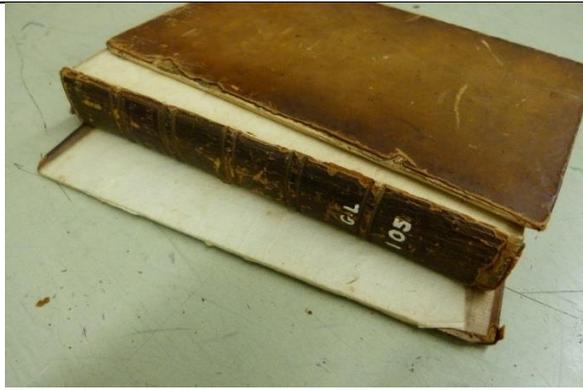
Detached leather spine



Broken sewing



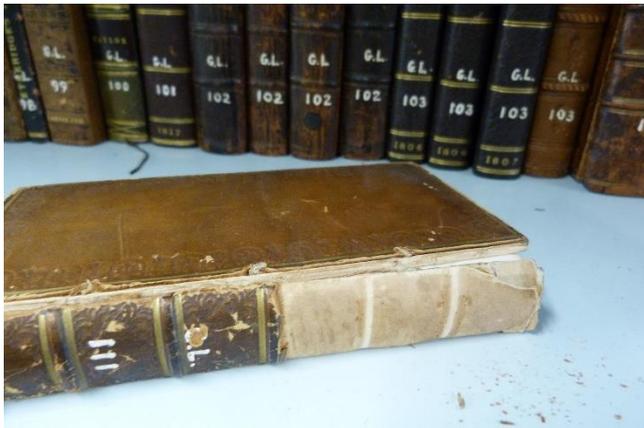
Detail of a broken sewing



Detached boards



Torn joint



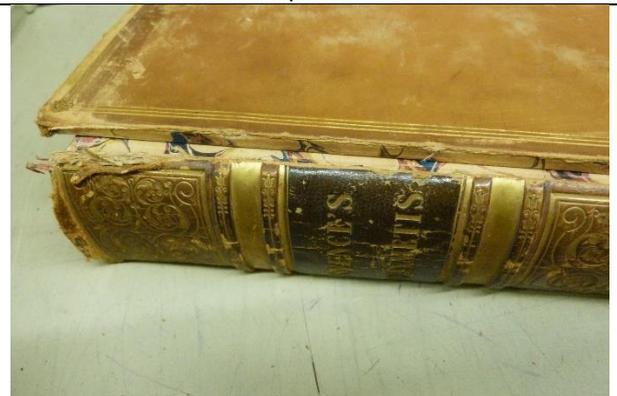
Partial missing spine



A series of books without a spine



Scuffed head cap



Detached front board