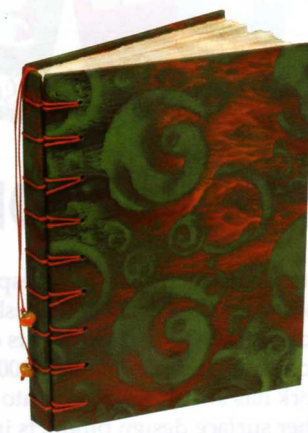


PASTE PAPER — WHEN OLD IS NEW

USING CENTURIES-OLD TECHNIQUES, YOU CAN CREATE DESIGNS THAT ARE BANG UP TO DATE. BY DEENA SCHNITMAN



If you have ever visited an antiquarian bookstore or a rare book library and opened a book that was published in Europe between the late 16th and 18th centuries, the chances are you will have found a decorative endpaper. Endpapers are those papers found at the beginning and end of books with one half pasted to the inside front and back covers and the other half remaining free.

The earliest books and manuscripts had no

endpapers – they were unavailable to the common man and were the highly prized possessions of churches and monasteries. With the invention of the printing press by Johannes Gutenberg in the mid 1400s, books were made available to the general public. It soon became evident that it was necessary to protect the text from not only the wear and tear of much handling but in the early years from bindings that were often of heavy hides stretched over wooden boards. Endpapers became the logical solution. Early endpapers were often plain and consisted of vellum, paper or even scraps of printed paper with text that might be unrelated to the text it was now protecting. Gradually, decorative papers became the fashion.

Of all the early methods of decorating paper (marbled, printed and stamped papers being the others) paste paper is my favorite. Historically there is no school of paste paper. No paste paper movement. No one has been given credit for inventing the process. It is likely that paste paper started in bookbinderies where all the materials needed – paper, paste, pigments and tools to create designs were readily available. In addition, no special skill was needed to produce a beautiful paper. As time went on, paste paper became commercially available and a book printed and



