THE PROGRESS OF THE ART:

PAPER MARBLING IN THE UNITED STATES, 1880-1950

by

Emily C. Pazar

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the University of Delaware in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in American Material Culture

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ABSTRACT

Paper marbling looks like magic. A marbler uses a brush to sprinkle pigments that float on a heavy solution. After manipulating the colors into a design with combs, the marbler sets a paper on top of the bath. The pattern reveals itself as the paper is pulled away. This process was shrouded in a level of mystery until the nineteenth century, when manuals and articles in periodicals began to explain marbling methods. A wave of new interest in the craft began in the 1880s, when authors no longer just broadly claimed to reveal secrets, but provided detailed guidance in conjunction with commercially prepared materials and tools. Hungarian-born marbler and marbling supplier Josef Halfer offered specific, thorough advice in his manual *The Progress of the Marbling Art*, along with carefully formulated products for sale. Halfer’s approach to supplying scientific precision, adapted to marbling distributors, teachers, and curious audiences in the United States, presented a special kind of demystification for professional bookbinders and novice marblers alike. Through contexts of bookbinding, manuals and lessons, technologies, and alternatives to hand-marbled paper, this study examines how specific instructions mediated a new, more clearly defined relationship between marblers and their materials.
Chapter 1
INTRODUCTION: DEMYSTIFICATION

Paper marbling looks like magic. A marbler uses a brush to sprinkle pigments that float on a heavy solution. After manipulating the colors into a design with combs, the marbler sets a paper carefully on top of the bath. The pattern reveals itself as the paper is pulled away. Manuals and histories of marbling from the nineteenth century through today describe marbling in terms of mystery and obscurity. This paper will examine how using specific educational materials and selling regulated supplies and tools clarified and regulated the marbling process. It will situate this process of textual demystification within the context of several decades in the United States during which changes in marbling were notably dynamic. This period, from around 1880 to 1950, saw an emergence of new, more specific marbling instruction; the distribution of marbling materials; new options in hand-marbling alternatives; and the choice to engage with a range of tools and technologies meant to facilitate the marbling process.

The Marbling Process

Marbling has a long history and the process can employ many different types of materials. However, the basic idea remains mostly the same across materials and specific techniques. As in printmaking, medium and design are transferred to paper from a prepared surface. Colored pigments, usually water-based, are floated on top of
a heavier liquid, usually a water and gum solution.\textsuperscript{1} Whether the colors are manipulated or not, papers or textiles are applied on top of the floating pigments and lifted off to reveal the marbled surface.

This marbling technique is based in traditions rooted in Japan and the Ottoman Empire. The idea of decorating surfaces using this technique reached Western Europe by the middle of the sixteenth century.\textsuperscript{2} The methodology of marbling was carefully guarded in countries like France and England by the eighteenth century, when the knowledge was carried over to the United States by several craftsmen hoping to turn a profit with decorated paper.\textsuperscript{3} Master marblers guarded their trade knowledge by separating and dividing tasks among workers in their shops. By doing so, they remained the only ones with access to all of the information needed to create the papers from start to finish. As apprentices learned each of the steps, they could become masters of their own workshops with enough capital and access to markets.

As with many trades, the marbling workshop remained shrouded in a level of mystery into the nineteenth century. Englishman Joseph Moxon’s book entitled \textit{Mechanick Exercises: or the Doctrine of Handy-Works. Applied to the Works of Smithing, Joinery, Carpentry, Turning, Bricklayery} was published in 1703. Using the medium of print to democratize access to trade secrets, Moxon provides a level of


\textsuperscript{3} Ibid., 88.
detail that exceeds any contemporary printed marbling instructions, which were generally limited to short descriptions until the mid-nineteenth century. However, a proliferation of trade manuals began to allow for a broader understanding. Writers who endeavored to describe marbling processes expanded relatively simple accounts of marbling into more detailed descriptions, using language that positioned the reader as an insider learning trade secrets.

Printed descriptions became more precise as the demand for more accessible information about paper decorating was increasing for book-related crafts in the nineteenth century. By the 1890s, periodical literature was indicating a “bookbinding fad” in the United States. The Boston Herald proclaimed in 1895 that “it is really becoming to be quite a fad for women of leisure and refinement” to “set up an amateur bookbindery in her boudoir.” Readers were advised on how to make beautiful books on a budget, and this often included acquiring some marbled paper or alternatives, like watered silk, to be used as flyleaves.4 Uses for marbled paper beyond the scope of bookbinding were suggested in periodical literature as well. As Marjorie Webb asserts in a 1926 article titled “You Will Find Many Uses for Marbled Paper,” there were indeed many ways to employ the decorated paper, from envelope lining to gift wrapping and lamp shades.5 These new methods and recommendations were shared


with a greater public in many forms beyond the traditional manual, from popular magazines to trade literature and newspapers.

**Historiography**

The changing and sustained process of paper marbling can be explored from the perspective of many places, people, and objects. These material and social networks related to marbling in the United States are complicated, but often link back to one figure, Josef Halfer. When I was exploring an aesthetic interest in marbling, I came across Anne Chambers’ book *The Practical Guide to Marbling*, published in 1986. It answered my questions about how it was done, sparked new ones regarding the production of marbled papers and their historical background, and ultimately directed my attention to Halfer. Chambers’ book is introduced by Bernard C. Middleton, who asserts that “the craft of marbling was greatly revitalized in the 1880s by Josef Halfer, a bookbinder of Budapest, whose researches were of great importance.”6 Interested in how a craft like marbling might be dramatically altered by one person, I began to research Halfer and his work. A native of Budapest, Halfer authored a German-language book called *Die Fortschritte der Marmorierkunst: Ein praktisches Handbuch für Buchbinder und Buntpapierfabrikanten; nach technisch-wissenschaftlichen Grundlagen bearbeitet* [The Progress of the Marbling Arts: a Practical Handbook for Bookbinders and Decorative Papermakers: From Technical Scientific Principles] in 1885. I was struck by how straightforward each edition of his book was, illustrating patterns and techniques with hand-marbled samples (Figure 1). I

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found more scholarship supporting the idea that Halfer was greatly influential in Phoebe Jane Easton’s book, *Marbling: A History and a Bibliography*, which described marbling periods as “pre-Halferian” and “post-Halferian.” The start date for the research reflected in this project is based on Halfer’s manual publication with editions in numerous languages, which began in the mid-1880s. The 1880s marks the beginning of a marbling revival, both in enthusiasm and in a desire to innovate and experiment with materials and technologies associated with the craft.

Figure 1  (L) “Table VI. Nonpareil Marble;” (C) “Table VII. Peacock and Bouquet Marbles;” (R) “Table IX. Turkish Marbles.” Josef Halfer and Louis Kinder. *The Progress of the Marbling Art*. Buffalo: Louis Kinder, 1893. Robert A. Haas Family Arts Library, Yale University.


Two earlier French resources illustrated and described elements of the marbling trade. Denis Diderot’s widely influential *Encyclopédie, ou Dictionnaire Raisonné des sciences, des Arts et des Métiers* [Encyclopedia, or a Systematic Dictionary of the Sciences, Arts, and Crafts] gives an account of how marblers work and illustrates with plates that show the appearance of a marbling workshop set-up (Figure 2). A widely reprinted 1834 French volume titled *Manuel de Relieur* [Manual of Bookbinding], by Sébastien Lenormand, includes a short chapter on the tools and processes needed to marble a sheet of paper. What differentiates Halfer’s work from earlier publications is his careful deconstruction of materials and chemical reactions that made marbling work. Halfer intended his work as a piece of trade literature. According to his preface to the first German edition, he intended the book for “practical men,” those who had not yet devoted the time to overcome the scientific

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8 Denis Diderot and Jean le Rond d’Alembert, *Encyclopédie, ou Dictionnaire Raisonné des sciences, des Arts et des Métiers, etc*, vol. IV (Paris: Denis Diderot and Jean le Rond d’Alembert, 1751), 72-77.

complexities of the trade itself. In addition to tradespeople who were already engaged with bookbinding and related practices, his work also reached amateur bookmakers. Halfer’s work allowed people to marble outside of the confines of a traditional workshop. His innovations diverged from earlier methodologies, including using carrageen moss instead of gum tragacanth for the marbling bath, and innovated with new materials. Carefully considered supplies, which Halfer both recommended and sold, brought the art of marbling within closer reach than it had ever been – making it something that readers could accurately achieve if they were willing to follow his methods.

10 Josef Halfer, The Progress of the Marbling Art (Fresh Ink Press: Taos, NM, 1989), 3. This paper will primarily reference the facsimile copy of Halfer’s book, produced by Fresh Ink Press. This copy includes an introduction by Phoebe Jane Easton, and besides printed reproductions rather than hand-marbled samples, is a faithful version of the first American edition of The Progress of the Marbling Art.

11 Ibid., 24-25.
The impact of *The Progress of the Marbling Art* may be measured by subsequent reprints and translations of his work. Several bibliographies of late nineteenth-century bookbinding cite the first German edition published in Budapest, a second published in Stuttgart, a French edition, and finally an American edition.
published in English. The 1893 American edition of the book ties Halfer to the American Arts and Crafts movement. The edition was managed by Louis Kinder, head bookbinder for the Roycrofters arts and crafts colony of East Aurora, New York. The Roycroft Press published an array of pamphlets and novels in fine bindings, to an extent seeking to replicate the emphasis on materials and aesthetics in William Morris’ Kelmscott Press. Before Kinder was brought into this role with the Roycrofters, he was an independent bookbinder in Buffalo, New York. Kinder coordinated the translation of The Progress of the Marbling Art and inserted advertisements for Halfer’s marbling materials in the back of each copy. A price list offers “Halfer’s Imported Marbling Colors,” along with complete marbling kits and essential tools such as brushes and combs. Halfer’s materials also show up in a book by W.C. Doebbelin, who seems to have founded the Halfer Marbleizing Company in Salem, Massachusetts. The Halfer Marbleizing Company published a book called Halfer’s Method of Marbling in the 1890s, including several chapters on methods and more than a dozen pages of marbled pattern samples tipped into the back matter of the book. Halfer lent his name and reputation to a commercial marbling machine that came to be used by bookbinders in the twentieth century. His detailed model of printed instruction and teaching in person reached the United States through numerous figures working in publishing houses, paper companies, commercial marbling studios, and private homes.


13 Wolfe, Marbled Paper, 132.
Halfer’s influence may also be measured by the number of writers who have used his model of marbler-as-author during the later nineteenth and twentieth centuries. A long list of marblers engaged in a mix of describing, practicing, and collecting marbling.\textsuperscript{14} The history of paper marbling has long been composed and collected by figures within the bookbinding community, often marblers themselves. One of the most significant contributions to marbling scholarship was written by Richard Wolfe, Curator of Rare Books and Manuscripts at the Francis A. Countway Library of Medicine at Harvard University and a marbler himself. He wrote \textit{Marbled Paper: Its History, Techniques, and Patterns: with Special Reference to the Relationship of Marbling to Bookbinding in Europe and the Western World}, which was published in 1990. It is regarded as the main authority on global marbling history, though its focus is largely on European practices. Wolfe offers one of the few comprehensive accounts of American marbling from the eighteenth through twentieth centuries, giving words to Halfer’s influence on W.C. Doebbelin, who distributed Halfer’s method and materials in the United States, and the development of new marbling tools.\textsuperscript{15} Wolfe’s work serves as the capstone to a trend of marbling manuals and published scholarship done by marblers, beginning in the early 1980s and resulting in numerous histories and marbling guides.

\textsuperscript{14} A wide range of scholarly conversations by marblers can be found in \textit{Ink and Gall}, a magazine, edited by Polly Fox and published in the 1980s and 1990s. Marblers including Diane Mauer and Iris Nevins contributed, and current practice and historical precedents are both discussed. A collection of manuals and marbled paper collected and created by Norma Rubovits can be found at the Newberry Library.

\textsuperscript{15} Wolfe, \textit{Marbled Paper}, 131-134.
Marbling: A History and Bibliography, by Phoebe Jane Easton, published in 1983, outlines many of the most important sites to study marbling in the United States and examines the advent of machine marbling. Easton devotes a chapter to the impact of Rosamond Loring, who led a mid-twentieth-century interest in marbling with her 1942 text Decorated Book Papers: Being an Account of their Designs and Fashions. This book serves as a link between marbling manuals of the twentieth century and the scholarly histories that followed. Loring’s work provides the approximate end date for the research contained in this paper. Many amateur paper decorators have looked to Loring for the history and aesthetic analysis to contextualize their work. Loring was also a collector of decorated papers. Her collection, at Houghton Library, Harvard University, is available to scholars and collectors to better understand the ways that marbling was practiced over time and geography. Loring herself died in 1950, leaving a legacy of teaching materials, training methods, and an influential book for future generations of marblers, scholars, collectors, and designers.

Current marbling scholarship contains case studies of European marbling companies, translations of eighteenth-century German and French marbling manuals, and new editions of well-received marbling manuals. Besides chapters by Wolfe and Easton and an introduction to a Loring recipe book reprint by Hope Mayo and Sidney Berger, little has been formally published on American marbling in the later nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth. With this study, I intend to show the contexts of American marbling in this period, but also to better understand the impulse to write about the craft in terms of history, mythology, and techniques all together. The historiography and the material subject are thoroughly intertwined. The
late nineteenth century and early twentieth centuries mark a unique time in the United States, where marbling fit into larger contexts of craft revival.

**Material Culture and Methodology**

Writing about marbling can be just as complicated and messy as the craft itself. This project looks to many forms of marbled papers as a source. Marbling appears on several different spots on books, including covers, endpapers, and the edges of text blocks (Figure 3). The material realities of marbling products, from the paper and textiles to the pigments and fixatives, forge connections between marblers’ visualizations and physical results. These material results can and have been described in many different ways, especially regarding the patterns that shape and are shaped by factors including economics, taste, available supplies, and teaching methodology. Differences in regional and personal varieties of the paper impact the names they are given and the standards for the patterns to be classified in different families of design. There have been attempts to create uniform methods for describing patterns, but challenges arise in creating precise enough written information to serve as visual identification.16 Because there is not yet one accepted authoritative source for marbling terminology, this paper uses a combination of Richard Wolfe’s terminology in *Marbled Paper* and the University of Washington Libraries Digital Collections marbled paper source, “Paper Patterns,” when pattern names are used.17


The process that takes marbling from mind to hand to paper was both stagnant and changing. Beyond finished marbled products, questions about the material culture of knowledge transfer, mechanical innovation, and the physical labor of making a sheet of marbled paper all drive this study. To this end, I look to pamphlets, manuals, instructional materials, and advertisements to get a sense of how papers were made, distributed, and used. Advertising in book trade literature has offered information about the locations of marbling distributors in the United States and the types of materials they were offering. Descriptions of marbling intended for home crafters also occasionally show up in popular newspapers, along with sketches of bookbinderies or small marbling studios. Choosing everything from the type of instruction manual to the materials that would bring a marbled design from plan to reality were all significant choices with material consequences.

To marble a paper was to give it value, because of the high cost and expertise required to produce even just one sheet. The wide variety and availability of plain
sheets, as well as other printed decorated papers, could easily fill the endpaper spot in a book. Some individuals and firms tried to produce imitation marbling through printing processes, such as lithography and stamping with wooden blocks. The motivations were similar to other trends in book production overall; to make a product that was associated with luxury yet required less time, expense, equipment, and specific expertise. Time and aesthetics, two imprecise factors in marbling, must be considered in light of demands on production and consumer preferences at all levels of buying and selling. These papers could be a professionally-made luxury, but could also be a luxurious good produced through a casual hobby activity.

Finally, there was tension between technological innovation and the appeal of marbling being an exclusive and highly skilled trade. Marbling accounts usually refer to marblers as artists rather than scientists. Marbling manuals repeatedly claimed to be revealing a great secret in describing the details of the trade, depicting traditional methods of sprinkling pigments by hand and lowering pages one by one onto the marbling bath. Machines did not have a clear role to play in this romantic portrait of a craftsman. Here, Halfer bridges the gap between the individual magician marbler and the call to streamline and clarify the marbling process as he gives specific instructions and endorses machines for certain contexts. This study will look to Halfer and other marblers who aimed to demystify marbling by selling precision in information and materials, and how this process of sharing information and tools shaped the material qualities of marbled papers themselves.
Chapter 2

MARBLING IN THE UNITED STATES AND JOSEF HALFER

While marbling in the United States was largely situated in small workshop contexts in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the process would eventually be democratized by manuals explaining how to marble at home or in book-related businesses. The ways that knowledge was spread from abroad and within the United States immediately informed how the demystification process was contextualized in the late nineteenth century. The great impact that Josef Halfer had on both professional and amateur marbling was by marketing success through precision, allowing people to marble at home by purchasing exactly the materials he advised and by carefully following his instructions. His strategy of transferring knowledge and skills in-person, by book, and through marbling supplies make him a symbol of marbling demystification, and his work had an impact on late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century United States marbling. Halfer’s legacy of regulating materials and expanding marbling instruction opened new access points for interested readers beyond a tight circle of craftspeople. In the United States, the process of demystification and democratization took shape in the form of clearly-defined, accessible instructions for marbling, and a secure place for marbled paper as a sign of value and craftsmanship in bookbinding.

This chapter will address the context of marbling in the United States, its place in wider bookbinding practice, options for creating and buying paper, and the tools and materials used by marblers. It will end by discussing Halfer’s entry into the
conversation in the 1880s, tracking the enduring legacy of his brand and situating his material and educational contributions to the craft.

**Bookbinding in the United States**

The period from 1880 to 1950 in marbling cannot be examined without first going back to early American bookbinding, to better understand the ground onto which Halfer and his contemporaries were building. Bookbinding began as a trade very soon after the development of English colonies on the North American continent. The “Cambridge Style” was highly influential on the types of books that were developed in the mid-seventeenth through late eighteenth centuries, and included calf leather, stained or red sprinkled book edges, and marbled endpapers. While American bookbinders found inspiration in this form, they also made some adaptations in both simple blank account books and more complicated texts. Benjamin Franklin himself employed fine bookbinders who innovated this form, including Joseph Goodwin from England, who purchased materials including pasteboard, parchment, and marbled paper from Franklin.19

Marbled text block edges on bound volumes were value markers in England for government documents, personal libraries, and official accounts among other texts. Blank account books were major points of sale for many American bookbinders, and local business owners understood that marbled edges signified official books. By the mid-nineteenth century in the United States, even some clothbound accounting


19 Ibid., 20.
textbooks aimed at primary schoolers had marbled edges, such as Bryant and Stratton’s 1861 *Common School Book-Keeping: Embracing Single and Double Entry* (Figure 4). Marbled elements are found on blank books used for taking inventories and maintaining businesses from art supply stores to hotels (Figure 5). A marker of official business and resistant to exact replication, marbled paper was used on currency as well. Benjamin Franklin’s grandson, Benjamin Franklin Bache, developed currency for the Bank of North America, a predecessor of the First Bank of the United States. When he designed the paper currency to be used by the Bank, he opted to print on marbled paper that his grandfather had collected while in France to deter counterfeiters.20

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During the first half of the nineteenth century, bookbinding underwent major changes in both England and the United States. The invention of case binding allowed books to be produced in large batches rather than being bound individually by hand. By the 1820s, leather bindings largely fell out of fashion in favor of cloth. Due to both taste and improved technologies, cloth bindings had transitioned from plain to highly decorative by the mid-nineteenth century. As the reading public grew and demand for books increased, large publishing houses incorporated English manufacturing...
strategies to meet the demand. As a result, many small shops were displaced.\footnote{Edward Walker and Paul S. Koda, \textit{The Art of Bookbinding, Its Rise and Progress, Including a Descriptive Account of the New York Book-Bindery and The Great New-York Book-Bindery} (New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll, 1984), 9-10.} Beyond cloth replacing leather, there was also a movement towards other new types of materials being used in book production. Aniline colors, by-products of coal tar, were widely used for printing ink despite not being color-fast. Brittle wood-pulp paper largely replaced rag paper. The Victorian impulse to decorate books manifested largely with making cheap ornament with machines.\footnote{Susan Otis Thompson, \textit{American Book Design and William Morris} (New York: R.R. Bowker Company, 1977), 2-3.} These material changes occurred gradually, and sometimes combinations of cheaper and more expensive materials appeared. This is frequently seen in sets and runs of bound periodicals, which sometimes mix cheap paper with marbling and leather binding. Three examples of marbling from books published in the United States are shown in Figure 6, which all come from books partially bound in leather, and have marbled endpapers, edges, and covers. These three papers show different patterns, from antique straight (left), to wide comb (center), to nonpareil (right). They also show a color palate common for this time. Reds, blues, oranges, and blacks are applied together to form contrast while the beige machine-made papers themselves show through the colors. The marbled papers present in these books represent a tradition associating the visual of marbling with books that took extra effort and attention to plan and create. At a time when parts of the printing and bookbinding process were mechanized, marbling also followed. Machines were developed to
marble papers to associate the patterns with status using a fraction of the time and cost that it would take to marble papers by hand. The fluidity of book production matched the fluidity of marbling, and when Halfer offered his precise guidance in his manual, it was to a heterogeneous book production market making papers of varied quality.


**Literary Clubs and the Status of Marbling**

In response to the onset of mechanization and the cheaper books that resulted, the public increased demand for more beautiful books by the 1850s. Literary clubs sprang up in major cities around the United States, including the Grolier Club in
Encouraged by the movement of artists to produce entire books themselves, these clubs supported a variety of activities related to fine bookbinding. The Club Bindery was established in 1895, with the aim of bringing high standards of bookbinding associated with Europe to the United States. Many talented bookbinders joined, and noted book collector Robert Hoe was involved in operations. Figure 7 shows a binding made by the Club Bindery. It is signed with the name “Leon Maillard,” a prominent French bookbinder, and an “RH,” which refers to Hoe. The Club Bindery imported many supplies from France, and the marbled paper used in this book was probably no exception. This example of marbled paper shows pigments that were skillfully manipulated to create the peaks and curves of the well-defined color lines. In selecting this paper, the bookbinder may have considered how the mustard yellow matched the tooled edges and cover of the book, and was set off by the other bright colors on the page. The pattern was neither too big and overwhelming nor too small and busy.

The aesthetics and ideology associated with making European-quality bookbinding in the United States emerged in a conversation between an elite few about skilled artisans being brought over from other places to produce bindings. This discussion put into action by groups like the Club Bindery happened at the same time that bookbinders were able to access unprecedented amounts of information through nineteenth-century manuals and pamphlet resources. The reputation of being best suited and most capable to make American books was up for grabs, and paper

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23 Ibid., 5.

marbling played an important role in the status of creating fine bindings. A 1902 book by William Loring Andrews said that bookbinding was a necessary subsidy of printing houses for many years, until “artistic bibliopegy” was developed as separate and distinct after a generation of book-lovers and collectors.\textsuperscript{25} William Loring Andrews himself produced books that included marbled endpapers (Figure 8). Halfer’s manual would allow bookbinders with access to his book opportunities to pursue specific techniques through precise instruction rather than total reliance on imported papers in this new artistic realm of book production.

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The language around marbling maintained a tension between art and craft, and newness and oldness. By the 1920s and 1930s, marbled paper was sometimes created as design work and illustration beyond its expected placement in a binding. Its use extended beyond established value marking and had moved into the realm of professional design. A New York Times “Book Notes” column from 1933 celebrates T. M. Cleland, who was a well-respected illustrator. The article mentions that for a special two-volume edition of Tristram Shandy, Cleland created all the illustrations, designed the edition, and “made the special marbled paper for the binding with his
own hands.”26 The aesthetics of marbling also extended to interior decorating and fashion. A 1930 issue of Women’s Wear Aesthetic: The Retailer’s Newspaper exclaimed in its headline, “Maison Paul Poiret Suggests Old-Fashioned Marbled Paper Prints in Chiffon.” It noted that models adorned at a fashion reception had individuality “given by choice fabrics and prints, including chiffon printed designs suggesting old-fashioned marbled papers inside book covers.”27 The status of marbling in these fashions show that these marbled patterns from old books could be appreciated in new ways. Marbling gained status in design for both books and other venues of craft and fashion, part of a process of popularization enabled through access to information about marbling.

This review was not the only article to frame marbling in terms of its oldness and fashionability. A May 2, 1895 article in The Christian Recorder titled “Marbling Books: The Slow Old Process by which the Fancy Edges are Made,” notes that because marbling’s popularity had decreased in the past, there was not as much pressure to speed up slow artistic methods for purposes of large-batch production.28


While this article ignores the marbling machines that had been speeding up marbling in the nineteenth century, it does show an increasing interest in the process of marbling by hand in the late nineteenth century. The flexible and changing status of the craft and science of making books was fostered at least in part by a growing literature about bookbinding and marbling more specifically.

One of the first texts about bookbinding published in the United States from the mid-nineteenth century period is Edward Walker’s *The Art of Bookbinding: Its Rise and Progress* (1850). He offered “cheap bookbinding” and had an auxiliary store in New York selling stationery. Drawing on English bookbinding manuals and his own experience, Walker writes that “bookbinding scarcely attained to the dignity of an art till within the past thirty years.” He calls out the special skills and knowledge involved in gilding over marbled edges. A listing of bookbindings offered by Walker noted marbled edges as a possible addition for over half of his available bookbinding options. Marbling maintained a significant place in bookbinding as consumers were choosing their own binding options through both stores and the post.

As Walker’s dual role as bookbinder and stationer suggests, the role of the bookbinder as it related to marbling was variable and inconsistent, as it had been for many decades in the United States. Many bookbinders also sold paper and imported books, along with running printing operations and social centers. An eighteenth-century Philadelphia bookbinder, William Woodhouse, advertised himself as a


30 Ibid., 78.

31 Ibid., 75-85.
bookseller and stationer in 1772, selling “red and blue marbled paper” along with writing paper and memorandum books.32 A Philadelphia stationer called the “Card Manufactory” sold marbled paper along with iron wire, gun flints, cotton, and stoneware.33 In 1771, David Hall, at “The New Printing Office” in Philadelphia, advertised magazines “just imported from London” with books and stationery, including red and blue marbled paper which could be bought by the ream or in smaller quantities.34 As the eighteenth century drew to a close, many of these stores transitioned into more specialized publishers, printers, and paper suppliers, with a mix of workshops specifically doing marbling and general bookbinding operations that also marbled. The absence of minimal written records for many of these shops and few signatures on marbling work makes it a challenge to identify the establishments that were making marbled papers themselves rather than importing their materials or going


to specific marbling businesses. Additionally, the divide between records for urban and rural marblers is stark; as many books from publishing houses in the United States were from cities in the Northeast, without records finding work traceable to rural operations is even more challenging. These urban records must be understood to represent a large part, but not the entirety of marbling work that was being done.

Businesses producing marbled paper in the nineteenth century were often tied to mechanical production and traditional patterns. Bookbinding communities drove marbled paper demand and making. An 1858 guide to Philadelphia’s manufacturing refers to bookbinding as both “an Art and as a manufacture.” It lists a variety of bookbinding machines that allowed volumes to be put into boards at unprecedented rates, with available materials like unsurpassed marbled paper made right in Philadelphia. The book calls attention to the manufactory of Mr. Charles Williams, who claimed to be the first in the United States to make antique Dutch and drawn marbled patterns, and matched certain types of English, Dutch, and French patterns in marbling designs. He supplied Boston, New York, and “chief cities of the whole Union.” Paper decorating firms like Williams’ allowed for relationships between marbled paper makers and bookbinderies. This fuzzy dichotomy between paper maker


37 Ibid., 177-178.
and consumer would be shifted by increasing access to specific information about creating marbled paper supplied by Josef Halfer and those espousing his ideas.

By the 1890s, there were many stores in the United States specifically offering marbled papers along with a wide array of bookselling tools. In 1922, a listing for the Norman F. Hall Company in a San Francisco city directory advertised “a complete line of bookbinders’, paper rulers’, marblers’ and embossers’ supplies carried in stock.” The Marsh & Kidd Corporation advertised bookbinders’ leather, cloths, marbled papers and bookbinding-oriented supplies in the same publication. The narrower advertising for products at these shops shows a twentieth century model for a more specific bookbindery supplier and marbling trade associations. The products listed in advertisements for these businesses, in conjunction with instructional pamphlets and books, show that mastery of marbling materials was within reach of bookbinders willing to learn, practice, and pay for it.

**Marbled Paper Options**

Bookbinders at all levels of production and specialization made calculated decisions about how they would select or create the decorated endpapers that would be included in their books. If a bookbinder desired a sheet of marbled paper in the United States, there were two main options. The first was to marble a sheet themselves, and the second was to buy from local stationers or from paper suppliers based across the United States and across the Atlantic. Marbling had been going on for hundreds of

years in England, France, Germany, and the Netherlands, and it was likely cheaper and easier in many contexts for marbled paper to be imported rather than obtain the marbling skills and supplies necessary to marble in-house.

Several texts profiling nineteenth-century marbling offer particular insights to the options available to publishing houses and individual bookbinders for creating their work. An 1852 article in *Godoy’s Lady’s Book* records a trip to the bookbindery of Lippincott, Grambo & Co., where the author, Cornelius Hinkley, records a variety of book production processes taking place. There is little mention of endpapers, though the marbling process is briefly described along with a line that books are sent out to the marbler’s, a specialized supplier.\(^39\) In contrast, an account by Jacob Abbott in 1855, *The Harper Establishment, or, How the Story-Books are Made*, describes and illustrates the work of the company’s in-house marblers in detail. The illustrations depict several traditional steps: a man places a piece of paper on a gum bath; a marbler sprinkles colors onto the bath (Figure 9); and a woman burnishes marbled paper with a machine that passes agate or flint quickly over the page to add a glossy quality to the marbling.\(^40\) These publications illustrate sweeping changes in book production, showing disparate operations that had formerly often taken place in several specialty workshops now going on under the same factory-sized roof. The size of a publishing house and its available resources determined whether marbling would be produced internally, ordered, or outsourced to a workshop.


One can easily imagine the labor involved in creating enough marbled paper to satisfy the demand of a large publishing house. Marbling hundreds of papers for commercial-level bookbinding purposes every day would require several people who would divide the task into smaller parts. If a publishing house or smaller bookbindery was working on the scale where it could support several people to prepare the bath, sprinkle colors, lay down and remove papers, hang sheets to dry, and burnish each paper, it would make sense to have the space and resources to do so in-house rather than purchase the endpapers. However, finding the trained talent to marble, making special economic considerations for purchasing the marbling supplies, setting up space for large baths and drying racks, buying burnishing machines to speed up the process, and taking the time to ensure proper environmental conditions for marbling pigments and gums would be a considerable undertaking. Many book producers in the
nineteenth century would simply find it easier and more economically feasible to order marbled paper from specific paper suppliers. Access to information clearly connecting marbling materials with how to use them was challenging to obtain before wide circulation of manuals, and it would not be until the late nineteenth century that Halfer’s precision through text would have an impact in the United States.

The importation of marbled paper by bookbinding suppliers is documented through several suppliers in the nineteenth century. Newspaper import notices record different suppliers importing marbled paper from England to ports like Philadelphia. In 1896 and 1897, J. L. Shoemaker & Co. was importing marbled paper for prices ranging from eight to thirteen dollars, in amounts from nine to thirteen cases on a steamer coming in to Philadelphia from Antwerp.\footnote{41 “Imports,” \textit{The North American}. 19th Century U.S. Newspapers. September 6, 1893, January 23, 1896, August 7, 1896, May 5, 1897, July 7, 1897. Gale Document Numbers: GT3011164945, GT3011230551, GT3011224950, GT3011269121, GT3011260704.} J. L. Shoemaker & Co. would then sell these supplies at a profit in a Philadelphia store, along with wire-stitching machines and other bookbinding accoutrements.\footnote{42 “Wholesale Markets,” \textit{American Printer and Lithographer}, vols. 5-6. Google Books. https://books.google.com/books?id=SH_nAAAAMAAJ&pg=PP1&vq= (Accessed March 15, 2016).} Aimed specifically at bookbinders, these papers would likely be used by smaller operations that did not have the time or resources to marble papers themselves or import directly from abroad.

From the 1890s through mid-twentieth century, there were many instances in which printing, bookbinding, and endpaper production were disparate operations done by different companies. The Hertzberg Publishing Company in Chicago, Illinois (then...
with an operation in Des Moines, Iowa), had a variety of marbled paper suppliers for their books ranging from fine art bindings to simple, cloth-bound library editions. A series of letters between Hertzberg leadership and paper companies in the 1930s shows that there were diverse options for endpapers. The traditions of the company and its overarching visual brand were as important as creating each individual book to be appealing and marketable. The materiality of this economic exchange is immediately evident in the letters and samples sent between the Japan Paper Company and Ernest Hertzberg, president of the Hertzberg Company. One 1933 letter proudly shares that the New York-based Japan Paper Company is to be the sole United States distributor of Cockerell & Sons marbled papers. The letter itself is accompanied by a price list, which has been underlined by the recipients in several places, especially under Cockerell and Son papers, Italian marbled papers, and the printed patterns offered by the St. Albans Company. The Japan Paper Company sent along numerous Cockerell samples in both cloth and paper (Figure 10). The samples show the wide diversity of materials available to the Hertzberg bindery. The quality of these samples is evident in their sharp, clear lines and striking colors. The cloth feels sturdy and the colors are bright on each surface, and the laid papers are thick, with precise lines of color. Some samples in this batch and other sample books are stamped with Cockerell’s name, suggesting a direct line between paper marblers and the bookbinders who would eventually use the paper (Figure 11). With such a wide array of options, a commercial binder could choose from many different types of papers for

43 “Japan Paper Company to Hertzberg Company,” January 15, 1933, Records of the Hertzberg Bindery/Library Binding Service (LBS), Des Moines, Iowa (MsC 545), University of Iowa Libraries, Iowa City, Iowa.
different types of work, and would have to consider the materials and tools used for an entire binding to decide on the most cost-effective and aesthetically appropriate endpapers. The relationship between bookbinder, design aesthetic, marbled paper supplier, and marbling company was significant in final book products.

Figure 10  (L) Cockerell Cloth Samples, Japan Paper Company; (R) Cockerell Paper Samples Japan Paper Company. Records of the Hertzberg Bindery/Library Binding Service (LBS), Des Moines, Iowa (MsC 545), University of Iowa Libraries, Iowa City, Iowa.

Figure 11  Sample. “Stevens-Nelson Corporation Sample Book.” Records of the Hertzberg Bindery/Library Binding Service (LBS), Des Moines, Iowa (MsC 545), University of Iowa Libraries, Iowa City, Iowa.
Marbling Materials and Tools

Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, authors writing about marbled paper carefully introduce the term “marbling.” They often suggest that it is a curious or unfamiliar art, which could be easily noticed if readers simply opened the books on their shelves. Articles about marbling in a wide range of magazines, newspapers, and pamphlets, offered opportunities to learn about the craft and change perceptions about the material world as designed and created by craftspeople. These articles show the variety of tools and materials used by marblers, including gum mixed with water to produce the bath that pigments are sprinkled on top of, called the size. They also sometimes describe how to mix colors and use ox gall, which would act as a dispersant to push colors together for vibrancy. Combs and styluses were used for manipulating the colors, and troughs of various scales held the size. These supplies had to be used in conjunction with a strong sense of timing to be successful.

The value of these materials is a frequent topic for writings about marbling. An 1873 article titled “Marbled Paper” in Practical Magazine says that marbled paper, used frequently by bookbinders, is produced in a “very curious way.” The author goes on to mention that “the name is not exactly suitable, seeing that few specimens are imitations of real marble,” but that the surface imitates any kind of stone or wood. It describes the colors as being of the “usual kind,” including “Naples yellow, yellow ocher, yellow lake, orpiment, verdigris, rose pink, red lead, carmine, terra di Sienna, Dutch pink, indigo, Prussian blue, verditer, umber, ivory black, etc.” which are then ground up and mixed with a few drops of alcohol.44 In the scheme of available

marbling colors, terra di Sienna was emphasized in other literature as a valuable pigment. In the 1840s, one article praising the great mineral wealth of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, hailed a material found in Lancaster identical to Italy’s terra di Sienna, which was “so important in the arts of portrait and fancy painting, stamping paper-hangings, paper marbling and staining, patent floor cloth painting, painting oil cloths, table covers & c.”45The substance, found in a yellow band overlaying marble in a quarry, was the earth pigment umber.46 This article reveals nineteenth-century tensions between materials sourced in the United States and those found in and imported from Europe.

While the main elements remain the same, the specifics of these instructions differ across a variety of articles. The Practical Magazine article also describes the process of making the gum bath for marbling, saying that “a solution of gum is made with gum tragacanth, alum, gall, and water, and placed in a trough or shallow flat vessel.” The article suggests that different colors are ground up with different oily, gummy, and watery liquids so that they distribute evenly over the bath.47 The tools of this process are also mentioned in “Marbling Books,” which states that, “a trough about two inches deep is filled with gum water, on the surface of which various


colored pigments have been thrown and disposed in various forms with a comb and coarse wire teeth,” and describes dripping paint over water with hairbrushes, with one color “put down right over the other, and the wide, coarse comb dragged through them.” These pieces suggest the wide array of tools that had been used for centuries in marbling, but that they ultimately boil down to a trough, brushes, combs, pigments, water, gum, and alum. The process is undoubtedly complicated and hard to convey, but the interactions with materials also differ from marbler to marbler. While one craftsperson might sprinkle ox gall first, to disperse the pigments, another might rely more heavily on the process mentioned above, of mixing colors with different types of liquids. The interaction with ox gall and gum is sensitive, and the choices and nuance with which to convey them in a short article are challenging.

After the application of pigment, marbled sheets were burnished, and with some shine, these sheets did sometimes resemble stone. The Practical Magazine article concludes by mentioning again that “the imitations of marble, gray and red granite, and fancy woods, are certainly not very faithful, but the paper is lively in appearance, and remains clean and bright a long time when polished.” The polishing process it suggests is to moisten the colored surface with a little soap, and rub it with a smooth marble, ivory knob, glass ball, or agate burnisher. The article mentions that some papers have been called “iridescent and opalescent paper,” which have been produced with special care to show an “exquisite play of light and shade.” The article feels accessible, with many options for how to burnish a paper to a neat shine,

but denies the reader the opportunity to learn more about types of soap, types of
marbled paper, or how to take a paper from start to “exquisite finish.” Josef Halfer,
with specific ideas about how materials should be formulated and used, introduces
himself to this conversation with a mission to regulate and improve the marbling
process and develop his business in marbling products.

Demystification and Josef Halfer’s Intervention

The impulse to simultaneously demystify craft and increase efficiency and
precision was certainly not new or unique to marbling in the United States. W. J.
Rorabaugh, in *The Craft Apprentice: From Franklin to the Machine Age in America*,
says that by the late eighteenth century in America, craft secrets were beginning to
lose their mystery. He emphasizes that technological advancement made it more
important for craftsmen to acquire new techniques than maintain old secrets, and that
the dissemination of craft secrets was launched by various how-tos and new
techniques making some old habits less effective.\(^50\) He also mentions that a master’s
authority was rooted in a sense of magic, language that is frequently applied to the
marbling process. He writes,

“To untrained youth, the myriad processes, the little rituals invoked at
each step, and the repetitions that always produced the same result were
a form of magic…the master ceased to be a magician and became only
one of a thousand followers of a routine.”\(^51\)

\(^50\) W.J. Rorabaugh, *The Craft Apprentice: From Franklin to the Machine Age in

\(^51\) Ibid., 36.
A sense that marbling was a completely secret, and completely magical, craft was simply not true by the late nineteenth century. Halfer did not claim that he was dramatically revealing the process from complete obscurity, but he did emphasize his interest in giving bookbinders a sturdy and consistent guideline to pursue their marbling work, and to “remove the technical difficulties of the art of marbling.”

Halfer suggests that the real key to marbling is creating and manipulating color, and sees his two-fold task as clarifying and creating precise colors for use in marbling. In a sense, this is his ultimate contribution to the craft, which is at its core the mastery of color and its application through a making process. Glenn Adamson’s parallel between the term “craft” and the term “color” in Thinking through Craft is a natural connection in the case of marbling. Adamson says that craft, like color, seems like a commonsense term that really means very little when taken out of context. Halfer’s desire to pin down and clarify color is more than a widely wielded claim to demystify, but rather a large idea about the nature of marbling. Halfer’s prepared colors represented an opportunity for marblers to streamline their operations, to focus on designing and learning new combing techniques for patterns rather than the preparation of all materials, especially laborious pigment grinding.

Halfer’s influence has been widely stated by a variety of authors, and emphasized through discussions and exhibitions. In his native Hungary, Halfer has been regarded as an important figure for the history of marbling and, more widely, the

52 Josef Halfer, The Progress of the Marbling Art, 4.

history of Hungarian manufacturing. Phoebe Jane Easton describes Halfer’s ready-made colors, carrageen size for finer detail, and a revival in the popularity of marbling through his material simplifications and writings. Richard Wolfe has written the most about Halfer’s influence, discussing his efforts to revitalize marbling as creating the “new marbling,” through “new methods, new materials, and new patterns.” He says that Halfer was researching both methods and materials, and sharing this information with students, who would come to supply hand-marbled paper and preserve the craft by practicing and improving it. Wolfe places Halfer in a long line of German-speaking marbling craftsmen-teachers, in a lineage going up to the mid-twentieth century.

Most bibliographies about marbled paper mention Halfer in some way. Noted paper scholar Dard Hunter includes seven editions of Halfer’s book in his Bibliography of Marbled Paper, and recommends Charles Woolnough’s and Halfer’s books as the most comprehensive works in the English language. He also cites the


56 Wolfe, Marbled Paper, 125.

57 Ibid., 125-126.


1891 German edition of Halfer’s book and the 1894 English edition in his “Two Hundred Works on Papermaking.”\(^{60}\) A bibliography compiled by Mark Pollei for a seminar on book collecting titled “Paper Marbling and Japanese Suminigashi,” includes Halfer at several points. Pollei writes, “In 1885, Josef Halfer of Budapest published his famous book, Die Forshritte der Marmorierkunst, which was later published in the United States as The Progress of Marbling. Halfer’s work is still considered one of the most important sources of information for marbling techniques. With the publication of Halfer’s book, a number of other important marbling manuals quickly succeeded.”\(^{61}\) A Madrid-based exhibition on from 2014 to 2015, “El Papel Decorado: Técnica, Tradicionales, Y Creación Contemporánea,” [Decorated Paper: Techniques, Traditions, and Contemporary Creation] has a section that divides different periods of marbled paper, which includes one division of the exhibit as “Josef Halfer and the New Marbling.”\(^{62}\) Halfer is frequently described in terms of his own influence as a key figure in marbling, but these ideas are often described as abstract influence rather than concrete material reality. Halfer’s material contributions can be traced in his teaching and technology, and those who followed his path continued a legacy of material precision and sharing knowledge.

\(^{60}\) Dard Hunter, Papermaking: The History and Technique of an Ancient Craft (New York: Dover Editions, 1947), 205.


Halfer would inspire decades of ready-made marbling materials and multi-faceted teaching programs in the United States. The next two chapters will consider how American students of marbling learned the trade, and will examine the variety of technologies and hand-marbling alternatives that shaped the aesthetics and quality of marbled paper.
Chapter 3

THE SCIENCE OF MANUALS AND THE ART OF TEACHING

Josef Halfer’s impact on marbling in the United States begins with *The Progress of the Marbling Art*. Halfer was from a German-speaking community in Budapest, and the first edition of the book was published in German in 1885 by Selbstverlag des Verfassers. A Hungarian edition of the book published by Mihály Szöllősy followed the next year, with a note to readers that marbling information was available in several languages including Italian, Spanish, Swedish, and Danish, but that practical, academic works on bookbinding should be available to Hungarian-speaking bookbinders. Further German versions came as well, including one by major bookbinding supplier Wilhelm Leo. This study will focus primarily on the 1893 English edition of the book. Halfer’s contribution to American marbling literature and marbling education was made not only through precision of materials and processes he advised, but also by using the process of marbling itself as an accessible and precise pedagogical tool.

In each edition, it was clear from an author’s note that the primary reason for the book’s existence was to make marbling more precise. When talking about who would work to introduce marbling to bookbinderies, he writes:

“He is the only one to find the remedy, scientific men not possessing sufficient technical knowledge. Only he is ready and able to stand up for such special trades, to work and to fight for them, who is himself interested and who not only learned to understand the art of marbling from former instructions and traditions, but from his own practical experience… My original plan was, not only to remove the technical difficulties of the art of marbling, but also to ascertain the correct colors from the mass at present manufactured, for the purpose of manufacturing marbling colors.”

This development of Halfer as a champion for material precision, for being a great mechanic of the trade, is a process that he outlines in length. He discusses his great joy in figuring out the right chemical formulas for colors, and the critical demands on color preparation set by marbling. Notably, Halfer speaks to many audiences, and writes “In composing this book, I have aimed to arrange it in such a way, that it will be a guide not only to the uninitiated, but also to the practical mechanic.” He says that on the basis of combining facts of practical experience with scientific principles, that the book will be a lasting contribution to bookbinding trade literature.

**Nineteenth-Century Predecessors**

Halfer’s was certainly not the first manual concerned with marbling that was read and used in the United States. Through these older manuals, each process was described in different amounts of detail. For the sake of comparison, this study focuses primarily on the nature of recommendations for the trough, the type of gum used in the size, and the pigments used for colors (see Appendix A: Pigments Named in Marbling

64 Halfer, *The Progress of the Marbling Art*, 3-4.

65 Ibid., 8.

66 Ibid., 9.
Manuals). Manuals available in England may have made their way to the United States through the host of bookbinders, printers, and stationers setting up shop in a variety of major city and town markets around the United States. For both urban and rural bookbinders, having access to information about how to marble could either guide a visual vocabulary for selecting quality marbled papers from marblers, or give bookbinders with limited access to marbled sheets the tools to make papers themselves. However, these early guides gave some guidance, but little exact information for readers to follow. They advocated for a model of sensitive craftspeople, able to use materials with their own idea of how the marbling process should work. They offer tools of evaluating success, but few specificities regarding measurements and materials in how to reach a promising result.

An 1820s guide published in London, *The Bookbinder’s Manual*, noted that most bookbinders sent books intended for marbling out to a marbler’s workshop, while others, such as rural bookbinders without access to the services of marblers, could find instructions in an appendix of the manual.67 This appendix suggested that a trough be slightly bigger than the paper being marbled, and made of any type of wood. The size is made by mixing gum tragacanth with clean water, which then rests for a day or two until “the consistence of the solution should be nearly that of strong gum water used in miniature painting,” indicating that the manual reader was familiar with other types of artists’ materials. Suggested pigments included carmine, lake, rose pink, and vermilion for red; king’s yellow or Dutch pink and yellow ochre for yellow; Prussian blue and verditer for blue; verdigris or a mixture of Dutch pink and Prussian

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blue or verditer for green; orange lake or a mix of vermilion or red lead with Dutch pink for orange; rose pink and Prussian blue for purple; flake white; lamp black; and black and yellow to achieve brown. These colors are to be ground with a measure of fish-gall, or the "gall of a beast" if fish gall was not readily available. The account assumes a great deal of knowledge, and offers no measures. Proportions were only alluded to by the author, with advice like "The proper proportion of the gall must be found by trying them." The author assumes a level of existing knowledge, or requires readers to take on the onus of making the colors work themselves.

_The Bookbinder’s Complete Instructor_, by George Martin, published in England in 1823, also offers little assurance to the novice marbler. Martin gives a description of marbling in a wooden trough two inches wide by six inches deep. For pigments, this account recommends Prussian blue, king’s yellow, rose pink or lake, flake white, lamp black, and combinations of two pigments for green, orange, purple, and brown. The colors were to be ground on a marble slab with old ox gall. The size was to be made by pouring hot water into the trough until nearly full, then putting in three ounces of gum dragon until it dissolved. Though it suggests a ratio for the size of trough used to measurement of gum tragacanth ("gum dragon"), the amount of color to be used on top of the size would have to be estimated by the reader. The materials are complicated, and estimating them against each other would be a challenging equation for a new marbler.

68 Ibid., 86-88.

69 Ibid., 36.
James Nicholson’s 1856 *A Manual of the Art of Bookbinding* offers something more lengthy and concrete than these earlier accounts, but as it attempts to demystify the craft, it complicates and implores readers to figure out specifics for themselves. Nicholson’s color recommendations start to diverge a little from the earlier ones. Drop lake, peach-wood lake, vermilion, rose pink, and burnt Oxford ochre are recommended for red; indigo, Chinese blue, ultramarine, and Prussian Blue for blue; lemon chrome, Dutch pink, and raw Oxford ochre for yellow; vegetable lamp-black and drop ivory-black for black; burnt Turkey umber for brown; orange lead and orange chrome for orange; and china clay, pipe clay, flake white, and Paris white for white.70 Nicholson advises using soft water, preferably rainwater, and gum tragacanth for the size. Nicholson makes no illusion of providing exact amounts of gums, noting that it is “hardly prudent or possible to give any exact weight of gum to any certain quantity of water. Practice and your own judgment must determine this.”71 He recommends a trough made of wood, with an emphasis on the entire set-up being “level and true.”72 The book describes a variety of patterns, and how each might be prepared. Nicholson, publishing this text in Philadelphia, gives American craftspeople with access to marbling materials in urban areas ideas about how to get started, but still relies heavily on readers being highly sensitive to their environments and supplies.


71 Ibid., 97.

72 Ibid., 100.
Despite the benefits of being a manual published in the United States, the directions in Nicholson’s book represent a hard-to-emulate step-by-step process. It adds an air of truth to potential anxieties that the process was indeed magical, and beyond easy passage from information in a book to the hands of an amateur marbler. The initial negotiations with colors are intimidating for even what Nicholson describes as the simplest of the patterns, the French or shell pattern. Starting with an appeal to mix together ox gall and a little water in one-eighth and seven-eighths proportions, the book loses clarity on the matter of mixing colors, advising the reader to put in just a little color at a time with the water and ox gall, being careful not to “make it froth by too rapid stirring.” The proper consistency was to be discovered through trial and error, from throwing solution on the bath and finding out if the colors sank, floated, or dispersed too much.73

_A Manual of the Art of Bookbinding_ provides models of finished marbled products, on lightweight machine-made paper that leaves acidic ghosts of their patterns on the facing page. There is no information to connect pattern descriptions to their corresponding illustrations (Figure 12). However, some particularly tricky patterns are accompanied by letter diagrams that show how colors were to be distributed on pegs in the marbling bath.

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G Y G Y G Y G
Y B Y B Y B Y
G Y G Y G Y G
Y B Y B Y B Y
G Y G Y G Y G
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73 Ibid., 101.
This diagram is from an account of how to lay out a color bath to create the Dutch pattern, described by Nicholson as being the oldest marbling pattern in European traditions.\textsuperscript{74} The letters represent the colors as they should be distributed within a system of pegs before the materials are combed. “G” represents green, “Y” is yellow, and “B” is blue. An example of what the final product should look like after applying these colors in this pattern is not evident in the surrounding pages. The book’s instructions had staying power, however, and besides glossier example sheets on thinner paper, 1874 and 1902 editions had almost exactly the same instructions. The 1856 publisher was Henry Carey Baird of Philadelphia, and Henry Carey Baird & Co. published the 1902 edition. In 1902, Baird was also publishing many instructional books for a host of industries, from cotton spinning to the management of steam boilers.\textsuperscript{75} The re-publication may be seen as a response to a demand for affordable and accessible information about marbling after a rising interest in the craft due in part to Josef Halfer’s precise instructions.

\textsuperscript{74} Ibid., 122.

Josef Halfer’s Precision and Novelty

Josef Halfer’s *The Progress of the Marbling Art* did not claim to build on former manuals. While Halfer continued in the tradition of providing increasingly detailed information to readers, his approach was that of a curious scientist, eager to share his knowledge with an equally eager reader. Halfer offered a substantial and distinct voice, one that was detailed and reassuring. He gives details about the types of plants that his recommended materials come from, and discusses in detail how certain chemical reactions cause certain results. The book described both carrageen and gum tragacanth in detail, outlining the benefits and downsides to both materials, ultimately landing somewhat in favor of carrageen. He found that adding borax could add greatly to the durability of carrageen size, and because of this discovery, said that the
popularity of tragacanth had decreased. He says that carrageen size produces a fine and precise line, and that gum tragacanth is more expensive and not able to provide a perfectly homogeneous solution once dissolved.\textsuperscript{76} He recommends a marbling trough around 20 inches long, 10 inches wide, and 1 ¼ inches deep, painted with white oil-paint inside and a sloping partition of sheet zinc so that color could be skimmed away.\textsuperscript{77} The measurements are specific, as is the reasoning for designing or purchasing tools like a trough with white paint inside. The pattern descriptions begin with the comb marble, where a detailed explanation is matched with encouragement to consult inserted examples.\textsuperscript{78} They illustrate everything from how the bath should look to specific representations of different patterns. There is a direct correlation between pattern and immediate result, and the physical sample of the marbled paper is the mediator between the text and the physical reality of the marbling process.

When it came to colors, Halfer was straightforward but less explicit about the types of colors to be used. He describes the differences between preparing lake colors, which only need to have gall added, and mineral colors, which are derived from organic coloring matters. Halfer gives instructions for how to mix colors with gum tragacanth, water, and isinglass or parchment-blue (which could be substituted for gum arabic), and how to grind colors using a smooth marble slab, a roller, and a palette knife. Halfer directs the reader’s attention to his own efforts towards

\textsuperscript{76} Halfer, \textit{The Progress of the Marbling Art}, 46.

\textsuperscript{77} Ibid., 163.

\textsuperscript{78} Ibid., 104.
developing marbling colors, and recommends use of his own products because the
“best results must be obtained with such a carefully and excellently prepared color.”\textsuperscript{79}

\textbf{Louis Herman Kinder and Distributing Manuals}

This last quote comes with an asterisk in the English edition of Halfr’s book, and a footnote reads, “The publisher of this book, having accepted the sole agency for the United States and Canada of these colors, pledges the closest and most prompt attention to all orders, dispatch in delivery and most reasonable prices. See price list at the end of this book.”\textsuperscript{80} The publisher of this edition was a man named Louis Herman Kinder, a German bookbinder who had settled in Buffalo, New York, before relocating to East Aurora, where he served as the head bookbinder for the Roycroft arts community. Kinder hired Herman Dieck of Philadelphia to translate the text, which came out in 1893. Dieck himself worked for the \textit{German Demokrat} in Philadelphia, translating numerous books including \textit{The German Soldier in the Wars of the United States} (1886). The American edition of Halfr’s book includes two pages of advertising as back matter, starting with a list of “Halfr’s Superior Marbling Colors,” in scarlet red, carmine lake, Oriental blue (light), indigo (dark), yellow (lemon), green, black, brown, and white, along with gum hogg, gum tragacanth, Irish moss (carrageen), ox gall, sprinkling water, shellac ammonia, and iron marbling clamps. These items were listed for sale through \textit{The American Bookbinder}, Buffalo, New York. The advertisements also offer two sizes of marbling outfit, including troughs, basins, brushes, skimmers, combs, Halfr’s Marbling Colors, ox gall, water,百分号

\textsuperscript{79} Ibid., 90-92.

\textsuperscript{80} Ibid., 92.
ammonia, Irish Moss, gum tragacanth, and gum hogg. The kits are available in two sizes, one with significantly more supplies and tools with more specific purposes, for fifty dollars, twice the price of the other. The advertisements extend to Louis Dejonge & Co., a New York bookbinding supplier, also claiming to carry Halfer’s marbling colors, and finishing with an advertisement for The American Bookbinder, a technical journal for bookbinding and official organ of the International Brotherhood (of bookbinders), available for $1.25 per year. The American Bookbinder offered a trade list that included four marbling-specific books; The Progress of the Marbling Art, Nicholson’s Manual, Art of Bookbinding, Zaehnsdorf’s Art of Bookbinding, and Crane’s Bookbinding, all priced between $1.10 and $2.25.81 Publishing the book about marbling was certainly not only about commercial gain, however, as Kinder was decidedly interested in sharing his own bookbinding knowledge with others and likely wanted to do the same with his interest in paper marbling.

The sale of Zaehnsdorf’s Art of Bookbinding emphasizes that this London-published 1880 book (with popular 1890 and 1902 editions) was part of a wave of books that provided some level of specific instruction and illustration about marbling to American audiences. The manual offers that in London, it is by far cheapest and easiest to send books to those who only did marbling, but that information on how to marble should be available to bookbinders. He says that though the process seems easy, it is difficult to properly execute.82 No specific color combinations are recommended, though lake, rose, vermilion, king’s yellow, yellow ochre, Prussian

81 Ibid., 92.

blue, indigo, some green, flake white, and lamp-black are mentioned. The size recommended is based on gum tragacanth, to be placed overnight in water, and that “the quantity of gum necessary to give proper consistency to the size is simply to be learned by experience, and cannot be described.”83 The book includes some small illustrations, but no samples of marbled paper, and tools are the central figures, rather than how to use them with materials and pigments. This guide would be most useful for those trying to learn how to make and use tools, offering the measured specifics of troughs (wooden or zinc, probably about 16 to 20 inches long and 6 to 8 inches wide), along with technologies of several varieties. The book specifically displays some materials made and sold by Wilhelm Leo in Stuttgart, the company that published the second German edition of Halfer’s manual, discussing their marbling apparatus that contained “colours, gall, cups, combs, sticks, filter, brushes, etc., the whole in a box” as indispensable to a country bookbinder.84 Zaehnsdorff also shows “Leo’s mechanical marblers,” and describes the invention, which worked by means of a top roller or rollers holding the color, distributed on the under rollers, which then inked the book edge being passed over it as the book was held on a press.85

Kinder wrote *Formulas for Bookbinders* in 1904, reserving special attention for instruction on marbled edges. The book was meant to be a compendium of knowledge for bookbinders, a place where formulas and ideas could be shared. He captures the tension of the marbling art in *Formulas*, that the results of the process rely

83 Ibid., 70.
84 Ibid., 70.
85 Ibid., 70-71.
entirely on chemical reactions, but also that the art is rewarding because of the quick results. He says that much has been written about marbling in papers, but the “the real pointers, the guides to success” have never been made known. He says that not many successful marblers can be found, and because only a few know how to prepare dry colors like chrome yellow, lampblack, and ultramarine blue, many overpay for colors in paste form.86 He offers some formulas for marbling, but says that he intends to issue a book as a complete treatise on marbling.

While it does not appear that Kinder ever published this book, his bringing Halfer’s work to the English-speaking world brought new audiences to potentially join his mission towards bookbinding progress. In Formulas, he offers options for several preparations of the size, listing carrageen, gum tragacanth, gum hogg, and a mix of gum tragacanth and carrageen. He outlines the benefits of using carrageen size with specially prepared colors as offering “really wonderful” results, and he offers suggests there is one particular line of colors in the market expressly prepared for carrageen size, called the “Halfer colors.” He writes that the colors can be purchased from Halfer Marblers’ Supply Co. in Buffalo, which was likely his own operation.87 He also offers advice for gum tragacanth size, and directs readers to Zinns’s, a bookbinding supplier whose address is provided in the book’s index, for information about getting the best gum tragacanth. Kinder is specific about each step, and says that few technical difficulties need be encountered if everything is done as described, a complete


87 Ibid., 89.
turnaround from earlier manuals advising experimentation for success. Even if Halfer was not singlehandedly responsible for a revival in marbling, his precision offered a model to follow. Kinder ultimately throws his vote behind tragacanth size as “most satisfactory,” because it is easy to prepare, cheap, and keeps for a month, with either fine or coarse textured colors used with equally good results. In the preparation of colors with a pigment binder (in this case with dissolved gum gattie, honey, yellow prussiate of potash, and laundry soap), he warns against adding too much to lake colors. Kinder also recommends new mediums, especially endorsing beef gall, which he suggests for general purposes after mixing with grain alcohol to keep indefinitely.88

Kinder also shared some of his advice in the first volume of The Whisper: a Magazine of Brief Practical Suggestions for Bookbinders, which ran from 1901 to 1902. The Whisper was printed in East Aurora, New York, after Kinder was brought in as a bookbinder by Elbert Hubbard for the Roycrofters. He writes that binding needs to evolve along with advancements in leather, cloth, and paper manufactures. He says that the standstill in progress is due to specialists keeping their secrets to themselves, rather than allowing people to get into competition.89 He especially points to edge gilding and marbling, which he says is “yet in its infancy,” and suggests The Whisper as a trade journal to share these secrets.

Hubbard brought Kinder into East Aurora, and wrote about him as the only person who came in as a skilled worker rather than learning the trade within the arts

88 Ibid., 96.
community. A description of Roycroft books by the Roycrofters says that Mr. Louis H. Kinder was a master bookbinder who spent a seven years’ apprenticeship in Leipsic learning his trade, and according to knowing bibliophiles, was not surpassed by any other American bookbinder. Mr. Kinder was known to tutor five helpers in his shop, as of the 1902 publishing of the book, and help forty others learning the trade. 90 Charles W. Youngers was a resident of East Aurora who did a seven year internship with Kinder as a boy and teenager, working with his father for three dollars per week. When Kinder left the shop, Youngers took over.91 Despite Kinder’s interest, the vast majority of Roycroft books are not outfitted with marbled endpapers, but rather watered silk and plain leather. Some examples survive, however, and primarily show that Kinder was capable of simpler patterns and one-color designs. Kinder was committed to his craft, and was also committed to teaching it to others.

Halfer’s manual was accessible through suppliers other than Kinder’s company, and copies of his English edition were available through mail order via the American Printer and Lithographer. An 1898 article in the magazine by Otto Zahn reads “The English edition of Halfer’s “Marbling Art” may be procured from the publishers of The Printer and Bookmaker.”92 The availability of Halfer’s manuals and

90 Wolfe and McKenna, Louis Herman Kinder and Fine Bookbinding, 33-43.


materials to American bookbinders and curious new marblers would be extended by other suppliers, writers, and teachers in the United States.

**W.C. Doebbelin and Capitalizing on Materials**

Halfer had a major promotor in the United States, starting early in the twentieth century. W.C. Doebbelin started marketing *Doebbelin’s Simplified Marbling Process*, using many of Halfer’s ideas and products for his own profit. He was certainly not alone. Marbling suppliers both affiliated and unaffiliated with Halfer devised pamphlets explaining his process while selling their own goods. Included in this category was a German pamphlet which offered the new system by Josef Halfer, with a stamp for an Akademia Street address in Budapest. The pamphlet advertised the marbling supply production company, and provided advice on how to marble.93 Doebbelin sold Halfer’s method to the world, first in London, and eventually in the United States. One manual produced by Doebbelin in Massachusetts shows the epitome of precision marbling instruction, showing step by step exactly what the results of following Halfer’s method could and should produce (Figure 13).

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Through the Halfer Marbleizing Company Incorporated in Middleton, Massachusetts, Doebbelin sold “Halmaco marbling gum” at sixty cents per ten pounds, along with gum hogg, carrageen moss, preserving solution, ox gall, and straining bags. Doebbelin was the managing director of the Halfer Marbleizing Company, Inc., which made Halmaco lamp shade papers and marbleizing material, including imitation marbled paper printed on thick, flashy, bright white textured paper for interior design applications.94 A simple price list advertised these goods, and offered advice about how to add the Halmaco gum to prepared carrageen moss to mature size more quickly and to expand colors more freely. Price lists included

specific instructions for how to be successful at different parts of the marbling process, emphasizing with bold type the products for sale that could facilitate the process being described (Figure 14). These price guides also showed samples themselves, breaking down the material paper patterns into comb, Turkish or stone marble, and hair vein marble, showing the versatility of colors and arrangements of patterns that might be used. These price lists paired specific instructions with marbling supplies for attainable results (Figure 15). Despite Halfer’s prescribed materials and explicit instructions, varied and individual results were not unusual. The four-page price list is replete with information, from advertisements for Doebbelin’s guide to Halfer’s method to a page of detailed instructions for how to prepare size using carrageen moss and Doebbelin’s products. People could pursue their own interpretations of Doebbelin’s and other instructional materials on their own terms. One collection, simply titled “Marbling” and bound with simple green cloth in 1909, shows the types of supply lists and instructions that would be available to interested English-speaking enthusiasts such as Arthur J. Smith, whose name is marked in the back and on the binding of the book. It includes numerous examples of Doebbelin’s Hostmann Printing Ink publications, a company he ran in England before coming to the United States, alongside individual sample books. One sample book, marked 1908, is pasted to the back cover of the book and shows papers that may have acted as a model for someone learning how to marble (Figure 16).
Figure 14  “How to Make Your Size for Marbling/The Art of Marbling.” The Halfer Marbleizing Company, Inc “Price List of ‘Halfer’ Marbling Colors and Utensils.” Robert B. Haas Arts Library, Yale University.

Figure 15  “Specimens of Marbling Produced by Using Halfer’s Marbling Inks.” The Halfer Marbleizing Company, Inc. “Price List of ‘Halfer’ Marbling Colors and Utensils,” Robert B. Haas Arts Library, Yale University.
The nature of pigments used in marbling varied from period to period. Doebbelin’s book offered precise instructions paired with material recommendations, in the exact vein of Halfer’s advice. Halfer’s distinction between mineral and lake pigments is reflected in the elements present in pigments across some nineteenth-century books. Lake colors were expensive and bright, but their mineral alternatives (also called “earth colors”) showed up consistently. Several books from Winterthur’s collection were analyzed with XRF analysis to better understand their pigment element components.\(^95\) A set of six books, published in the United States between

\(^{95}\) All analysis was done by Jocelyn Alcántara-García, in the Scientific Research and Analysis Lab at the Winterthur Museum. Non-destructive, qualitative ED-XRF (energy-dispersive x-ray fluorescence) spectroscopy was performed to determine the sample area’s elemental composition. Analysis was performed with the ArtTAX \(\mu\)XRF spectrometer using a rhodium tube (600\(\mu\)A current, 50kV voltage, 100 seconds
1847 and 1872, show that some of the pigment recommendations in manuals published before Halfer’s were not far from the elements present in papers used by several different publishing houses. While it is difficult to isolate exactly which elements line up with pigments only and which overlap pigments and fillers, these papers produced before Halfer’s work and late-nineteenth century advances in synthetic pigment production show some similarities. These include high levels of lead content in most of the white parts of samples, echoing the recommendations for “flake white” (also known as “lead white”) in early-nineteenth through early-twentieth century manuals.

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live time irradiation, approximately 70-100 micron spot size) with element detection range of potassium (K) to uranium (U). Spectra were interpreted using the Intax version 4.5.18.1 software; an integrated CCD camera allowed a magnified image of the region of analysis to be acquired. The pigment analysis is based on a conversation with Jocelyn Alcántara-García on April 5, 2016 and email correspondence from March 22, 2016, April 5, 2016, and April 11, 2016.

96 Books analyzed were all from the Winterthur Library, including three books all authored by Benson John Lossing but published by different companies. All of these samples were taken from endpapers, except where noted. In chronological order, the books were Lorenzo Sabine, American Loyalists (Boston: Charles C. Little and James Brown, 1847); Benson John Lossing, The Pictorial Field-Book of the Revolution (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1859); Benson John Lossing, Life of Washington: A Biography Personal, Military, and Political (New York : Virtue and Co., 1860); Benson John Lossing, Pictoral History of the Civil War (Philadelphia, G. W. Childs, 1866-68); John Barber, History of the Antiquities of New England, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania (Hartford : Allyn S. Stillman & Son, 1856) (edges rather than endpapers), and Francis Wey, Rome (New York, D. Appleton & Co., 1872).

Halfer’s Method of Marbling, with instructions printed in England and samples produced in the United States, includes pigments originating in the mid-to late twentieth century. In Halfer’s time, before the production of ready-made bottles of color, pigments came in powder form, or in cones that had to be ground to a powder. They fell into both lake and mineral categories, as outlined by Halfer in The Progress of the Art, and an array of pigments available to consumers of Halfer’s colors and advice was present in the Halfer’s Method of Marbling samples.

A selection of eight papers from Halfer’s Method of Marbling was analyzed for an array of colors. In the “Process II” page, zinc, barium, and lead are all present and likely related to a mid-to-late nineteenth century white, potentially “lithopone,” which was developed by the DuPont Company in the late nineteenth century. In “Nonpareil, No. 4,” high iron content in blue pigments suggests Prussian blue (Figure 17), and arsenic in the red in this sample and “Shell, No. 22” suggests oropiment or realgar. “Peacock Bouquet, No. 7” includes magnesium, which creates a purple color, and was most popular in the early twentieth century (Figure 18). “Turkish Marbling, No. 16” and “Turkish Marbling, No. 17” line up with earth pigments elements, including chromium, iron, copper, and lead across red, teal, white, and blue. “Gloster, No. 21” has red with tin and ochre with chromium, both indicating earth pigments. A book published shortly before Doebbelin’s text, in 1898, was Esek Hopkins by Edward Field. It was published by Preston & Rounds Co. in Providence, Rhode Island, the edition limited to three hundred copies and the current binding probably made contemporary to printing. As Halfer supply companies recommended metallic colors,

98 Wolfe, Marbled Paper, 173.
this example epitomizes an associated gold, shiny appearance. It includes iron, copper, and zinc, and radiates a sparkling gold. Lead white produces white breaks in a colorful green, yellow, and gold pattern.99


99 Jocelyn Alcántara-García, email message to author, April 11, 2016.
Other companies followed suit on creating instructions and samples that would be paired with their priced product lists. Dane & Co, a London and Edinburgh firm, had a 1920s price list that included the colors scarlet lake, carmine lake, Indian yellow, orange, oriental blue, indigo blue, green, brown, normal black, white, and other shades to order. Additionally, sprinkling water, alum water, Gloucester preparation, prepared ox gall, preserving liquid, and carrageen moss were available with a variety of tools including combs, brushes, straining bags, drop bottles, Dutch apparatus, and

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white enamel marbling baths.\textsuperscript{101} Dane & Co., established in 1853 and expanding through the early twentieth century, offered many different types of inks, varnishes, and oils. The liquid marbling inks chapter of the price list included instructions for hair vein marbling, Gloster pattern marbling, and Italian marbling, but without much detail. Describing Italian marbling, the company noted that “for this, any number of colours may be used, and they should all be prepared and applied as the second mixture in Turkish Marbling.” Dane & Co. includes warnings, but few specific details beyond advice to keep utensils clean, keep the bath at the same temperature, alum water the work before marbling, and shake or stir the colors before using.\textsuperscript{102} In the sense that Halfer provided the ultimate manual to use with his marbling colors, other marbling suppliers also made efforts to provide information to spark interest and goodwill in teaching potential customers to use them. Examples like the Dane & Co. price list reveal varying levels of precision, but the notion that good, relatively specific information should match materials for sale was well underway by the early twentieth century.

An article in the August 15, 1924 edition of \textit{The World’s Paper Trade Review} defined marbling as “the art of arranging moist water colours upon an elastic surface and that they will, or can be made to, readily assume the sundry fantastic forms such colors being transferred from the medium on which they lie to the edges of a book or the surface of a sheet of paper.”\textsuperscript{103} The article gives a history of gum tragacanth, the

\textsuperscript{101} Ibid., 14-15.

\textsuperscript{102} Ibid., 13.

product of a species of shrubs found in Greece and Turkey, two to three feet high and six inches in circumference, as well as carrageen, a species of sea weed which grows on rocks or exposed with tied, varying in size and color. This discussion of each gum matches Halfer’s introductions to each material almost exactly. The article says that marblers disagree with one another about the best gum to use, but marblers in the past generally used gum dragon and preferred to grind their own colors. The author adds that, at the time of writing, ninety per cent of marbling is produced on carrageen, and that colors could be either in paste or liquid form. It advises for the preparation of gum tragacanth with cold water and soaking for a week and straining through a sieve or close mesh. The author says that when using gum tragacanth, the colors are “inclined to be rugged,” which is why the author favors carrageen, which produces a more homogeneous size and produces a size free of strings or specks. Mixing with borax, liquid formalin, and size, the mix is to be boiled and simmered, mixed with cold water, and preserved with formalin. The colors advised are hydrates of argillaceous earths, tin, lead oxides, and barium sulfate. This article, meant for bookbinders and related tradespeople to learn more about marbling, echoed Halfer’s precise, scientific language, and offered readers well-measured options for how to prepare and preserve size. This kind of joyful specificity is exactly the type of progress that Kinder was calling for in *Formulas for Bookbinders*, hoping that bookbinders could share their knowledge with each other to encourage competition and progress. Even if this article was intimidating, as Halfer’s book was likely intimidating to novice marblers trying

104 Ibid., 525.

105 Ibid., 525.
their hand at a new skill, it had the information to get started and make decisions about materials.

**Rosamond B. Loring and In-Person Education**

In 1942, marbling was impacted again by interest in a book by Rosamond B. Loring, a collector, practitioner, and scholar of decorated paper. Her book, *Decorated Book Papers: Being an Account of their Designs and Fashions*, showed the historical context and contemporary craft of decorating papers, and marbled papers made up a significant portion of her data. Many references, from handwritten notes in sample books to a 1947 Government Printing Office publication, call attention to her scholarly work as an authority. Her connection to Halfer is clear in *Decorated Book Papers*, where she says that he wrote an “authentic book on hand-marbling on a size of Carrageen, or Irish Moss.”

She says that the Halfer method was used in Germany and later England and the United States with “great success,” and that his lectures and book revived interest in marbling for small binderies and popular audiences when machine marbling was at its height. She says that contemporary marbling in the United States is high quality, and names craftspeople in the United States making quality marbling, including Peter Frank, Mrs. Thomas H. Shipman, Dorothy B. Moulton, Mrs. George Bullock, Mrs. Irving Cox, and Mrs. Henry F. James. Her recognition of women’s contributions to the craft are particularly significant because

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107 Ibid., 30.

108 Ibid., 32-33.
she uses terms of both status and access to describe their achievements. She shows that Halfer reinvigorated interest in the craft on a small bindery level, but then further illustrates a more accessible market not just for hobbyists, but for women like herself making money and having influence in realms of fine binding. She recognizes Mrs. Bullock and Mrs. Cox for taking “high honors” for numerous years for series of papers used in fine bindings, and Mrs. James for reintroducing marbled paper in interior decoration, bringing the craft “back to one of its original uses.”

Edith Diehl, an American bookbinder, teacher, and contemporary of Loring, gave credit to a similar list of endpaper makers who sold their own papers in her book *Bookbinding: Its Background and Technique*, citing Rosamond B. Loring, Peter Frank, Oscar H. de Boyedon, Dorothy B. Moulton, Janet E. Bullock, Jane E. Cox, Mrs. Thomas H. Shipman, and Veronika Ruzicka (who Loring worked with and knew well). Diehl also cites Loring’s *Decorated Book Papers* as a source to learn more about the history and production of marbled endpapers. Loring’s book was an authority for marbling enthusiasts and interested readers, and like the Halfer lectures she mentions, she also extended her expertise to public audiences.

Loring taught marbling in many forms, from direct workshops at such places as the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, to workshops for many types of students where large pieces of marbled paper were sometimes mounted and numbered as samples for

109 Ibid., 33.


111 Ibid., 184.
her classes. During World War II, Loring demonstrated marbling for a group of service men and women at the Bay Club in Boston (Figure 19).\textsuperscript{112} She held small exhibits at libraries and museums, and amassed an extensive collection of marbled papers, now held by Houghton Library at Harvard. The papers range from a variety of American and European sources, and include dozens of papers that Loring herself created. Her own papers were tied to larger trends in bookbinding, and include papers potentially made by Dard Hunter, the noted paper marker and historian, with marbling potentially done by either Hunter or Loring herself. Loring experimented widely, and had a keen interest in how the material process she was using related to her final products. Some pieces, like an orange and pink pattern, were done on soft, fibrous laid papers. They feel luxurious, but the pigment does not sink so far into the paper as to be reduced in vibrancy.

She represents the process of learning coming full circle, relying heavily on older manuals to learn a new art. She used Zaehein’s 1902 manual to pursue her interest in marbling and learn the skills to begin.\textsuperscript{113} She ended up writing a volume in 1933 called \textit{Marbled Papers}, predating \textit{Decorated Book Papers}, in which she recounted how she received in-person marbling instruction. She says that she gave demonstrations in a Craftsmen-at-Work show in Boston in 1928, and was greeted by a demonstration observer, Mr. Charles V. Saflund. He told her that he liked her work but that she did not do the process correctly. He offered to teach her, and they worked

\textsuperscript{112} Wolfe, \textit{Marbled Paper}, 134.

out an arrangement for him to come to her from Fitchburg, Massachusetts, twice a week for part of one winter. A longtime bookbinder, he offered specific material recommendations to Loring in the winter of their lessons. His name appears on the top of a recipe book on marbled and paste papers that Loring handwrote, during their March 1928 lessons. The book includes specific material recommendations, beginning, significantly, with how to test and prepare an Irish moss size. Halfer’s recommendation for size was emphasized by Salfund during this time, giving instructions on timing, how colors should appear on the size if it is prepared properly, and how to prepare ox gall. The colors themselves were made from mixing color with gum arabic and boiling water, though Loring’s tools left to Houghton Library show that at least some of the colors she was using were already prepared. Her interest in continuing her education is reflected in an April 1933 letter from her husband A.P. Loring to W.C. Doebbelin, inquiring about the cost and availability of marbling instruction from him. While it is unclear whether Rosamond Loring pursued this option, it is evident that her interest in improving her own skills was tied to both creating a good product for sale and educating members of a diverse public about the craft that she enjoyed.


Loring is the epitome of Halfer’s movement to make material processes plain to engaged readers and potential marblers. She showed that marbling could be an enjoyable hobby and a craft not so complicated as to be completely impossible or even particularly frustrating. As Halfer revealed material processes to progress marbling as a skill while moving further into a niche career, Loring took up the dual role of practitioner and expert. Her advice to readers and listeners was not to relentlessly experiment, but rather to do, to go forward and enjoy the process. Her own evaluations of the best materials to use and the steps to getting good results were a mediator among materials, tools, history, and process.
In 1947, Charles M. Adams published an article about marbling in the seventeenth century by writing “the making of marbled paper is almost a lost art, although a few bookbinders and amateurs can make a good sheet of marbled paper.” Adams almost immediately references Loring in the article, noting her collection of seventeenth-century papers and her references to many others, during the stage when they were curiosities in Europe. He traces many different types of paper sources, including a source on Ebru by H. Taberzade Behzad, published by the American Institute for Iranian Art and Archaeology, and outlines an extensive bibliography of marbled paper.

Adams describes a 1646 guide to marbling, noting that while the instructions are not long, they are detailed enough for an artisan to follow. The text he describes is from “Chartae Turcico more pigendae ratio,” a section of a book explaining marbling by Athanasius Kircher, an author and mathematics professor, published first in Rome.

Kircher’s instructions begin by recommending immersion of gum tragacanth in water for three days, after which the solution is strained into a trough, until its consistency is neither thicker nor thinner than water. Lighter colors are recommended. Lake for red, India for blue with white color, auripigment for yellow, white lead for white, all to be dissolved separately in water with egg white, ox gall and oil. The


118 Ibid., 3.

119 Ibid., 5.
instructions encourage sprinkling the preparation on the solution while ensuring the surface remains, yet there is not specific instruction on how to sprinkle the colors.\textsuperscript{120} Though at its core familiar materials are represented, this is a brief article, and a pale comparison to the more detailed accounts by Halfer and his followers. Adams also looks to England, where John Evelyn presented to the Royal Society on marbling papers in 1662. He shows that the materials described in Evelyn’s accounts match others in the seventeenth century, including using “gumme tragacant,” using two to three-days-old ox gall, and advising for colors including indico for blue, oripigment for yellow, indico and oripigment for green, and lake with raspings of brasill for colors.\textsuperscript{121} Evelyn also asks readers to envision their workspace: “This done, having all your colors before you in ample gally-pots upponn the Table, where also the Trough is placed.”\textsuperscript{122} Even if not as detailed, the sense of the craftsperson in their own workspace has parallels to Halfer precisely placing readers’ eyes and hands throughout marbling workshops.

The same year, in 1947, a Government Printing Office Publication was released: \textit{The Process of Marbling Paper}, by Morris S. Kantrowitz and Ernest W. Spencer. The pamphlet gives a history of the craft, and is quick to point to the influence that Halfer’s book had on marbling. It emphasizes the complicated nature of the craft, and defines it as an art rather than science, heavily dependent on the taste and skill of individual doing the marbling. Related to this idea, the idea of hidden

\textsuperscript{120} Ibid., 5-6.

\textsuperscript{121} Ibid., 9.

\textsuperscript{122} Ibid., 10.
knowledge was still maintained, the document reporting, “much traditional secrecy is still maintained in the application of the craft.” The authors attribute Halfer’s contribution as teaching marbling as “somewhat of a science,” serving as both a model and stimulus to the “further precise development of the art” in Germany, England, and the United States. The pamphlet reports that the Louis Dejonge & Co. of New York, New York, sold Halfer’s marbling colors and outfits, and around 1910, “the Halfer method and materials employed became the standard for use by marblers in the United States.”

*The Process of Marbling Paper* suggests an approach to marbling materials akin to what Halfer recommends, and says outright that it is difficult to communicate the process through written instructions. The authors recommend that the trough can be wood or lined sheet copper. It still advises for finely ground pigments, mixed with ox gall and placed on a shallow trough from 2 to 3 inches in depth. The gum-bath might be made from karaya gum (gum hogg), gum tragacanth, goat-thorn gum, or carrageen moss, with carrageen producing the “finest veined patterns obtainable,” but being harder to obtain and more expensive than gum hogg. The pigments recommended are mineral-based. Ox gall is given specific, scientific language, with the writers describing the ox gall-laden pigment transferring to the paper as a chemical

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123 “A GPO-PIA Joint Research Bulletin,” Bindery Series No. 1 (B-1), 1. Records of the Hertzberg Bindery/Library Binding Service (LBS), Des Moines, Iowa (MsC 545), University of Iowa Libraries, Iowa City, Iowa.

124 Ibid., 2.

125 Ibid., 2.

126 Ibid., 2.
reaction between the alum and the glycolic acid, binding the pigment permanently to
the paper fibers.\textsuperscript{127} The book claims that “sprinkling water is one of the newer
discoveries in the art of marbling,” though Halfer had described the material in \textit{The
Progress of the Marbling Art}. The soap may be dissolved in about ten times its weight
in water and when allowed to stand for several weeks, and is much more intensive in
its action than ox gall.\textsuperscript{128} Colors are not described in specific detail, but there is a brief
discussion of mineral versus lake colors, explaining that the lake colors usually consist
of a color on a metallic base, while mineral colors are insoluble in water and would
not discolor the gum bath or bleed to produce stains. For an article so forthright about
Halfer’s influence, the specificity and precision associated with explaining the
materials matches this reference and the document’s status as a government report.

The article ends on a hopeful note, describing the recent revival of marbling
traditions in the Government Printing Office. A special pattern and color scheme of
marbling were developed to bind the presidential addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt
in specially designed volumes of quarter-bound leather. This article includes a list of
what books to reference, especially noting Doebelin’s 1910 London pamphlets
describing “Halfer’s Method of Marbling.”\textsuperscript{129} The article says that while marbling’s
common commercial use as protection for the edges of reference and blank books may
be the only remaining vestige of the art in America, it might be restored to its place in

\textsuperscript{127} Ibid., 6.

\textsuperscript{128} Ibid., 6.

\textsuperscript{129} Ibid., 6-7.
artistic bookbinding if cost is subverted in favor of art. Decades after Halfer sought to demystify the obscured art of marbling, there were still concerns about how the craft was faring in the United States. These concerns were tempered with hope that by educating interested readers, the precision and popularity of marbling could increase.

One slim manual was published just before the Government Printing Office publication and Charles Adams’ work on seventeenth-century marbling. Speaking in dialogue with Loring’s work, Tim Thrift of Winchester, Massachusetts, produced Modern Methods in Marbling Paper at his Lucky Dog Press. His work was in the spirit of Halfer’s efforts to distribute trade secrets and Loring’s interest in engaging with a broader public. In a preface, he says that the book was written in response to a need for a beginners’ treatise on marbling paper. He writes that there is a “real dearth of readily accessible information on the topic,” and says that a practical work, by Josef Halfer, had few copies in existence. He says that other instructions were in old books on bookbinding, and that Loring’s Marbled Papers and Decorated Book Papers were classics but published in limited release. Thrift’s vision for marbling is akin to some of the periodical literature written about marbling at home and for children. He recommends rectified turpentine and a mix of bookbinders’ flexible glue, pure glycerine, and water for the base. This turn from Halfer’s recommendations and the more recent Loring instructions shows a drastic departure from established materials

130 Ibid., 7.


132 Ibid., 16-17.
and a move towards the convenient. He advocates for the bookbinder as artist, but also for any reader able to access standard artists’ materials and prepared to follow his precise instructions. While the marbled samples used to illustrate Thrift’s text are not placed near the descriptions, Thrift does offer authoritative, but friendly guidance akin to Halfer’s voice. The American course of marbling was tied to this type of precise voice, and to the tools and technologies available to facilitate the process.
Chapter 4

RISK AND OTHER OPTIONS: MARBLING IMITATORS AND TECHNOLOGIES

Josef Halfer’s factory became an important facet of Budakeszi life after being established there in 1902. Prior to opening his factory, Halfer had been a bookbinding apprentice and studied in Germany and Italy, eventually becoming a bookbinding and marbling master and opening one of the first substantive bookbinderies in Budapest in 1882. The bindery offered many services, but over time Halfer came to specialize in marbled paper and be recognized specifically for his marbled papers. Halfer continually adjusted pigments to get things exactly right. One Hungarian account of Halfer’s life says that while he did much to perfect the method of using Irish moss, wooden troughs, and ox gall with pigments to disperse color, it was his factory that would become his enduring legacy.133

Indeed, this factory became an important part of Halfer’s public profile. He worked with an apprentice to open the factory in 1902, in Budakeszi, a town at the outskirts of Budapest. The factory was about the size of a gymnasium, and employed around thirty people. Across the street, Halfer’s family home, the Halfer Villa, had a lively social life. Halfer’s wife taught local girls to sew, gatherings happened every Sunday, and the housing residents spoke to each other in German. Halfer spent the

majority of his time in Budakeszi with the factory, traveling to the center of Budapest to tend to business matters. Budakeszi was not a large place, and its growth in the early twentieth century until Halfer died in 1916 at the age of seventy-one may be attributed in part to the new jobs that the factory offered.\(^{134}\) One survey reported that around 1900, there was a three horsepower engine in the factory and seven workers, and the company continued to expand in the first part of the twentieth century.\(^{135}\)

Ultimately, Halfer’s contribution is not just demystification, but a means of teaching marbling with material precision and an eye towards tools. In *The Progress of the Marbling Art*, Halfer made known his opinions on mechanically-produced papers, saying that marbling had stagnated within the last decade. He cited the reasons for this as insufficient instruction and the use of using mechanical marblers by tradespeople. He said that mechanical marblers were problematic because they became sticky from dust and color mixing if they were not carefully cleaned, and the necessity of cleaning them continually or dealing with a lack of uniformity in products was not acceptable. Halfer advised that mechanical marblers be “retired to small bookbinderies for use upon single books, where they are eminently in the right place, driving away the primitive sprinkled or starched edges.”\(^{136}\)


\(^{136}\) Halfer, *The Progress of the Marbling Art*, 86.
Marbling Machines

David Pye writes about workmanship in terms of certainty and risk. In the workmanship of certainty, the processes are fully mechanized and the final product is determined before it is made. In contrast, the workmanship of risk has many outcomes, and the result is alterable once the production begins. Pye maintains that the workmanship of risk rarely exists in pure form and that craftspeople use tools to reduce risk and increase speed of production. There are forms of work that are intermediary stages, like typewriting, where the look of the letters is guaranteed even if the typist errs. This spectrum of certainty may be applied to marbling. When done entirely by hand, marbling is almost all risk. Though skilled marblers have the capacity to apply colors evenly, pigments can fly in unexpected trajectories and are never guaranteed one specific spot on top of a bath. There are countless environmental factors that impact how a sheet is marbled. Weary arms or a different angle in reaching over the bath or placing a clean sheet on top of the bath could mean significant differences in how two papers, made at the same time with the same materials and processes, might look. Marbling machines, which Halfer bemoaned, were aimed at providing certainty in pigment application. They certainly had commercial resonance in the United States, where their popularity in production was widely regarded as the reason for a dip in hand marbling skills. These machines could offer essentially the same sheet every time, but their success depended on their functionality. It is difficult to tell the difference between a machine-made and a human-made sheet of marbled paper in many instances, and this is where the lines

between certainty and risk are blurred. Halfer offered an intervention between the two options, the option of precision in hand marbling. He gave readers the tools to make their materials as clean as possible, to choose gums that would make crisp and consistent lines, and to use his colors, which had quality that he could guarantee. *The Progress of the Marbling Art* was an offering of success to the reader, but also Halfer’s key in making his own commercial production part of a narrative of more certain, and perhaps more comfortable, marbled paper making.

Machines could be present in many stages of the marbling process. Louis Kinder, the Roycroft bookbinder who introduced Halfer’s ideas to an American audience, engaged with the machine by suggesting the use of a mechanical grinder in the preparation of mineral pigments. He mentions that a fair sized machine could be purchased for five dollars.138 In pursuit of regularity and promotion associated with Halfer’s methods, Doebbelin developed the Halfer Marbling Machine.139 The machine was fitted to a special trough, which could also be purchased, and was a long bar with brush ends to flick pigments evenly over a marbling bath. In advertisements for it, a man with a lab coat (probably Doebbelin) grasps the machine and pushes it across the bath.140 The machine looks professional, but accessible.

The machine was available through marbling suppliers. The 1927 “Halfer Marbleizing Company Price List” includes Doebbelin’s Marbling Machine, at a price of seventy-five dollars, with a special trough for the machine at twenty-five.

138 Kinder, *Formulas for Bookbinders*, 14
140 Ibid., 132.
**Halfer’s Method of Marbling**, a page advertising “Doebbelin’s Marbling Machine: invented by W.C. Doebbelin, London, England” precedes an advertisement which clearly shows a picture labeled “Halfer’s Marbling Machine.” By the publication of this booklet in 1916, the original price of the machine had been blacked out in the book and one-hundred dollars is written in, fifty dollars more than its advertised price on the inside cover of the book. The booklet emphasizes that “Halfer’s marbling colors,” being particularly light in body, are the only colors suitable for use with the machine. The educational, the commercial, and the final material marbling product are all wrapped up in this booklet, which uses samples of marbling to show the regulated but aesthetically appealing and exciting products that can come from using products ranging from machine to pigment.

Halfer’s Marbling Machine was advertised in J. G. Pleger’s *Bookbinding*, a 1914 text which was reprinted by the Inland Printer Company in 1924. Rather than Halfer’s Marbleizing Company out of Massachusetts, the machine image gives “The Halfer Co., New York, N.Y.” as the source to buy the machine itself (Figure 20). This company is listed as a supplier of red lake in pulp for marbling and gum hogg in a Government Printing Office Annual Report of the Public Printer in 1914, and likely had ties to Doebbelin.\(^\text{141}\) The description of the machine is detailed, telling the reader that it has a four-compartment reservoir with an attached system of tubes which drop colors at regular intervals. The machine could be loaded with colors before being slid along the rims of the trough, while the operator presses two levers forming part of the

handles of the machine to release the colors.\textsuperscript{142} The book also shows a marbling trough set-up with a glass bottom, so that the marbler can judge exactly what is going on with the pigments and the size (Figure 21).\textsuperscript{143} The tool becomes a technology for viewing work, demystifying the interaction between marbler and materials.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{Halfer-s-Marbling-Machine-
The-Halfer-Co.-New-York-N-Y.jpg}
\end{figure}


\textsuperscript{143} Ibid., 394.
The specifics of materiality were essential to this technology-maker exchange. When the pigments themselves are viewed as a technology, one that does not require a marbler to grind their own colors and facilitates chemical reactions, the line between materials and tools blurs. An advertisement by Otto Zahn, a writer and bookbinding supplier, offered Halfer’s book for sale and an advice-style column on why white spots might appear in marbling. He gives several reasons - from the brushes not being clean enough, to the color lacking gum arabic, to the gum bag not having completely dissolved - but focuses in on colors, saying that the color might not have been ground finely enough, a problem that is precluded by using Halfer’s colors.144 The risk of white spots is reduced by the assured certainty of the colors.

Available Papers

For American bookbinders who were not marbling papers themselves, technological developments offered opportunities to access a host of different kinds of papers. Many of these items manifested in the forms of sample books, offered by paper distributors trying to sell their goods and to create special house styles. An article titled “Book Production 1928-1938” in The Art of the Book recommends that books should be well-produced with character and “house style,” implying the presence of recognizable and familiar features. In pursuit of a recognizable brand and individual aesthetics for books, bookbinders might communicate with dozens of paper distributors. It is around the turn of the nineteenth century into the twentieth that shows the advent of many of these companies, from the Japan Paper Company to the Commercial Lining Paper Company. These fit well into ideas that Halfer was both promoting and capitalizing on, making supplies widely available to people interested in making books.

Many endpaper options were open to the bookbinders working in the late nineteenth through mid-twentieth centuries. One binder in particular, the Hertzberg Bindery, maintained archives held from the 1880s to 1980s, documenting changes from its early years as a Chicago bindery to its transfer to Des Moines, Iowa, to later years as a library bindery company, following a national trend in bookbinderies scaling up for greater profits and reach. In this archive, hundreds of paper samples represent the variety of options available to the Hertzberg Bindery as its staff decided what endpapers would be most suitable for books ranging from children’s publications

to intricate art bindings of the Bible. Edward Hertzberg wrote *Forty-Four Years as a Bookbinder* in 1933. In it, Hertzberg traces the history of the bookbindery to 1872, then its founding to as early as 1870 through two men by the names Kiss and Ringer. After the great Chicago fire, the firm had gathered available masters of the bookbinding trade. Mr. Ernest Hertzberg was trained abroad and eventually drafted into the firm in recognition of his talents and business acumen.\(^{146}\) The firm displayed books at a variety of expositions and fairs, including a Gothic-based room filled with books at the 1933 Century of Progress Exhibition in Chicago and the Universal Exposition, 1904, which included at least one half-bound leather book with marbled covers.\(^{147}\) Edward took over the business in 1905, and in 1920 a Des Moines-based library wing was opened. In 1934, Fred Hertzberg was invited by the American Library Association to exhibit children’s books published by the company. Careful attention was paid to the endpapers, which included calico for Louisa May Alcott’s works, but were otherwise endpapers imported from Italy, probably marbled. Even Hertzberg’s antecedent, a children’s book company called Treasure Trove, used marbled papers on their covers, along with printed scenes and plain colors.

Several sample books are represented in the Hertzberg archive. The company kept a sample book from H.D. Catty & Company, a New York City-based firm. The words “American made” appear on the cover of this collection of “Lining and End-Sheets.” The book itself contains specimens of decorated and mock-marbled paper, “wave agate,” “gold vein marble,” “autumn leaf spot,” and “onyx, etc., wave, manila.”

\(^{146}\) Edward Hertzberg, *Forty-Four Years as a Bookbinder* (Chicago: Ernest Hertzberg and Sons Monastery Hill Bindery, 1933), 13-14.

\(^{147}\) Ibid., 15-21.
Emphasis was placed on the color fastness and uniform appearance of the products (Figure 22). The samples were divided between printed metallic pages with repeating floral patterns, and marbled specimens, including one Turkish marble design, thirteen striped marbles, seven with gold vein overlays (in green with overlay paper samples cut away), one antique red pattern, one poorly lined-up double comb figure (Figure 23), and three variants on a floating Turkish pattern.

Figure 22 “H.D. Catty & Co. Sample Book.” Records of the Hertzberg Bindery/Library Binding Service (LBS), Des Moines, Iowa (MsC 545), University of Iowa Libraries, Iowa City, Iowa.
Figure 23 “H.D. Catty & Co. Sample Book.” Records of the Hertzberg Bindery/Library Binding Service (LBS), Des Moines, Iowa (MsC 545), University of Iowa Libraries, Iowa City, Iowa.

Showing the continuity of marbling samples in the twentieth century, a 1947 Comertex sample book proclaims “Linings in fine books for more than 50 years!” (Figure 24). Comertex, the Commercial Lining Paper Company, was based in Chicago and included patterns and a message that were very similar to those offered by H.D. Catty & Co.148 (Figure 25). Comertex supplied imitation marbled papers with vibrant colors and a diverse array of designs imitating combed marbled patterns (Figure 26). Lithographic paper comes up again in a sample book from the Chicago-based company of Slade, Hipp & Meloy. “Samples of Lithograph Lining Papers” presents numerous printed floral patterns, while others imitate elements of marbled paper, like pages with tonal stripes and gold overlays (Figure 27).


The lithographic marbled paper samples represented in these books were a considerably more economical option for bookbinders than hand-marbled papers. The
Inks used for lithography were completely different than those used for marbled paper. The lithography option was popular because it did not require special training. If a paper company was already equipped to lithograph other types of designs, they could print marbled designs as well. However, the results lacked the presence of the human hand. When compared to hand-marbled paper, lithographic marbling lacks depth, lacks clean lines, and is often out of register. When viewed from some remove, the technology gives the illusion of a marbled sheet, but the printed marbling lacks the vitality of risk, and the bright colors and precise lines especially present in marbling after Halfer’s work are conspicuously absent. Halfer said that he had been manufacturing marbled colors specifically for fifteen years. He had selected colors from several different factories, all known for their own best colors, and was able to control an assortment of pigments specific to marbling that no other single factory could produce.¹⁴⁹

Staff at the Hertzberg Company were also looking at supplies from the company of Cockerell & Son, including advertisements for finishing tools and copious amounts of paper stock. The Hertzberg archive includes 1930s era letters from the Japan Paper Company proposing service as the sole suppliers of Cockerell papers. These papers were in many ways the gold standard of decorative papers and other paper-based bookbinding supplies. The quality of the papers is evident in their bright colors, crisp lines, and creative patterns, and as Richard Wolfe argues, is Halferian in their materials and applications.¹⁵⁰ Hertzberg Bindery maintained the collection of


paper and fabric samples for years, and when someone at the company finely bound a scrapbook, which would eventually contain pictures and words detailing the company’s history, the cover was bound in half leather, with Cockerell-made marbled cloth as the prominent feature (Figure 28).

The Japan Paper Company, established in 1901, offered several different types of sample books representing different paper-making operations. Distributors ranged from the Swigart Paper Company in Chicago, the Millcraft Paper Company in Cleveland, and the Zellerbach Paper Company as Pacific Coast distributors with stock in Los Angeles. A book of “Marbled Paper from France” shows papers with a more subdued quality than the Cockerell papers, with a mix of Turkish stone, fantasy, and other traditional patterns in greens, browns, reds, and blues, and yellows.151

The Stevens-Nelson Corporation of New York and Boston offered St. Albans paper sample books, full of brightly printed abstract designs. Stevens-Nelson offered hand-made and machine-made French marbled papers by Putois Brothers and Co. in Paris, which mostly featured papers with abstract swirls on beige and light blue papers, which show through. Some designs have purple and gold metallic sprinklings over parts of pattern veins. More formal designs show up about half-way through the book, and include French snail patterns and shell patterns, generally with light reds, blues, yellows, and the occasional black. The Hertzberg records include Cockerell Sample Books, dating mostly to the first half of the twentieth century.

151 “Marbled Paper from France,” Japan Paper Company. Records of the Hertzberg Bindery/Library Binding Service (LBS), Des Moines, Iowa (MsC 545), University of Iowa Libraries, Iowa City, Iowa.
Figure 28  (L) Cover. *Scrapbook*, Hertzberg Bindery; (R) “Cockerell Sample Book.” Japan Paper Company. Records of the Hertzberg Bindery/Library Binding Service (LBS), Des Moines, Iowa (MsC 545), University of Iowa Libraries, Iowa City, Iowa.

Hertzberg was also looking to the Sylvia Patterned Papers Company, based in Leicester, England, for series of patterned papers including repeating book motifs and dancing figures. Their ‘O’ Series includes printed designs and marbled papers, which are likely Cockerell papers in cheerful blues, pinks, greens, yellows, and browns. New York City-based Tamm & Co. Novelty Papers offered what appear to be machine-made abstract shell prints on heavyweight cardstock in dark colors (Figure 29). The patterns are primarily abstract interpretations of shell patterns with patches of colors and surrounding flecks.
Steffens, Jones & Co. Inc. Fine Papers of New York City used a marbled exterior for their sample book of “Paper and Paper Specialties” (Figure 30). The book is accompanied by a letter to the Hertzberg Bindery, dated 1931. The letter describes this sample book and highlights the pages where the Hertzberg staff could find French marbles, Duerr marbles, Durabel marble, Mother of Pearl, and “Ouvyt” Marbles, along with a sample book of imported marbled papers and information for price reductions. The prices range from 13 to 36 cents for fifty sheets of paper, and $42.50 to $123.00 for a ream.

![Figure 29 “Tamm & Co. Sample Book.” Records of the Hertzberg Bindery/Library Binding Service (LBS), Des Moines, Iowa (MsC 545), University of Iowa Libraries, Iowa City, Iowa.](image)
The prices of these papers are not insignificant for an early twentieth century audience. They represent a wide array of paper available to bookbinders in the first half of the twentieth century. Notations indicate Hertzberg buyers’ considerable interaction with Cockerell products and imported papers from France and Italy, but there are virtually no cut samples or pencil marks on the lithographic and otherwise printed designs to indicate interest from the bookbindery. Though these papers represent a level of certainty, and less expensive options for binders, the quality of hand-marbled paper maintained a special value through the twentieth century. The hand-marbled designs that Halfer advocated for and taught still held considerable value for bookbinders, their suppliers, and their customers in the mid-twentieth century United States.
Chapter 5

CONCLUSION

The popularity of marbling did not end in the mid-twentieth century. Following a wave of interest inspired by Rosamond Loring’s book and teaching, the craft was quiet for a couple of decades until a small group began to explore marbling techniques using manuals like Halfer’s Progress of the Marbling Art. 1980s and 1990s engagement with the craft manifested in increased marbling scholarship and practice, and the impact of this new marbling production is still present today. Inspiration for this revival of marbling interest was rooted in accessibility to precise instructions and broadened availability of materials. Like those who subverted the workshop system by reading and learning from Halfer’s book in the late nineteenth century, twentieth-century craftspeople found power and creativity in specific knowledge through books, matched by collaboration with other marblers.

Marbling remains an important craft and aesthetic. The steep rise of crafting information available on the internet avails marbling instructions to any enthusiast who wants to learn. The marbling process, done with a variety of materials, appears on family, crafting, and museum blogs alike. #Marbledmonday, a popular hashtag for museums and libraries on social media, invites audiences to share an appreciation for marbled paper from book collections. Imitation marbled papers are still frequently used as endpapers, and fine bookbinders still use hand marbled pages in their work. In many ways, the concerns about moving marbling knowledge forward have dissipated, as access to information about it are at an all-time high. Halfer’s precise language, his...
careful study, and his precedent to share rather than hoard knowledge still resonate in marbling and in craft more broadly today.
REFERENCES


“A GPO-PIA Joint Research Bulletin.” *Bindery Series No. 1 (B-1)*: 1-12.


Appendix A

PIGMENTS NAMED IN MARBLING MANUALS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author, Date, Location</th>
<th>Pigments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Bookbinder’s Manual</strong></td>
<td>1820s, London</td>
<td>Carmine, lake, rose pink, vermilion, king’s yellow, Dutch pink, yellow ochre, Prussian blue, verditer, verdigris, orange lake, red lead, flake white, lamp black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Bookbinder’s Complete Instructor</strong></td>
<td>George Martin, 1823,</td>
<td>Prussian blue, king’s yellow, rose pink or lake, flake white, lamp black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A Manual of the Art of Bookbinding</strong></td>
<td>James Nicholson, 1856,</td>
<td>Drop lake, peach wood lake, vermilion, rose pink, burnt Oxford ochre, indigo, Chinese blue, ultramarine, Prussian blue, lemon chrome, Dutch pink, raw Oxford ochre, vegetable lamp black, drop ivory black, burnt Turkey umber, orange lead, orange chrome, china clay, pipe clay, flake white, Paris white</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>“Marbled Paper,” Practical Magazine</strong></td>
<td>1873, Philadelphia</td>
<td>Naples yellow, yellow ocher, yellow lake, orpiment, verdigris, rose pink, red lead, carmine, terra di Sienna, Dutch pink, indigo, Prussian blue, verditer, umber, ivory black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Progress of the Marbling Art;“Halfer’s</strong></td>
<td>Josef Halfer, 1885,</td>
<td>Mineral and lake colors; scarlet red, carmine lake,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marbling Colors”</td>
<td>W.C. Doebbelin, 1910, Middleton and Salem, Massachusetts</td>
<td>Oriental blue (light), indigo (dark), yellow (lemon), green, black, brown, and white</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Art of Bookbinding</td>
<td>Joseph Zaehnsdorf, 1902, London</td>
<td>Lake, rose, vermilion, king’s yellow, yellow ochre, Prussian blue, indigo, some green, flake white, lamp-black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bookbinding and Its Auxiliary Branches</td>
<td>John J. Pleger, 1914, Chicago</td>
<td>Mineral and lake colors, black, green, ingotine blue, carmine red, indigo blue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Marbled Parchment,” Fireside News</td>
<td>Gabriel Andre Petit, 1926, New York</td>
<td>Undercoat in red, dark blue, orange, green, and yellow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern Methods in Paper Marbling</td>
<td>Tim Thrift, 1945, Winchester, Massachusetts</td>
<td>Artists’ oil colors in tubes; cadmiums (yellow, orange, red), burnt umber, viridian green, cobalt blue, violet, titanium white</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B

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<tr>
<td>Col. 946</td>
<td>Conertex Book Lining Sample Book(s).</td>
<td>Digital scans Order#16L073</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1) 1942 booklet, Page 1.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2) 1947 booklet, Cover.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3) 1947 booklet, Sample No.425, “Course feathered comb.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doc. 890</td>
<td>Hue’s Hotel. Inventory: Ossipee, NH, 1908-1919.</td>
<td>Digital scan Order#16L074</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1) Front cover.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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