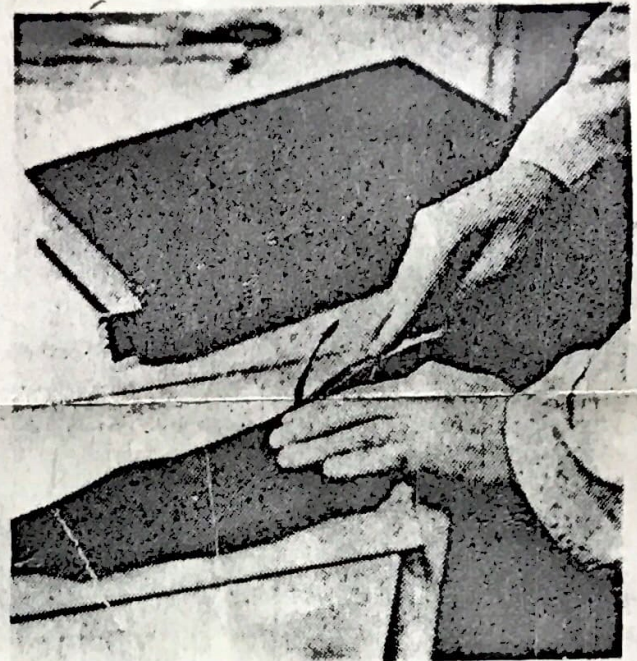
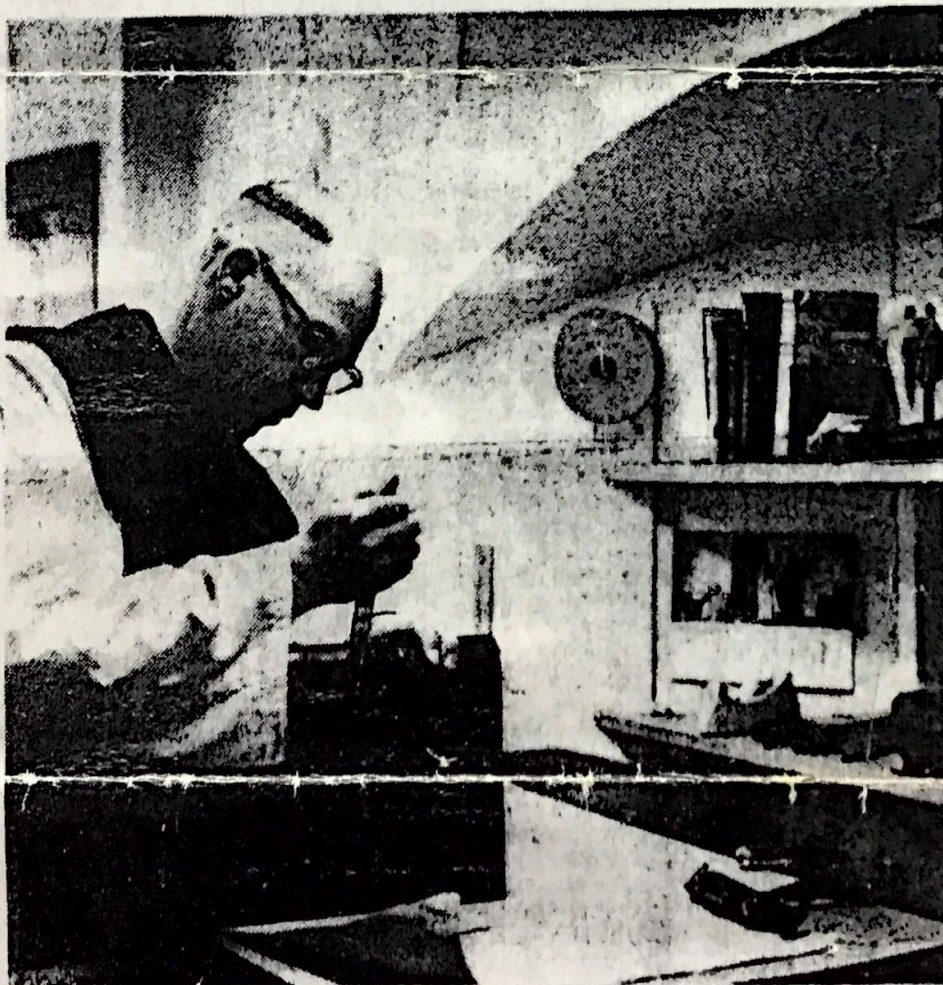


Brother Charles, a trappist monk at New Melleray Abbey, 10 miles southwest of Dubuque, is a master of the 400-year-old craft of hand-binding books. Here he uses a plough and press to shave the edges of the book.



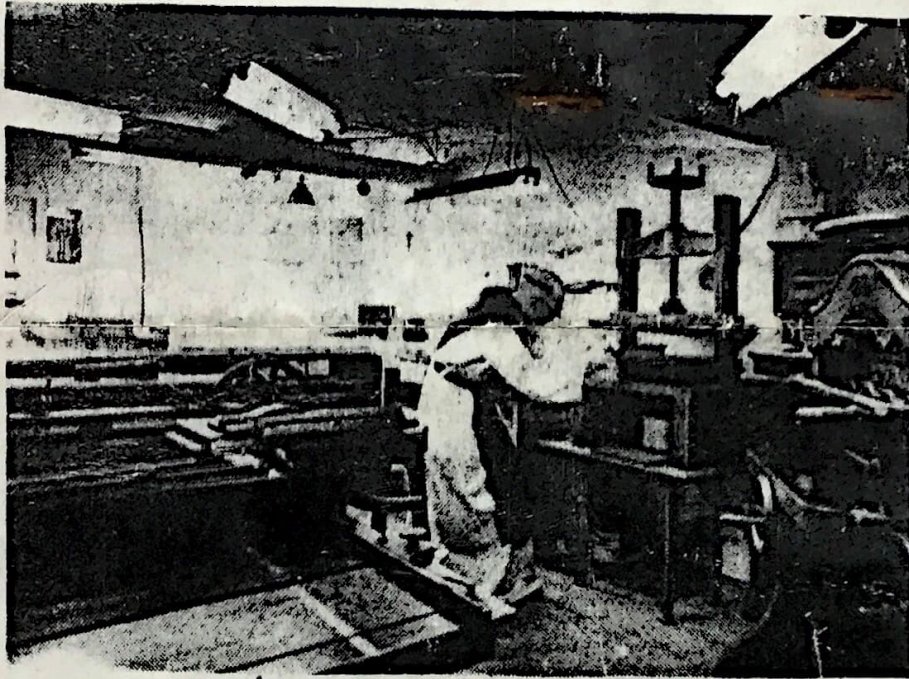
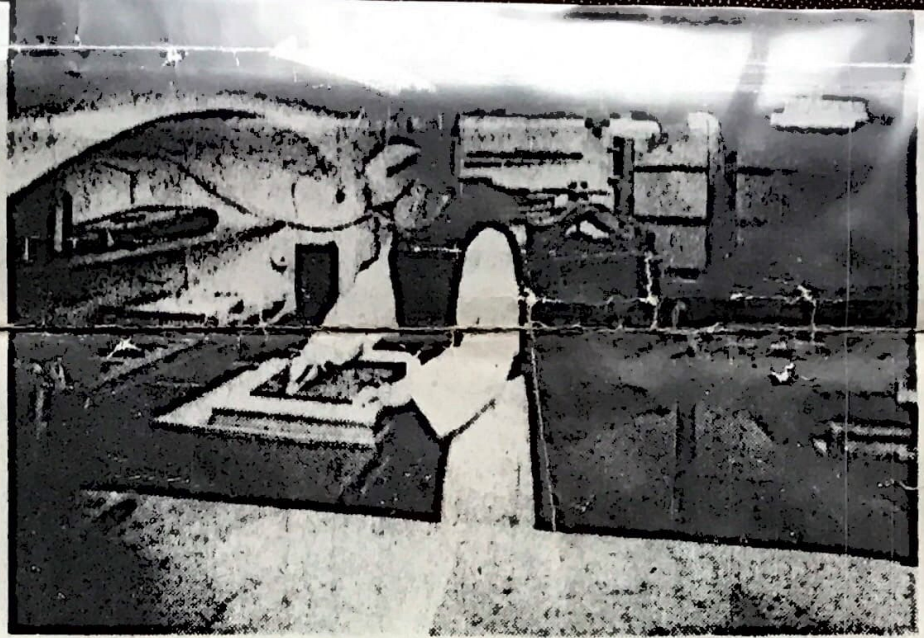
After the pages have been trimmed and sewn together, the leather binding is processed. Here the Moracco leather that will cover the book is trimmed. The missal on the workbench shows how the leather will look when finished.

## An Ancient Art Survives



After the leather has been soaked in paste, it is worked onto the "boards" of stiff cardboard that is the cover of the book. Here Brother Charles uses a pincher to work the leather around the cords that bind the pages of the book. This keeps the spine of the book flush against the backing.

Nearing the completion of the binding process, Brother Charles smooths the end sheets of the missal after he has pasted them onto the cardboard. It takes him about 16 hours to bind a missal like this. He taught himself the craft by reading books.



The bound missal is then placed into a press and remains there for 24 hours. It is placed in this press eight times during the binding process. As a service to the Monastery, Brother Charles binds all books and periodicals in the Monastery library.

#### Telegraph-Herald Photos

The completion of the binding process comes with the stamping of the title on the missal. A strip of gold foil is laid on the spine and the heated palet makes the impression on the leather. The leather, purchased by the Monastery from England, is made from Algerian goat skin which is considered the best type of leather for book binding.

