

Meaning of Yapp

You'll be hard pressed to find the work 'yapp' in a dictionary. Yapped is the past tense of how a small dog barks when it is agitated. But when a Bible is 'yapped', that is something quite different.

I understand that the word yapp is a 6th century old English word meaning 'wide' or 'open', and it later came to mean 'bent' or 'curved'. Most often the word is used as a surname. Apparently the phone book reveals that there are plenty of Yapps in Shropshire, England. At any rate, there was a Mr Yapp who was a 19th century bookbinder in London and perhaps the binding style derived from him.

In Bible production, a volume which has a yapp or is yapped means that the leather covers overlap some way beyond the page edges, and so provide protection for the gilded pages from sun and rain. Semi-yapp extends just a short way, but a full yapp binding will extend more and curve over the pages so that the yapped edges meet or almost do so when bent over the two leather covers.

The finest bound Allan Bibles - those with leather linings - have a full yapp finish. This adds an extra touch of luxury but it has a practical purpose as well - to extend the beauty and life of your Bible.

Do you have an old yapp Bible in you home somewhere? I expect it may be a bit dog-eared too.

Back to dogs and yapping again!

Nicholas