Cut Pages

I. General Information

- Some books will have pages that are unopened at the top (head), some will be unopened at the side (fore-edge), and some will have both. To allow easy use of the book, we must cut the pages.

II. Important Note

- These instructions are for opening pages of general collections volumes only. For rare and special volumes that have unopened pages, always consult with a curator before doing anything to alter the physical condition of a book.

III. Tools and Materials

A long, thin-bladed, non-serrated knife that is not too sharp

III. Procedure

1. Start by opening the folds at the head.

2. As shown in the photo below, lay the book on a flat surface, open the book and insert the knife in the center of the first folded gathering, holding the knife parallel to the plane of the paper.

3. Slowly and firmly draw the knife forward and out, cutting away from the book at a slight angle, until the entire fold is cut.

4. Turn those pages and move on to the next folded gathering, applying gentle pressure on the book to keep it flat as you progress through the pages.

5. When all the top folds have been opened, open the fore-edge folds in the same way.