

TREATMENT PROPOSAL/AUTHORIZATION FOR TREATMENT

Date: 9/29/07
PCS Identification number: 08-19
Owner/Custodian: Nancy Sparrow
Address: Alexander Architectural Archive
Battle Hall, Room 6, University of Texas at Austin
Austin, TX
Telephone: 512-475-4621
Owner/Custodian call no.: WEBB
Title/Subject/Description (.01): Ellens Farm
Creator: Maurice Everett Webb Firm
Date of production: unknown
Place of production: unknown
Approximate dimensions (hxw): English: 16 9/16" x 10 3/4" (width is 11 5/8" with overmat fragments included.)
Metric: 42.1 cm x 27.3 cm (width is 29.5 cm with overmat fragments included.)

Conservator: Sarah Norris

Authorization

The undersigned requests and authorizes the Kilgarlin Center at the University of Texas, Austin, TX, to undertake conservation treatment of the artifact described in the attached Condition Report according to the procedures outlined in the appended Treatment Proposal. In the event the Owner/Custodian authorizes the Kilgarlin Center to proceed with the treatment recommended in the proposal such authorization shall be deemed to include acceptance by the depositor of the terms and conditions appearing in the original Authorization for Examination and Treatment. The undersigned further agrees that the Kilgarlin Center and the conservator may share any information or images obtained during the agreed upon examination, treatment, or investigation in written and public presentations.

Signature of Owner/Custodian: _____

Date: _____

Signature of conservator: _____

Date: _____

Description

Primary support(hxw): English: 16 9/16" x 10 3/4" (width is 11 5/8" with overmat fragments included)
Metric: 42.1 cm x 27.3 cm (width is 29.5 cm with overmat fragments included.)

Image area(hxw): English 15 3/4" x 10 1/8"
Metric 39.4 cm x 25.7 cm

General

The drawing is brown ink on watercolor board. Fragments of an overmat remain adhered to the right and bottom edges of the watercolor board. The board has a long crack near the bottom edge of the verso, which has split the image area on the lower left.

Media

Medium 1

Thin lines of brown ink cover the image area.

Medium 2

Very light graphite lines appear to form a faint underdrawing in the image area.

Medium 3

A graphite cataloguing annotation appears at the lower right corner of the verso of the primary support.

Primary support

The watercolor board is approximately 2 mm thick. Its recto is beige (1) in color, and slightly textured¹, and its verso is light blue speckled with darker blue. The verso bears a brown ink stamp identifying it as "Whatman's Water Colour Sketching Board. Winsor & Newton, Ltd., London, England," and also stating other production information. The remaining overmat fragments are approximately 2 mm thick, beige (2) in color, and slightly textured.² These overmat pieces are adhered with water-soluble adhesive, which is visible along the edges of the primary support where the overmat is missing.

Condition

General

The drawing is in fair condition overall, with serious visual disturbance caused by the remaining torn fragments of overmat adhered to the primary support. One major crack in the verso of the primary support has caused the lower portion of the board to move independently from the rest, and has torn the recto on the left side.

Media

Medium 1

¹ Lunning, Elizabeth and Roy Perkinson. *The Print Council of America Paper Sample Book*. 1996: The Print Council of America.

² Lunning, Elizabeth and Roy Perkinson. *The Print Council of America Paper Sample Book*. 1996: The Print Council of America.

The brown ink appears to be stable overall. Though this ink has a brown color typical of iron gall, it does not fluoresce under UV light as iron gall ink typically does. A small ink sample does not yield a blue color when tested with potassium ferrocyanide, and the manuscript displays none of the haloling or burn-through characteristic of iron gall. For these reasons, the ink is not presumed to be iron gall. The ink does not appear to be soluble or to yield offset in water, ethanol, or acetone.

Medium 2

The faint graphite lines appear stable, though barely visible. They are most apparent beneath the roof beams in the drawing.

Medium 3

The graphite cataloguing annotation appears stable.

Primary support

The watercolor board displays graphite dust and surface grime on recto and verso. Its core is a brownish-orange color that indicates brittleness and acidity. Fiber analysis indicates the board contains soft wood, cotton, and a small amount of bast fibers. Light damage is apparent in unmatted portions of the image area. Grime, adhesive, and board fibers remain where the overmat has broken away. Portions of the mat remain adhered to the right and lower edges of the recto of the board. Mounting tape remains adhered to the right side of the board's verso. On the verso, a horizontal crack spans the board approximately 4.5 cm from the bottom edge. Presumably caused during storage or handling due to the board's brittleness and acidity, this crack has caused a tear in the left side of the image area, and poses significant future danger of further tearing and breaking.

Treatment Proposal

1. Remove the remaining overmat by paring.
2. Gently surface clean the recto with soot sponge, taking care not to lighten medium 2.
3. Remove the residual adhesive with a methyl cellulose poultice.
4. Based on progress and behavior of materials, choose treatment option A, B, or C:

Option A:

5. House object in a sink mat.

Option B:

5. Split the image and top layer of board from the rest of the board. If splitting is not successful, pare off the back of the board.
6. Mend crack in image area.
7. Remount on new board if necessary for stability.
8. House in a folder or mat, depending on the split material's strength.

Option C:

5. Split the image and top layer of board from the rest of the board.
6. Split the back paper layer with its brand markings from the board.
7. Remount recto and verso on new board core.
8. House in a sink mat.

Photography

Digital images, recto and verso, in spectral and raking light, will be taken before and after treatment. During treatment photos will be taken, as well.

Possible Effects of Treatment

Overly aggressive surface cleaning could lighten medium 2, the graphite underdrawing. Removing the remaining overmat could cause skinning of the image area. Removing the image from the board could cause distortion or tearing, especially in the area where the board is already cracked.

Treatment Notes

10/19, 3 hr: Split and pared remaining overmat down to its bottom facing paper. Uncovered one ink line in a previously unknown medium in the lower right corner of the recto. Surface cleaned recto with soot sponge.

10/21, 2.5 hr: Tested newly revealed line; no offset with water or methyl cellulose. The line appears to be felt tip pen to the naked eye, but looks surprisingly like graphite under magnification. Removed overmat's facing paper and mat adhesive with methyl cellulose poultice and gentle scraping with Teflon folder. Newly revealed line remained stable.

10/22, 2 hr: Mechanically split top corner and bottom broken portion of board with thin ivory folder.

10/26, 2 hr: Completed splitting board and began splitting facing paper off remaining board. Left board fibers remaining on facing paper to avoid danger of tearing image area.

10/27, 5 hr: Completed splitting facing paper off remaining board. Pared board fibers off the back of the facing paper with small paring knife on light table.

10/29, 1.5 hr: Sanded board fibers from back of facing paper.

11/5, 5 hr: Humidified facing paper in Goretex chamber and scraped off remaining board fibers with microspatula while spraying out object verso with deionized water. Dried in felts under weight for five days.

11/10, 1.5 hr: Removed some of the remaining board fibers with microspatula and damp swab.

11/12, 1.5 hr: Removed some of the remaining board fibers with microspatula and damp swab. Decided to leave the remaining few fibers attached to the facing paper as they will not endanger it.

2 hr: Mended tear with Usumino tissue and wheat starch paste all the way across the crease to reinforce and control damaged area.

1 hr: Humidified drawing in humidity chamber in sink. Flattened and dried between blotters and boards with heavy weight for one week.

11/26, 30 min: Used raw umber colored pencil to inpaint small abraded portion of image's border line where it had previously been cracked. Created 16" x 20" housing folder from 80# coverweight Mohawk.

Treatment Performed

10/19/07 3 hours: Split and pared overmat. Surface cleaned image area with soot sponge.

10/21/07 2.5 hours: Tested newly revealed medium with water and methyl cellulose. Removed remaining overmat and adhesive with methyl cellulose poultice.

10/22/07 2 hours: Mechanically split board with ivory folder.

10/26/07 2 hours: Mechanically split board with ivory folder. Split facing paper from remaining board.

10/27/07 5 hours: Split facing paper from remaining board. Pared remaining board.

10/29/07 1.5 hours: Sanded facing paper verso.

11/5/07 5 hours: Humidified drawing in Goretex chamber. Scraped remaining fibers from verso. Dried in felts for five days.

11/10/07 1.5 hours: Removed board fibers from drawing verso with damp swab and microspatula.

11/12/07 1.5 hours: Removed board fibers from drawing verso with damp swab and microspatula.

2 hours: Mended tear all the way across the crease with Usumino tissue and wheat starch paste for support.

1 hour: Humidified drawing in humidity chamber. Flattened 1 week in blotters and boards.

11/26/07 30 min: Inpainted abraded border line with colored pencil. Created folder with 80# coverweight Mohawk.

Total: 27.5 hours