

Treatment Report

Temporary ID # 08-77

Date: 3/28/08

Owner/Custodian: Center for American History
Address: Sid Richardson Hall, The University of Texas at Austin
Curator: Evan Hocker
Owner/Custodian Call No.: Rabb Family Papers box 2J457
Title/Subject/Description: John W. Rabb Correspondence
Creator: John W. Rabb
Date of Production: June 25, 1864
Place of Production: Near Atlanta, Georgia
Approximate Dimensions (hwx): : 12.5 x 8 inches (32 x 20 cm)
Conservator: Helen Kuncicky

Treatment Objective

There is pressure-sensitive tape on one corner of the letter. Treatment will remove the tape and prevent further damage from the adhesive residue.

Description

General

Approximate Dimensions (hwx): 12.5 x 8 inches (32 x 20 cm)

The letter is written in graphite on machine made paper. Written on both sides of the paper, the letter was folded into thirds both lengthwise and widthwise.

Media

Graphite

The text of the letter is written in graphite and covers the front and back of the leaf. There is an even amount of white space in relation to the amount of graphite. The graphite is unevenly applied with some areas much darker than others. It is fairly lightly and thinly applied overall.

Black Ink

A number 13 is written and underlined in black ball-point ink in the upper left corner on the front side of the letter. This is not contemporary to the document and is likely a cataloger's annotation.

Primary support

The primary support is a machine made, laid paper. The paper is beige in color and medium weight, according to the standards established in *The Print Council of America Paper Sample Book*¹

The paper was folded first in half widthwise, then folded widthwise again and then into thirds lengthwise. This gives three horizontal creases and three vertical creases

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

running down the length of the page.

Condition

General

The manuscript is in good, usable condition overall, with minor tears and some discoloration.

Media

Graphite

The graphite is in good condition. The writing is legible and the medium is not visibly smudged.

Black Ink

The writing ink is in good condition. There is no fading, sinking, or discoloration.

Primary support

The primary support is in fair condition with some discoloration and embrittlement. The paper is more severely discolored around the edges. There are also several stains, which are more visible on the back of the page. Viewing under UV light shows the beginnings of foxing in the form of small whitish dots fairly evenly spread across the paper.

There are a few minor tears around the edges of the paper. There are also a few small holes, at the intersections of the fold creases. The paper is very wrinkled, with many small creases along the entire surface and several larger, severe creases.

There are two small pieces of pressure-sensitive tape holding the lower left corner of the letter to the rest of the document. The tape is located on the front of the document only, and the two pieces overlap slightly. The tape is translucent and lightly soiled along the edges.

Treatment Proposal

1. Surface clean as needed.
2. The tape will be removed.
3. Tears will be mended with tissue and wheat-starch paste.

Photodocumentation

Photo-documentation was completed with a Pentax digital camera. Images include front and back shots of the manuscript in spectral, raking, and transmitted lights, and during-treatment images in ambient light. The images document the manuscript's condition before and after treatment.

Testing

Media

Graphite

The graphite is friable with very light pressure.

Black Ink

Friability: The ink shows no evidence of friability when tested with hard pressure.

Solubility: The ink gives no offset onto damp chromatography pressure when applied with hard pressure for several minutes.

Treatment Performed

1. Removed tape carrier and adhesive mechanically.
2. Removed adhesive residue with ethanol.
3. Mended tears with lens tissue adhered with wheat starch paste.
4. Housed in paper sleeve in original folder.

Length of Treatment: 4 hours.