TREATMENT PROPOSAL/AUTHORIZATION FOR TREATMENT

Date:	September 13, 2007
PCS Identification number:	08-14
Owner/Custodian:	Center for American History
Address:	University of Texas at Austin Austin, TX
Telephone:	512-475-4557
Owner/Custodian call no.:	2J457
Title/Subject/Description (.01):	Oct. 18, 1863, Virgil Rabb to Sister
Creator:	Virgil Rabb
Date of production:	Oct. 18, 1863
Place of production:	Camp Sugar
Approximate dimensions (hxw):	9 1/16" x 7 10/16" 23.1cm x 19.4 cm
Conservator:	Emily Rainwater

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): 9 1/16" x 7 10/16"
23.1cm x 19.4 cm

General

The writing is iron gall ink on blue machine made ruled paper.

Media

Black Iron Gall Ink 1

The black ink was applied with a light to moderate hand. There are both thick and thin letters, as well as a few inkblots.

Black Iron Gall Ink 2

The black ink was applied evenly and in a somewhat heavy hand.

Blue Ruling Lines

The lines run horizontally on both the recto and verso of the paper approximately 1cm apart. They were most likely created during production of the paper.

Primary support

The support is a light blue, smooth machine made paper of medium 1 thickness.[1]

Condition

General

The manuscript is in fair condition overall with some tears along the edge of the paper and at fold lines and mends done with pressure sensitive tape; the tape remains tacky and is noticeably darkening the paper.

Media

Black Iron Gall Ink 1

The iron gall ink has browned with age; there is also some fading and the very beginning signs of burn-through. There are a few ink smudges though these are likely contemporary with the creation.

Black Iron Gall Ink 2

The iron gall ink has browned with age; the manuscript also exhibits the very beginning signs of burn-through. There are a few ink smudges though these are likely contemporary with the creation.

Blue Ruling Lines

The blue ruling lines have faded considerably. For the majority of the paper, these lines are very faint. At the edge of the support, the blue ink is darker and tested positive for solubility in water.

Primary support

The primary support exhibits surface grime as well as discoloration and an orange-brown stain which has entered into the fibers of the paper. There is some embrittlement of the paper resulting in tears; minor loses appear along fold lines in the center of the support. One white and one orange particle are present, both near the lower edge of the recto.

In addition, there are six pieces of pressure sensitive tape; two on the recto and four on the verso. The carrier is still intact and prodding a bubble with a tungsten needle revealed the adhesive remains incredibly

[1] Lunning, Elizabeth and Roy Perkinson. The Print Council of America Paper Sample Book: A Practical Guide to the Description of Paper. The Print Council of America, 1996.

tacky. The pressure sensitive tape has marred the surface of the paper support with dark stains; the outline of each piece of tape is clearly visible from the opposite side.

Photography

Digital images were taken before treatment in ambient, raking, and transmitted light. Overall images were taken as well as detail shots.

Testing

Each medium was tested for dry particulate offset by gently abrading the medium with a clean cotton swab. Each medium was also tested for dye offset and solubility by holding a piece of chromatography paper moistened with distilled water against the medium for 1, 5, 15, and 30 seconds. If the medium showed no signs of offset, a microscopic drop of distilled water was placed directly on the medium.

Results

- Iron Gall Ink 1: No particulate offset; no bleeding from the chromatography paper or the water droplet.
- Iron Gall Ink 2: No particulate offset; no bleeding from the chromatography paper or the water droplet.
- Blue color of paper: No particulate offset; no bleeding from the chromatography paper or the water droplet.
- Blue ruling lines: No particulate offset; no bleeding from the chromatography paper. A water droplet placed on the darker blue lines showed solubility.
- Orange stain: No particulate offset; no bleeding from the chromatography paper or the water droplet.

Treatment Proposal

1. Remove pressure sensitive tape with solvents.
2. Perform stain reduction if possible.
3. Mend tears and losses.
4. House in appropriate materials.

Possible Effects of Treatment

The stains resulting from the pressure sensitive tape might remain after removal. Some adhesive might remain inside the paper fibers. The remaining dark portions of the blue ruling ink might fade considerably when immersed in a solvent bath. The solvent bath might also speed up the degradation process of the two iron gall inks.

Treatment Performed

1. Removed tape carrier mechanically with a heated microspatula and some use of ethanol. (3 hours)
2. Removed adhesive residue using a crepe eraser, a swab moistened with ethanol, and alpha cellulose. (3 hours)
3. Stain reduction attempted using a Fullers Earth poultice moistened with first ethanol and then acetone. (2 hours)
4. Mended the document with Lens tissue and wheat starch paste. (1 hour)

TOTAL TIME: 9 HOURS