

TREATMENT PROPOSAL/AUTHORIZATION FOR TREATMENT

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Date: March 30, 2008  
Temporary Identification number: 08-80  
Owner/Custodian: Center for American History, Evan Hocker  
Address: Sid Richardson Hall  
University of Texas at Austin  
Telephone: 512-495-4535  
Owner/Custodian call no.: Rabb Family Papers  
Title/Subject/Description (.01): John W. Rabb Letter to Dear Brother (V.S. Rabb)  
Creator: John W. Rabb  
Date of production: September 19, 1861  
Place of production: New Iberia, Louisiana  
Approximate dimensions (hxw): 9¼ x 14½ in.  
24.8 x 36.9 cm

Conservator: Beth Antoine

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: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Treatment Objective**

Objective of this treatment is to stabilize the document for safe handling and storage in a research institution.

## **Description**

Primary support (hwxw):               9¼ x 14½ in.  
  24.8 x 36.9 cm

## **General**

The A.L.S. is written in iron gall ink on a folio of blue ruled machine-made laid paper.

## **Media**

### **Iron Gall Ink**

The ink is heavily applied and covers the first and second pages entirely and the upper quarter of the third page with very tight margins. No iron gall ink is present on the fourth page. The signature just below the last line of writing on the third page appears to be written in the same ink. The writing occurs at regular one-centimeter intervals and consistently overlaps with the writing on the reverse. Under magnification, the edges of the strokes appear darker than the center, indicating the use of a steel-nib pen.

### **Blue Ruling Ink**

Bright blue ruling lines are present on all but the fourth page at about one centimeter intervals.

### **Graphite**

A cataloger's annotation, written in graphite, appears on the fourth page.

### **Unknown Medium**

There is a cataloger's annotation on the upper left corner of the first page. Possibly written with a grease pencil, the medium appears waxy and dark, purplish black under magnification.

## **Primary support**

The primary support is a single folio of ruled machine-made laid paper. It is blued-white in color, medium weight, and smooth in texture.<sup>1</sup> Under transmitted light, an overall even pulp distribution is evident, as are the laid lines created by the dandy roll. The folio was folded horizontally three times and once vertically approximately two inches from the foreedge.

## **Condition**

### **General**

The letter is in poor condition overall with several tears and losses, one of which was previously mended with pressure sensitive tape.

## **Media**

### **Iron Gall Ink**

The black ink has faded to a dark brown color and exhibits a fair amount of sinking. The ink is clearly visible from the verso in ambient light. Consistent with the progression of iron gall ink corrosion, haloing

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

is evident under magnification, and is more pronounced under UV light. In several areas, the ink has burned all the way through the paper leaving small losses.

#### **Blue Ruling Ink**

The blue ink is in good condition.

#### **Graphite**

The graphite is in good condition with no signs of smudging.

#### **Unknown Medium**

The unknown medium is in good condition.

#### **Primary support**

The paper is in poor condition with several tears and losses, and an inappropriate previous repair.

The tears appear primarily along the folds, and there are several small losses along the edges of the manuscript, perhaps the result of insect damage. One tear has previously been repaired using a matte transparent pressure sensitive tape, with a similar appearance to Magic Mending tape. The tape appears on the first page along the horizontal fold just above the middle of the page, one centimeter from the foreedge and extends two inches in length. The pressure sensitive tape has caused the staining and darkening of the paper, and is visible from the reverse in ambient light.

There is a small water stain on the final leaf around the folded edges; under UV the stain produces a yellow fluorescence. The paper is slightly discolored overall, though it remains fairly flexible. Under UV light, the fold lines appear significantly darker, indicating that the integrity of the paper is weakened in these areas. Several tight creases appear around the edges of the paper, especially near the corners.

#### **Testing**

The paper fibers are less resistant to the penetration of a tungsten needle in areas where iron gall ink is present, indicating that iron gall ink corrosion is causing damage to the integrity of the paper.

#### **Treatment Proposal**

1. Remove tape as appropriate.
2. Reduce staining caused by pressure sensitive tape as possible.
3. Mend tears with long-fiber paper and wheat starch paste.
4. Re-house in acid-free folder.

#### **Photography**

Digital images have been taken before and after treatment in ambient, raking, and transmitted light. The images include overviews of the recto and verso, as well as details of the previous tape repair.

#### **Possible Effects of Treatment**

It may not be possible to remove all of the stain from the pressure sensitive tape.

#### **Treatment Notes**

See attached.

#### **Treatment Performed**

1. The tape was removed using Naptha.

**4 hours**

2. The stain was reduced using Naptha.
3. The tears were mended with toned lens tissue and wheat starch paste.
4. The manuscript was re-housed in an acid-free folder.

**1 hour**

**6 hours**

**15 minutes**

**Total treatment time: 11.25 hours**