

CONDITION REPORT & TREATMENT PROPOSAL

Library of Congress – Conservation Division – Special Format Conservation Section

Conservation Object Number: 3940.06
Division: Manuscripts
Collection: Nelson Jordan Family Papers
Division Object Number: none/unknown
Division Contact: Chelsea Fairley/ Joseph Brooks
Date Examined: December 4, 2018
Conservator: Alisha Chipman

Artist/Photographer/Maker: Unknown
Title/Subject: Aunt Julia Womack
Period/Date: ca. 1880s – early 20th century
Medium/Process: Crayon enlargement (black charcoal drawing media over photograph)

Dimensions (h x w): Image- 20 x 15 7/8 inches; 50.8 x 40.5 cm
Primary Support- same
Secondary Support- same

Distinguishing Marks:

Recto: none
Verso: none

Framing/Housing, etc.: Received in a historic frame. Object was unframed and frame was returned to MSS division in 2017.

Methods of Examination: Normal light, Magnification, UV

Testing Procedures and Results:

Water solubility test of mounting adhesive through water drop test = water soluble adhesive

Water solubility testing of media using water drop test = not water soluble

Photographic Documentation: Normal Light, Raking, UV Fluorescence

Description:

The object is a crayon enlargement on thin paper adhered overall to a thin paperboard. Crayon enlargements typically consist of charcoal and/or pastel media that is applied over a silver or platinum print. XRF was not conducted to confirm the presence of the underlying photographic print or to identify its image material. The charcoal media is airbrushed and hand-applied with a high level of skill.

Condition:

The enlargement is in fair condition overall. The charcoal media is in good condition. The secondary support is very brittle, discolored, stained and dirty. There is severe wood patterned staining on the verso of the secondary support indicating long-term contact with a wood panel, likely in a previous frame. The primary support is brittle and discolored overall with large dark tidelines along the perimeter. The most severe tidelines are along the top and bottom. Mat burn staining is also present.

There are two small losses associated with punctures at the upper left and lower left. There is a large tear and loss at the lower right edge. A dark stain with tidelines is present in the lower right quadrant.

Treatment Objective: Stabilize the print and improve its aesthetic appearance.

Proposed Treatment:

1. Document the photograph before and after treatment using a digital SLR camera.
2. Consolidate the charcoal media overall by applying 5% B72 in xylene with an airbrush.
3. Humidify print in a humidification chamber for at least 2 hours.
4. Spray overall with 50/50 deionized water and ethanol to ensure full humidification.
5. Immersion wash in bath of deionized water with calcium hydroxide added to achieve pH 7.0 for 2-3 hours or until primary support separates from secondary support.
6. Remove secondary support manually while saturated.
7. Immersion wash in bath of deionized water with calcium hydroxide added to achieve pH 7.0 for 2-3 hours.
8. Dry between felts overnight and evaluate results the next day.
9. If necessary, repeat steps 4 & 5 in preparation for light bleaching.
10. Immerse in bath of deionized water with calcium hydroxide added to achieve pH 8.0.
11. Light bleach under artificial light for 2-3 hours on recto and 2-3 hours on verso. UV blocking Plexiglas will be used and distance will be set to achieve 200-300 W of light.
12. Rinse by immersion in deionized water with calcium hydroxide added to achieve pH 7.0 for at least 2 hours.
13. Mend tears using Japanese tissue and wheat starch paste.
14. If necessary, fill the losses with a photographic grade paper. The insert paper may be toned to match the primary support with watercolor and cut to fit the shape of the loss. The insert will be attached using wheat starch paste and Japanese tissue.
15. House in a unimat (Mylar enclosure within a paper folder).

TREATMENT RECORD

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Conservation Object Number: 3940.06

Division: Manuscripts

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Division Contact: Chelsea Fairley/ Joseph Brooks

Treatment Completed: June 22, 2019

Conservator: Alisha Chipman

Artist/Photographer/Maker: Unknown

Title/Subject: Aunt Julia Womack

Period/Date: ca. 1880s – early 20th century

Medium/Process: Crayon enlargement (black charcoal drawing media over photograph)

Treatment Record:

1. The print was photographed before and after treatment using a digital SLR camera.
2. The charcoal media was consolidated overall by applying 5% B72 in xylene with an airbrush.
3. The print was humidified in a chamber for 2.5 hours.
4. The print was sprayed overall with 50/50 deionized water and ethanol to ensure full humidification and even wetting.
5. The print was placed in an immersion wash bath of deionized water for 3 hour.
6. The secondary support was separated from the primary support manually while saturated.
7. The print was placed in an immersion wash bath of deionized water for 30 minutes.
8. The print was dried between felts and under heavy plexiglas.
9. The print was humidified in a chamber for 1.5 hours.
10. The print was sprayed overall with 50/50 deionized water and ethanol to ensure full humidification and even wetting.
11. The print was placed in an immersion wash bath of deionized water for 2.5 hours.
12. The print was dried between felts and under heavy plexiglas.
13. The print was humidified in a chamber for 1.5 hours.
14. The print was sprayed overall with 50/50 deionized water and ethanol to ensure full humidification and even wetting.
15. The print was placed in an immersion wash bath of deionized water for 1 hour.
16. The recto of the print was light bleached under artificial light for 3 hours. UV blocking Plexiglas was placed over the tray. The lamp output was 9,477fc.
17. The verso of the print was light bleached for 3 hours under same conditions.
18. The print was placed in a new immersion wash bath of deionized water for 2 hours in order to rinse after light bleaching.
19. The print was dried between felts and under heavy plexiglas.
20. Tears were mended using Japanese tissue and wheat starch paste.
21. The print was attached with paper photo corners to an 8 ply backmat and housed in a mat board folder.