

Winterthur Museum

Division of Conservation

Library Collections

Conservation Report

Acc #/Call #: Col. 992

Title: Stidham Diaries

Owner: Downs Manuscript Collection

Content Summary: An excerpt from the WinterCat database describes the collection as “diaries kept by ropemaker and wire weaver Joseph H. Stidham of Wilmington, Delaware, between 1830 and 1867. The diaries (all volumes were made by him) include good records of his daily work. In addition to his work, Stidham also recorded his other activities and made note of the weather.

Description/Condition: This collection contains a mix of bound and unbound items made from a variety of materials. The binding structures seem unique and it is possible they were “homemade” by the diarist. The objects range in condition, with many being loosely bound, some with broken bindings, and loose pages at risk for disassociation. The paper itself seems to be in fair condition. There is light soiling overall. The dimensions of the items in the collection range from smallest at 9.9 cm x 8.2 cm to largest at 20.4 cm x 13.1 cm.

Current Housing: The objects are separated into 16 Permalife folders, arranged by year, which are currently housed in an archival document box. The folders are stamped in blue: “Permalife// pH 8.5// The Hollinger Corporation// Arlington, Virginia.” The total contents of each folder are varied. Bound materials are stored spine side down, with loose leaves stored adjacently. Many of the loose leaves are unprotected, with only a few stored in plastic sleeves.

Project Rationale: The bound structures are varied, difficult to handle in their current state, and are at risk of further damage or disassociation. Though the current housing materials are stable, they could be improved for long term storage, access, and handling. This is especially necessary because the Winterthur Library anticipates heavy research use. Improving storage and performing general stabilization treatments will allow for better preservation of the written contents and original binding structures, which are valuable in their uniqueness.

Project developed by WUDPAC 2020: Lindsey Zachman, Yan Ling Choi, and Karissa Muratore.

Project Conservators

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Folder #: 2018x 34.14a-c

Diarist: Joseph I. Stidham

Object Date: 1864-1865

Examined by: Katarina Stiller

Report Date: September 11, 2022

Folder Content General Description:

Include item's letter designation (a, b, c...) and the number of each type of item.

("Individual" = not within textblock)

Total # of Items in Folder: 3

Bound Object with Boards: 1 (a)

Individual Sewn Gatherings: 19 (a)

Individual Leaves: 2 (b, c)

Other:



CONDITION ISSUES: List item letter (a, b, c...) as applicable per condition issue. If "Other," describe condition issue and list applicable item letter.

Overall:

Surface Soiling: a,b,c Mold: _____ Moisture Damage: _____ Pest Damage: _____

Other: _____

Board Covering Material:

Detached: _____ Missing: _____ Damaged/Abraded: a Stained/Discolored: a

Other: scattered losses of paper, particularly around board edges; staining throughout, including bleaching of blue paper on verso

Spine Covering Material:

Detached: _____ Missing: a Damaged/Abraded: a Stained/Discolored: a

Other: scattered losses of textile, particularly at endcaps

Boards:

Detached: _____ Missing: _____ Damaged/Abraded: a

Other: minor abrasions/delamination at corners; dents at fore edges

Sewing Supports:

Detached: _____ Missing: _____ Damaged/Abraded: a Stained/Discolored: _____

Other: attachment at boards fairly stable; attachment to gatherings unstable

Sewing Threads:

Broken: a Brittle: a Missing: a

Other: majority of sewing has failed, resulting in detached or loose gatherings

Endsheets/Pastedowns:

Detached: _____ Missing: a Damaged/Abraded: _____ Stained/Discolored: _____

Other: likely never existed

Textblock/Individual Sewn Gathering/Individual Leaves:

Loose gathering/leaves within textblock: a Stained/Discolored: a,b,c Brittle Paper: _____

Torn: _____ Creased: a,b,c Planar distortion: _____

Other: staining is relatively minor and likely made at or around time of writing/binding; there are a variety of gathering sizes that have some abrasion and distortion at the edges due to being housed in an ill-fitting case; of the 19 gatherings, 8 are totally detached, 6 are partially detached, and the remaining 5 are loose; this is some minor discoloration/adhesive staining on spines of gatherings in areas not in direct contact with leather straps; (b) has small losses along edge, likely from a no longer present pin

Media:

Faded: _____ Friable: _____ Bleeding: _____ Offset/Acidic Migration: _____

Iron Gall Ink Deterioration: _____

Other: ink is stable; further testing is required to confirm presence of iron gall ink

TREATMENT PROPOSAL:**Enclosure/Rehousing:** Check as appropriate

- Tuxedo box for bound objects with boards
 Mylar sleeves for individual/miscellaneous material
 Archival envelope or folder for sewn gatherings
 Other: _____

Minor Repair/ Stabilization: List item letter (a, b, c...) as applicable per treatment option. If "Other," describe treatment and list applicable item letter.

Board Cover Material:

Surface Clean: a Consolidate: a
Other: consolidate lifting papers

Spine Material:

Surface Clean: a Consolidate: _____ Mend: _____
Other: _____

Boards:

Consolidate: a Mend: _____
Other: consolidate board corners

Sewing Supports:

Consolidate: _____
Other: _____

Sewing Threads:

Surface Clean: _____ Consolidate: _____ Spot Sewing: a
Other: spot sew individual gatherings to be stored loosely in cover (not sewing gatherings directly onto leather tapes but rather to each other); use abbreviated sewing pattern and thin thread to reduce swell; store original thread fragments in polyester sleeve

Endsheets/Pastedowns:

Surface Clean: _____ Consolidate: _____ Mend: _____
Other: N/A

Textblock/Individual Sewn Gathering/Individual Leaves:

Surface Clean: a,b,c Consolidate: _____

Mend severe page tears: _____

Other: local humidification and flattening, particularly where text has been obscured; test for free iron ions to help inform treatment approach; guard innermost and outermost bifolios of gatherings to be re sewn; may need to rehouse detached gatherings in separate four-flap if they no longer fit in case after spot sewingSigned Approval: see email attachment Date: 9-23-22

TREATMENT REPORT: Initial and date.Completed as proposed: yesAmendments/Additional Specifications: _____

Surface Cleaning with polyurethane cosmetic sponges: 2hrs

Humidification and flattening; guarding and tear repair: 2hrs

Partial resewing using individual quire coptic stitch pattern to reduce swelling, to enable flexibility between the gatherings, and to aesthetically complement the original sewing pattern: 3hrs

Box and Mylar enclosures: 1hr

Photo documentation BT/AT: 1hr

Materials Used in Treatment:Repair papers: kizukishiAdhesives: wheat starch paste:methylcellulose (50:50)Other: 2 ply linen threadCompleted By: Katarina Stiller Date: 12/20/22

Master Chart of Items: Upon completion of treatment, initial and date.

Folder #	Type	Year	Item Type(s)	Notes on folder	Treatment Complete
2018x 34.1a-e	"Book of Memorandum of work"	1830	Bound object with boards		
2018x 2a-b	Daily diary	1833-5	Bound object with boards	See also notes of work 1834-1835 (seventh mo)	
2018x 34.3	Daily diary	1834-5	Bound object with boards	Note: this signature was found laid into volume for 1836-8	LM
2018x 34.4a-e	Daily diary	1836-8	Bound object with boards	Note: Booklet about work for John Brooks does not date to the time of this diary	YS
2018x 34.5a-d	Daily diary	1839-40	Bound object with boards, individual leaves		KM
2018x 34.6a-g	Daily diary	1843-4	Bound object with boards, sewn gatherings, individual leaves	Wallpaper covers	JO
2018x 34.7	Daily diary	1845-6	Bound object with boards, supplementary materials		YLC
2018x 34.8a-e	Daily diary	1847-8	Bound object with boards		LZ
2018x 34.9a-g	Daily diary	1849-51	Bound object with boards, individual leave		
2018x 34.10a-c	Daily diary	1852-5	Bound object with boards	Wallpaper or decorative paper	VIMO
2018x 34.11a-d	Daily diary	1856-8	Bound object with boards, individual leaves	"Coates thread" covers	JP
2018x 34.12	Daily diary	1859-61	Bound object with boards	Missing Dec. 11-31, 1861	RRB
2018x 34.13a-e	Daily diary	1862-3	Bound object with boards, individual leaves		
2018x 34.14a-c	Daily diary	1864-5	Bound object with boards, individual leaves		KS
2018x 34.15a-c	Daily diary	1866-7	Bound object with boards, individual leaves		KF
2018x	Misc. notes		Bound object with boards, sewn gatherings, individual leaves	Expense records and memoranda books	

INSTRUCTIONS:

Imaging:

- All folder contents should be imaged together in a single photograph, using a copystand and white background.
- Image should be taken from straight above to take visual stock of all the content and digitally labeled with its designated object letter.
- Images should be saved as three file types: DNG, TIFF, and JPEG.
- Image provided in documentation should be the BT JPEG. No after treatment image is necessary.

Housing:

- Use original box if all materials and their new housings will fit within it in order to keep original footprint.
- Store bound materials spine-down in box, and label tuxedo boxes with the accession number on the fore-edge side.
- Keep folders in order by year and transfer written information from old folders to new in graphite.
- If special handling instructions are needed, include within individual folder.

File Saving Protocols:

- Naming Protocols
 - Unique_ID_Documentation_Year-Month-Day-Surname.docx
 - Example: Col_922_2018x34.5a-d_Documentation_2019-04-29_Muratore.docx
- Mater Chart Protocols:
 - Upon completion of treatment, the master chart should be initialed and dated in three locations—personal digital document, master digital document (on shared drive), and paper form (in the collection's box).



HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS:

- These items are fragile, so please handle with care.
- Use cradle or additional supports with all bound material.
(Do not hold items in hand when examining materials.)
- Keep leaves, books, and containing folders in original order
- Defer to archivists'/librarians' instructions and ask for additional assistance if needed.