

TEXTILE CONSERVATION CENTER
AMERICAN TEXTILE HISTORY MUSEUM
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April 21, 2004

Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc.

Attention: [REDACTED]
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Telephone: [REDACTED]

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TCC# 2001-003

Object: Seabag, prior to 1812; MSM Accession # 2000.178

Classification:	Seabag MT-PM
Size:	~ 35 inches long by ~ 19 inches wide
Fiber:	Ground: linen; blue embroidery: silk
Yarns:	Ground: S spun singles
Structure:	Unbalanced plain weave ground fabric embellished with a variety of embroidery stitches depicting several domestic and maritime scenes
YPI:	Ground: warp - 52; weft - 45
Other Materials:	Cord handle - an example of a variety of knotting techniques; ¼ inch thick acrylic sheet wrapped with a fabric-covered batting "pillow" (adhered with double-sided tape to the acrylic); the pillow is inserted into the center of the seabag; the support is attached by adhered Velcro tabs at the center front, center back and two sides

General Condition of the Object:

The condition is fair. For examination purposes the interior support was not removed. The hook and loop Velcro tabs were released to briefly examine what could be seen of the interior. The embroidery is moderately to severely faded when comparing the exterior to the interior. The embroidery on the exterior is abraded and missing in several areas revealing needle pricks and pattern sketches. The hook Velcro is adhered to the interior at the center front, center back, and two sides under the band near the top edge.

General particulate soils and fiber dust are found overall. Soft to moderate wrinkles are found throughout. The ground fabric is brittle and discolored. The discoloration indicates both cellulose oxidation and cellulose degradation.

Several losses ranging in size from a pinpoint to 1 inch long are scattered throughout the linen ground fabric. Approximately six of the larger losses have been stabilized with an adhered patch in the interior. This patch appears to be a sheer fabric or paper and "fills in" the area of loss as well as stabilizing the surrounding area to help prevent further loss. When the interior is accessible, further analysis will be done to determine the content of the patch and if removal is possible.

The folded edge at the opening of the embroidered band is worn, split and torn. Fourteen buttonholes are located ~ ⅛ inch from the edge. The buttonholes are reinforced with cord and stitching. Seven of the buttonholes have intact knotted cords. Seven of the buttonholes do not have knotted cords although it appears that the cord bundle that has been placed in the seabag may be the remnants of the missing cords. The buttonholes have varying degrees of loss ranging from splits, tears, worn edges, and a loose cord.

The cord handle is discolored but mostly intact. Red, white, and blue fabric is noted at the joins that separate the knotting techniques. The red and blue fabrics are also noted covering the center core of the knots.

The twill fabric covered piping at the seams shows various levels of fading, abrasion and general wear. At the seam at the bottom edge the piping is exposed and is unattached for a few inches.

Treatment as of 3/31/04: 25.75 Hours

1. The interior support was removed and retained for return to the client.
2. Exterior and interior of the seabag were surface cleaned using low suction vacuum.
3. Velcro and several patches were removed.
4. Folded top edge was stabilized with color compatible 100% cotton fabric.
5. Overall photography of the interior was completed.

Revised Core Treatment Plan:

The revised Core Treatment is intended to reflect a more detailed approach and incorporate additional areas of work as discussed with Dave Matheison at the TCC on April 16, 2004.

Revised Core Treatment: 59.5 – 75.5 Hours

1. Removal of remaining patches
2. Reduction of adhesive residue
3. Detailed photography of interior
4. Humidify to reduce wrinkling
5. Stabilize losses with color compensating fabric patches
6. Stabilize open areas and losses in piping
7. Cut and place lining fabric. Stitch in place
8. Attach separate collar for mounting
9. Untangle/undo secondary knot in handle
10. Splice/splint broken cords and attach to bag as appropriate
11. Adjust, pad, and cover supplied mount
12. Install seabag on prepared mount
13. Design and implement display method for handle in consultation with Mystic Seaport staff
14. Project administration, photography, and documentation

† The textile will be sufficiently packed for client pickup at the TCC lab. Should the client wish to have the object shipped, additional labor and materials charges will be added to the final invoice.

Materials for Core Treatment:

photographs
fabric
batting
solvents
misc.

Prognosis:

Please note that many of these steps are the same as in the initial treatment proposal. Several steps have been added after consultation with Dave Matheison and hours have been re-evaluated and revised as necessary. It is realized that the total hours for the project have increased slightly, but every effort will be made to keep hours to a minimum. The materials for the core treatment have also been modified to reflect the client supplied mount and more detailed approach.

The removal of the remaining patches will permit color compensation of all areas of loss in the seabag. Tacky adhesive residue from the previous Velcro support system and other patches will be reduced as much as possible. The wrinkles will be reduced with a localized humidification technique that gradually introduces moisture to rehydrate fibers allowing for realignment in preparation for support patches and lining.

Detailed photography of each of the embroidered motifs on the interior of the bag will be completed and copies made for the client.

The TCC has cotton fabric of the correct color, but not in sufficient quantities to line the entire seabag. An initial search for fabric has been unsuccessful. Therefore, the areas of loss will be supported with the color compensating in-house fabric and the bag will be lined with a different, appropriately colored fabric. The stabilization technique will aesthetically compensate for fabric losses, and help to maintain the structural integrity of the areas surrounding the loss. Stabilizing the losses in the piping and reattachment to the seams will help to prevent further losses to the piping. A separate collar for mounting will be attached to the lining and will permit the seabag to be removed from the display mount without disturbing the supportive and protective conservation lining.

As per the request of the client, the loose secondary knot will be undone and broken yarns will be spliced / splinted as necessary. Cording will be reattached to the bag.

The mount supplied by the client will be modified as necessary and will be installed in the seabag in preparation for return and exhibit. A method for mounting the heavy cord handle will be developed in conjunction with the staff of Mystic Seaport and implemented as necessary. Please be aware that once the seabag is mounted the safest means of transport will be to hang it.

Display should be at low light levels (not exceeding 50 lux), out of direct sunlight, and alternated with longer periods of protective storage.

Cost Estimate of Revised Core Treatment:

Treatment as of 3/31/04:

Labor @ [REDACTED]/Hour 25.75 Hours [REDACTED]

Revised Core Treatment:

Labor @ [REDACTED]/Hour 59.5 – 75.5 Hours [REDACTED]

Total Revised Hours/Labor: 85.25 – 101.25 Hours [REDACTED]

Materials for Core Treatment: [REDACTED]

Exam Fee: [REDACTED]

Estimated Cost of Core Treatment: [REDACTED]

Less deposit paid 08/17/01: Invoice #11183 [REDACTED]

Estimate due at completion of conservation treatment: [REDACTED]