

Raye 19x24
Super Raye 19 1/4 x 27
Compuil 22 x 30
Elephant 23 x 28

26 1/2 x 40
De. Elephant
Antique 31 x 55

The Conservation Treatment of "The Birds of America", Vol. 1 by John James Audubon, 1827-30 for the Legislative Assembly Library of New Brunswick.

Abstract:

In 1853 the Legislative Libray of New Brunswick purchased the 4 Vols. of Audubon's American ornithology for \$800.00.

Condition:

Vol. 1, which arrived at the Atlantic Conservation Centre in September 1978 contains 109 engravings executed by W. H. Lizars of Edinborough and R. Havell of London in the years 1829-1830 on double elephant (63.5 X 95.5 cm) handmade paper (Wove) which was heavily sized (gelatine). They were hand watercoloured by colourists of these two engraving firms under the direction of Audubon. The gelatine sizing containing a high content of Alum (from our tests) has produced a high acid content in the plates. The leaves were bound so that the grain of the paper runs horizontally instead of vertically, creating a strain along the inner margin each time a leaf is turned. Each plate was edged on the three exposed under margins with linen tape creating a buckling of these edges. The leaves were heavily soiled, some had been excessively trimmed. The binding was executed by J. Wright, a prominent London binder of the period, and bound in full red Turkish leather with gold finishing of a very high standard. The leather was in excellent condition after 130 - 150 years.

Treatment:

Photo Documentation; checked PH of all plates; checked solubility of pigments. Took samples of pigments for identification of same by Scientific Staff of CCI, Ottawa. Dry-cleaned individual works of art with Opaline pads and pink pearl eraser. To prevent colours from bleeding, applied a coating of methyl-cellulose to all images. Immersed each plate in water supported on reemay, both to wash them and to remove linen tape borders. Deacidified in Mg Bicarbonate solution. Pressed between blotters in large press. Mended all tears and back margins and re-inforced front edges with Sekishu oriental paper using wheat starch paste. Mended corners of binding and reinforced spine leather and relined boards. At the request of the Curator, the book was not rebound, but instead: each work of art was inserted in a Mylar (.007 Type D) envelope and returned to the Library in two large custom-built solander boxes. The binding was returned flat, stored in a specially constructed display and storage box. The Library is currently considering the construction of a display case with climate and lighting control to house all of the volumes.