

Speaking Textile Conservation

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Museum Textile Services

Textile Condition Terms

Abrasion	Wearing away of the surface from scraping, rubbing, grinding or friction
Accretion	Deposit of extraneous material on the surface, such as mud or fly speck
Crease	Tightly pressed fold often causing threads to weaken and break
Crocking	Rubbing off of color resulting in loss of dyestuff but not loss of fiber
Cut/Tear	Clean break in the fabric
Deterioration	A general term for a weakened state caused by age, use, or environmental conditions
Discoloration	General change in the color of an area from the prevailing tone
Embrittlement	Decline in pliability and suppleness to the degree that damage may be imminent
Fading	Discoloration seen as change of color, often caused by light exposure
Fold	Pleat resulting from one part doubled or laid over another
Fraying	Raveled or worn spot indicated by the separation of threads, often found on edges
Hole	Area of missing fibers from both the warp and the weft
Insect damage	Holes, surface loss (grazing), or deposits (frass, silky fiber) caused by insects
Loss	General term for an area missing fibers
Mold/Mildew	Microbial activity, often seen as stains or surface growth, exacerbated by humidity
Oxidation	Chemical alteration caused by the presence of corroded iron in or adjacent to fiber
Particulates	Dust and other soil particles that accumulate on and within fibers
Shattered	Description for chemically treated silk that exhibits losses
Soot	General term for a dark and oily deposit caused by air pollution or fire
Stain	Soiled or discolored spot
Stiffness	Loss of flexibility and suppleness of fibers causing a resistance to bending
Unidirectional	Failure and loss of warp or weft, leaving behind more of one element than the other
Weak seam	Looseness in the attachment of two adjoining pieces of fabric

PARTICULATES

Dust and other soil particles that accumulate on
and within fibers



SOOT

General term for dark and oily deposit caused by air pollution or fire



MOLD/MILDEW

Microbial activity, often seen as stains or surface growth, exacerbated by humidity



ACCRETION

Deposit of extraneous material on the surface,
such as mud or fly speck



STAIN

Soiled or dirty spot



DISCOLORATION

General change in the color of an area from the prevailing tone



FADING

Discoloration seen as change in color, often caused by light exposure



CROCKING

Rubbing off of color resulting in loss of dyestuff
but not loss of fiber



OXIDATION

Chemical alteration cause by the presence of corroded iron in or adjacent to fiber



DETERIORATION

A general term for a weakened state caused by age, use, or environmental conditions



STIFFNESS

Loss of flexibility and suppleness of fibers causing a resistance to bending



EMBRITTLEMENT

Decline in the pliability and suppleness to the degree that damage may be imminent



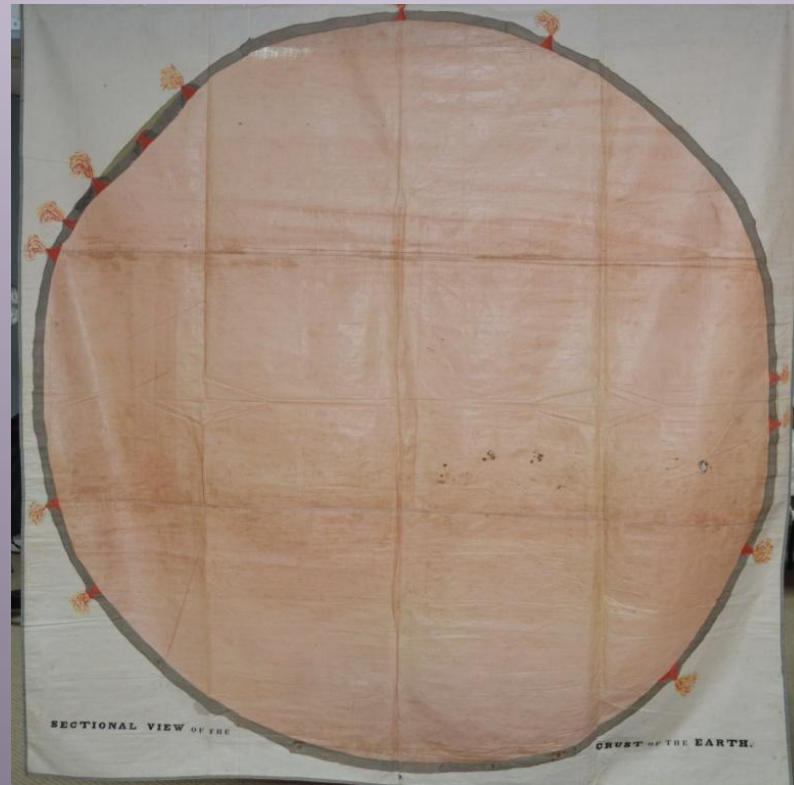
SHATTERED

Description for chemically treated silk that exhibits losses



FOLD

Pleat resulting from one part doubled or laid over another



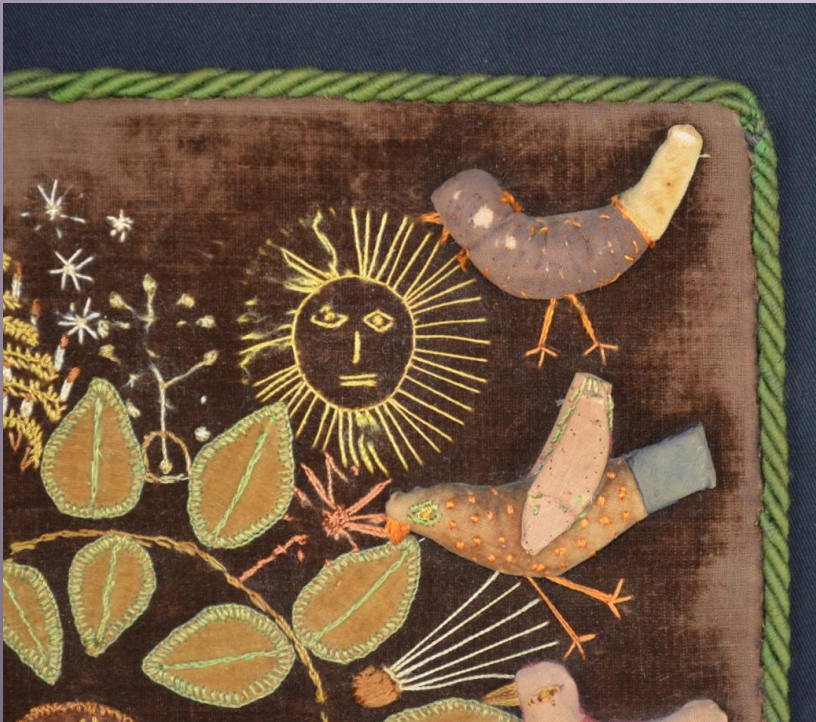
CREASE

Tightly pressed fold often causing threads to weaken and break



LOSS

General term for an area missing fibers



ABRASION

Wearing away of the surface from scraping, rubbing, grinding, or friction



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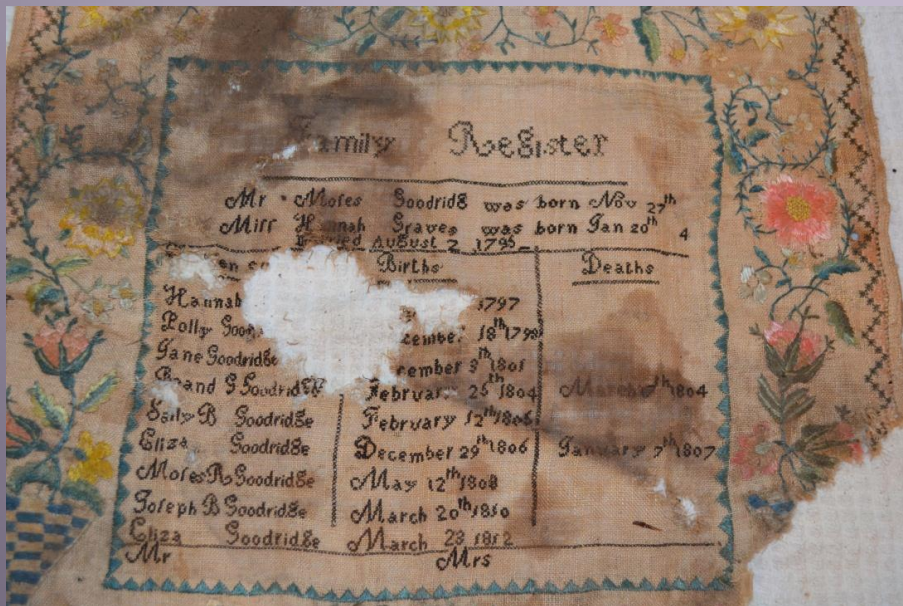
CUT/TEAR

Clean break in the fabric



HOLE

Area of missing fibers from both the warp and the weft



FRAYING

Reveled or worn spot indicated by the separation of threads, often found on edges



UNIDIRECTIONAL LOSS

Failure and loss of warp or left, leaving behind more of one element than the other



WEAK SEAM

Looseness in the attachment of two adjoining pieces of fabric



INSECT DAMAGE

Holes, surface loss (grazing), or deposits (frass, silky fiber) caused by insects



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Individuals

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Museum Textile Services: New E

Your family christening gown. The signature quilt c
at a local history museum. A flag carried into battle
Civil War. Each of these textiles tells a story about our
personal and collective past. And each story brings meaning
to our present.

Founded in 1999, Museum Textile Services is one of just a
handful of independent conservation studios that specialize
in preserving textiles that are under the care of private
individuals, cultural heritage institutions, and government
agencies.

Museum Textile Services is a trusted resource for education
and information on the conservation, storage, exhibition, and
care of textiles of personal and cultural significance.

Textile Conservation Studio



Katrina Herron Gendreau and Camille Myers Breeze, co-founders
and creators of Andover Figures, a new system of custom
museum forms to fit your needs.

Project Updates

Issue 4 of the [MTS e-Magazine](#) is out! Read
about our favorite
projects and upcoming
endeavors.

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Resources for Museums

[Building T-Bar Supports.](#) Because it provides only a narrow line of support across the shoulders, a T-bar must be modified to prevent stress to the costume. Make sure that the T-bar is tall enough to keep the costume from touching the floor.

[Choosing Storage Materials.](#) A wide array of textile storage materials is available online and in catalogs from your favorite archival supply companies. Knowing which wrapping or box is best can be daunting given the plethora of choices available today. This handout will help steer you toward the proper materials, which in turn will help you find the best value for your money.

[Clothing and Textile Storage Guidelines.](#) Museum Textile Services helps museums large and small assess and upgrade their historic clothing and textile storage areas. These guidelines are equally helpful for individuals concerned with the best way to protect their collections within the home. Regardless of budget or size, all storage areas must be clean, cool, dry, dark, and as free as possible from drastic changes in temperature and humidity, thus ruling out the basement or attic.

[Conservation Netting.](#) Conservation netting is done to temporarily stabilize areas of weakness, to secure damage with a minimum of intervention, and to prolong the display and/or study life of a textile.

[Conservation Stitching Guide.](#) An in-depth explanation of the four most common stitches used for textile stabilization, including ideal length, use, and variations.

[Customizing Mannequins.](#) Historic garments require proper support to ensure safe display. They are often small, have a complex profile that was created with the aid of foundation garments, and are fragile even when they appear to be in excellent condition. Here are some tips on how to customize a commercial mannequin or dress form for museum display.

[Displaying Textiles.](#) These guidelines are designed to help you choose the best locations and methods for displaying your textiles. These recommendations are meant only for textiles in stable condition with proper mounting, framing, or support. Continuing to display a textile under poor display conditions will accelerate deterioration and shorten the textile's useful and/or decorative lifespan. Over the time you see visible changes, such as color fading, yellowing, tears, or insect activity,



Museum Textile Services

Condition Report

Accession #	Description	Date range
MTSE# 1043	Feather pillow with crazy quilt cover	1880-1900
Collection	Donor	Location
MTS Study Collection	Jean Myers, grandmother of Camille Myers Breeze	Quilt Box 2

Materials

Silk, silk velvet, silk embroidery floss, cotton, cotton-silk blend, feather pillow with cotton fabric over cotton ticking

Dimensions in inches

Height	Width	Length
3	11 1/4	16

Condition (1-4, 1 being Poor and 4 being Very Good)

Overall	Soil	Stains	Losses	Fading
1	2	Cover: 3 Pillow: 1	1	3

Check all that apply:

Evidence of Insect Infestation	Mold/Mildew	Previous Repairs	Unstable Dyes	Label
X				

Condition details

Shattered silk is present on one of the patches, and unidirectional loss can be found in several places. There are failing seams on the cover and as well as on the inner pillow. Creasing is present on one of the patches, and there are several areas of loss due to abrasion. Other damage includes frayed patch edges, and holes of various sizes throughout. Staining is visible on the inner pillowcase. There is evidence of past insect activity, including accretion and holes. There is also another accretion of unknown origin on the lower layer of the cover.

Photographs



Overall recto



Overall verso

