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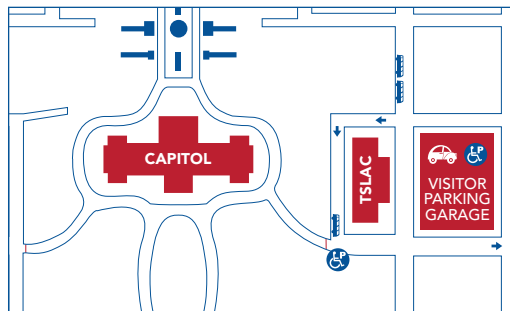
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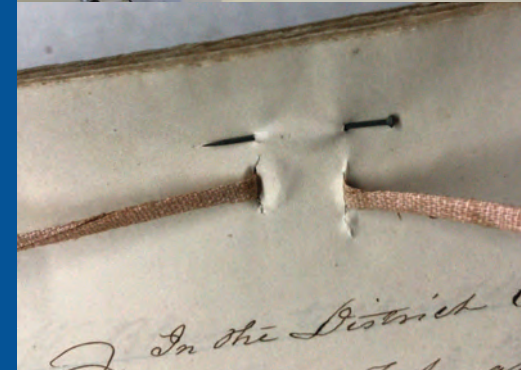
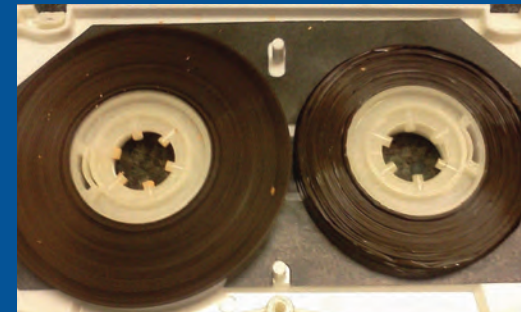
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CONSERVATION

AT THE TEXAS STATE LIBRARY
AND ARCHIVES COMMISSION



WHAT IS CONSERVATION?

Conservation is a process that prolongs the life of cultural materials. At the Texas State Library and Archives Commission, conservation focuses on book and paper items in our archival holdings. The practice of conservation is built upon ethical foundations that balance historical integrity with future use. Conservation treatments range from simple cleaning to mending, housing, and full rebinding.



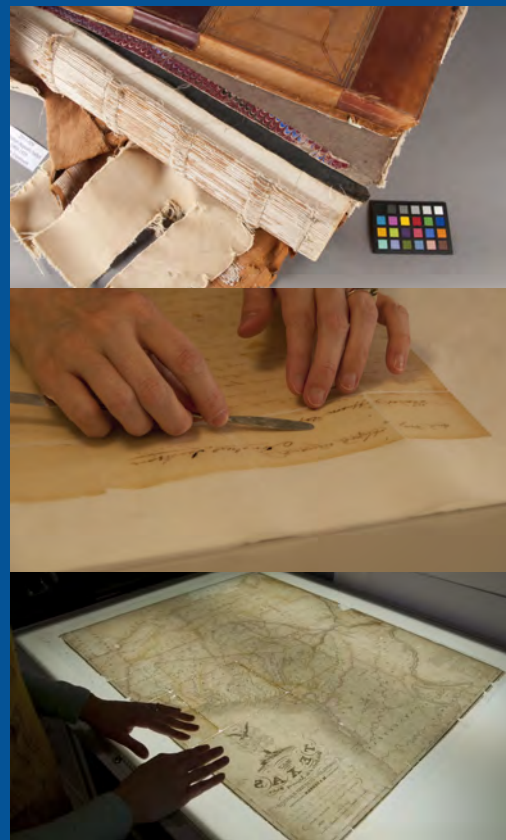
WHY CONSERVE?

Archival materials can be damaged by poor handling, improper storage, pollution, natural disasters, and the breakdown of component materials. Left unchecked, these processes can destroy valuable historical records. Conservation prolongs the life of archival holdings for research, exhibits, and digitization projects.

MATERIALS AND PRACTICE

Items in archives share a common set of materials, including paper, leather, inks, and dyes. They also share a unique set of historical craft-making practices, such as bookbinding traditions passed down through many centuries.

Conservation combines aspects of history, art, and science to preserve the materials, craft, and content of our archival holdings.



DOCUMENTATION

Conservation projects require detailed documentation before, during, and after treatment. An item's physical condition is thoroughly evaluated, sometimes at the microscopic level, in written and photographic reports.

Understanding specific treatment procedures and materials used can help librarians and archivists develop effective strategies for future care and handling.



PRESERVATION AND PREVENTION

The most effective conservation strategy is to stop problems before they start. Conservation's sister field, preservation, tackles collections-level issues like storage and handling to provide long-term stability for thousands of items.

Strong preservation practices ensure that fewer items require intensive conservation treatment.