



Art Conservation *and big surprises*

The small six-by-seven-inch book is deceptively modest, as WUDPAC Fellow Brittany Murray discovered when she first examined *Grand Panorama of London: from the Thames Extending New Houses of Parliament to Greenwich Hospital*. She found that the book’s plain brown cloth covers open to reveal a vividly colored, hand-painted, panoramic 10-mile-long view of London, seen from the far bank of the Thames, that unfolds to be 18 feet long and six inches high.

It is known as a “pocket panorama,” to differentiate it from larger versions that, beginning about 1820, were painted on large canvases and installed in specially built rotundas. The *Grand Panorama* dates from 1849, when copies were issued by the *Pictorial Times* and sold as souvenirs in London.

Brittany, a library and archives major, examined and treated a copy of the *Grand Panorama* that belongs to the Winterthur Library. Her treatment goal was to stabilize the fold-out, which showed wear and damage from repeated handling while being used for research and study. As she worked, she was able to refer to an earlier version of the same panorama also owned by the Winterthur Library, that was reprinted in 1972. This version, a black-and-white printed illustration of the same scene is 12 feet long, six inches high, and was originally issued in 1844 as a gift for *Pictorial Times* subscribers.

One of Brittany’s first steps was to remove tape from two sheets of paper that had been taped back-to-back and then taped again to the inside front cover of the panorama. The handwritten pages listed the locations depicted in the print, transcribed into French. Brittany believes the pages were likely pasted into the book by the original owner. Brittany began her treatment by using soft cosmetic sponges to clean surface grime from the panorama’s binding and pages. The front board was detached and then reinforced with toned mulberry paper to strengthen the hinge of the book. She used mulberry paper and a wheat starch paste/methylcellulose mix to mend tears and reinforce the folds in the print.

When Brittany completed her treatment, she returned the *Grand Panorama* to the library for continued use for research and study, along with recommendations for storage and environmental controls. She also recommended that the library consider digitizing the panorama because few full-length images of the colorized version exist online.

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The University of Delaware’s Art Conservation Department educates and trains professional conservators who are well versed in the treatment, analysis, documentation, and preventive conservation of individual artifact and archive collections. For more news about our students and other department activities visit our web site at www.artcons.udel.edu.

Top: An after-treatment view of the first panel of the Grand Panorama. Above: Winterthur/University of Delaware Fellow Brittany Murray assessing the pressure sensitive tape on the title page before treatment. Right: After treatment views of the cover and the frontispiece of the book; an angled view of the cover shows the texture of the embossed decoration. (Images: B. Murray and E. Krape.)

