

CONDITION REPORT AND TREATMENT PROPOSAL (Mounted Head)

**SPECIMEN:** Wapiti (Elk) or Red Deer (*Cervus elaphus*), adult, male.

**CATALOG #:** Coe Hall (temp. no. 7; or Elk 2 in photo and digital documentation)

**PROVENANCE:** Coe Hall at Planting Fields Arboretum State Historic Park, Oyster Bay, New York. Mounted over the archway in the Entrance or Great Hall (1<sup>st</sup> floor, F.1) that leads to the Louis XVI Room (1<sup>st</sup> floor, F.21). Possibly collected by William Robertson Coe (b.1869) who built Coe Hall, or his son, William Rogers Coe (b. 1901), ca. 1920-24. Coe Hall was a private home until 1949, when it was deeded to the State of New York. In 1955, the State University of New York obtained use of the site as a horticultural study campus and the house was used for classrooms and administration. Some furnishings, including taxidermy specimens, apparently remained in place during this period, and from 1970-78, when the building was used as a community center. In 1978, restoration of Coe Hall was begun, and it has been operated as an historic site since that time.

**STATUS:** *C. elaphus* occur in Europe, parts of Asia, southern Siberia, Mongolia, Manchuria, Korea, parts of China, northwestern Africa, southern Canada, and parts of the US. Populations in many parts of the world are greatly reduced, and at least 2 US subspecies are extinct. The North American population is now subject to controlled sport hunting.

**PREPARATION:** Mounted head and antlers.

**DIMENSIONS:** D ~132 cm W not measured. H not measured.

**DESCRIPTION:** (*Specimen examined in situ, in ambient light with auxiliary illumination from a flashlight*)

**Specimen** Taxidermy mount of head and antlers with soft tissues of nose modeled in wax. Skin shaped over unidentified form. Mouth closed. Glass eyes, probably painted on reverse.

**Plaque** None.

**Labels** Octagonal metal (alloy not identified) tag, stamped, "8844", suspended by iron alloy wire with lead (?) seal, from L antler.

**CONDITION:** (*Specimen examined in situ, in ambient light with auxiliary illumination from a flashlight*)

**General Specimen** Fair. Dusty overall.

**Hair** Moderately brittle. Dark pigments faded, especially on R side (towards windows). There may have been some hair losses from the mane.

**Skin** Void or tear in skin between antlers and possibly at top back of neck.

**Eyes** Glass dusty. Left eyelid very powdery. Cracks in front of eye from the inner corner. R eyelid very powdery. At least 3 cracks from the R eye into the forehead.

**Ears** Tips worn.

**Nose** Numerous cracks. Skin lifting. Large void on R side.

**Mouth** Upper lip torn and skin lifting. Skin detaching along lower lip.

Teeth	Not applicable.
Antlers	Some cracks near base of both antlers. Skin pulling away from base of both antlers.
Neck	Possible hair losses.
Plaque	Not applicable.
Labels	Minor corrosion on metal tag and lead (?) seal. Wire very corroded.
ANALYSES:	Testing for the presence of arsenic (see attached for discussion of test procedure) produced a positive result for this specimen.

#### PROPOSED TREATMENT:

1. Clean specimen using HEPA filtered vacuum. Vacuum through a screen to protect hair.
2. Clean antlers, glass eyes, and wax and painted areas using 95% ethanol on lightly dampened swabs or polyvinyl alcohol sponges, after testing to determine the solubility of the paints (paints of this era when the specimen was likely to have been mounted should be fairly stable to ethanol).
3. Clean metal tag and wire using 95% ethanol.
4. Reattach lifting skin using B-72 (ethyl methacrylate/methyl acrylate copolymer resin) as 50% solids in reagent grade acetone with a small amount of 95% ethanol added (acetone soluble when dry).
5. Infill small skin voids using either B-72 (as above) bulked with Cabosil (fumed silica) or A4M (4,000 mol. wt.) grade methyl cellulose bulked with L tissue and mulberry tissue (softens in water and/or ethanol/water mixtures when dry).
6. Coat wire on metal tag using B-72 ~10% solids in reagent grade acetone (acetone soluble when dry).
7. Tint infills using Daler Rowney acrylic paints with high lightfastness, thinned in water (ethanol soluble when dry).
8. Check the base of the form for labels or other information and if found, record photographically or digitally.
9. Clean base by vacuuming and then with solvents as testing may show to be appropriate.
10. Prepare a black Volara 2A (irradiation crosslinked, expanded polyethylene foam with carbons black filler) pad to cushion the specimen while on display, making sure the pad does not obscure any label data on the base. Adhere to form using 3M #415 doubled-sided tape (acrylic adhesive).

#### TREATMENT RATIONALE:

By reattaching the skin with a strong but still moderately extensible adhesive, there may be less chance for additional distortion and tearing of the skin as a response to humidity fluctuations in the future. This will also make it possible for staff to undertake routine maintenance on the specimen without further jeopardizing the skin. Repairs will improve the visual appearance of the mount, but will not make it appear as it did originally (e.g., hair will not generally be recolored to try to approximate original coloration). Careful examination will provide an opportunity to recover

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additional information about the history of the specimen. All materials to be used in the proposed treatments are synthetics and could not be mistaken for original specimen or original specimen preparation materials in x-radiography or other analysis, and should not interfere with biochemical analysis of untreated areas of the skin.

**PHOTOGRAPHY:**

**Before treatment**

(October 2000) ASA 200 Kodak color prints (see photography records, filed by roll and negative number) and digital images (attached).

Roll 3:02-06

**REFERENCES:**

Down, J., M. MacDonald, J. Tetreault, and R. Williams. 1992. *Adhesive Testing at the Canadian Conservation Institute - An Evaluation of Selected Poly(vinyl acetate) and Acrylic Adhesives*. Environment and Deterioration Report No. 1603. Canadian Conservation Institute, Ottawa.

Nowak, R. and J. Paradiso. 1983. *Walker's Mammals of the World*. 4th ed. The Johns Hopkins University Press. Baltimore and London.

Ruehrwein, R. 1997. Coe Hall at Planting Fields Arboretum State Historic Park. The Creative Company, Lawrenceburg, Indiana.

**ESTIMATE:**

~ 12 hours, including written, digital, and photographic documentation of the work (2 hours). The estimate assumes that the specimen will be removed from the wall, but will be treated on site, and that no more than 1 year has elapsed between preparation of this report and the actual treatment.

**ADDITIONAL CONDITION/TREATMENT NOTES:**

**TREATMENT APPROVED:** \_\_\_\_\_

(legal custodian or authorized agent)

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Conservator:** Catharine Hawks

**Date:** 17 October 2000



## TREATMENT REPORT (Mounted Head)

**SPECIMEN:** Wapiti (Elk) or Red Deer (*Cervus elaphus*), adult, male.

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**PROVENANCE:** Coe Hall at Planting Fields Arboretum State Historic Park, Oyster Bay, New York. Mounted over the archway in the Entrance or Great Hall (1<sup>st</sup> floor, F.1) that leads to the Louis XVI Room (1<sup>st</sup> floor, F.21). Possibly collected by William Robertson Coe (b.1869) who built Coe Hall, or his son, William Rogers Coe (b. 1901), ca. 1920-24. Coe Hall was a private home until 1949, when it was deeded to the State of New York. In 1955, the State University of New York obtained use of the site as a horticultural study campus and the house was used for classrooms and administration. Some furnishings, including taxidermy specimens, apparently remained in place during this period, and from 1970-78, when the building was used as a community center. In 1978, restoration of Coe Hall was begun, and it has been operated as an historic site since that time.

On 16 September 2002, the specimen was carefully removed from the wall by Marshall Fine Arts of Deer Park, NY, and placed, hanging upright, on a wood support for treatment.

There is no information on the specimen to indicate the name of the taxidermist or taxidermy studio that undertook the mounting.

**STATUS:** *C. elaphus* occur in Europe, parts of Asia, southern Siberia, Mongolia, Manchuria, Korea, parts of China, northwestern Africa, southern Canada, and parts of the US. Populations in many parts of the world are greatly reduced, and at least 2 US subspecies are extinct. The North American population is now subject to controlled sport hunting.

**PREPARATION:** Mounted head and antlers.

**DIMENSIONS:** D ~50" W ~57" H ~62"

**DESCRIPTION:** *Specimen examined in situ, in ambient light with auxiliary illumination from a flashlight, 17 October 2000 (see Condition Report). Additional descriptive information noted during cleaning and treatment under Ott lamps and ambient light, 2002.*

**Specimen** Taxidermy mount of head and antlers with some modeling of soft tissues of nose, apparently in wax. Skin shaped over wood form with some plaster modeling. Mouth closed. Glass eyes, probably painted on reverse. Antlers have a coating, probably originally clear. Earliners may be cartilage. Heavy cotton thread or cord used as stitching at seams and in ears. Some ferrous metal nails in skin to secure it to form, especially at base of neck.

**Plaque** None.

**Mounting hardware** Ferrous metal plate with hole for a wall hook, attached to top edge of wooden form at base of neck. Ferrous metal wire around plate from form.

<b>Labels</b>	Octagonal metal (alloy not identified) tag, stamped, "8844", suspended by iron alloy wire with lead (?) seal, from L antler. Seal is embossed, "WYO./GAME/TAG". There is no label or other information on the wooden form at the base of the neck.
<b>CONDITION:</b>	<i>Specimen examined in situ, in ambient light with auxiliary illumination from a flashlight, 17 October 2000 (see Condition Report). Additional condition information noted during cleaning and treatment under Ott lamps and ambient light, 2002.</i>
<b>General</b>	Fair to poor. Very dusty overall.
<b>Specimen</b>	
<i>Hair</i>	Moderately brittle. Dark pigments faded, especially on R side (towards windows). There have been some hair losses below chin, from mane, and some general losses in guard hair.
<i>Skin</i>	Void or tear in skin between antlers. Skin stretched and pulled apart at seam along top of head and back of neck.
<i>Eyes</i>	Glass dusty. Plaster behind both eyelids very powdery, waxy infills have numerous cracks and voids, and eye is slightly loose in socket. Cracks in front of eye from the inner corner. R eyelid in similar condition but eye is not loose. Skin in below inside corner of eye is torn. At least 3 cracks from the R eye into the forehead. Hole, possibly from a nail, below R eye.
<i>Ears</i>	Tips worn. Large stitches visible on inside and outside of L ear. Some small voids in skin inside L ear.
<i>Nose</i>	Numerous cracks. Skin lifting. Large void on R side, torn on L side
<i>Mouth</i>	Upper lip torn and skin lifting. Skin detached along lower lip and across chin. Cracks and voids in skin along upper lip line. No soft tissues of mouth remain.
<i>Teeth</i>	Not applicable.
<i>Antlers</i>	Some cracks near base of both antlers. Skin pulling away from base of both antlers. Small areas of blood/velvet lifting with coating on L antler near base. Coating has attracted and held some gray/black dust. Antlers have natural wear below coating. Small holes at base of antlers, possibly from old insect damage or possibly nail holes.
<i>Neck</i>	Hair losses.
<b>Plaque</b>	Not applicable.
<b>Mounting hardware</b>	Surface corrosion.
<b>Labels</b>	Minor corrosion on metal tag and lead (?) seal. Wire very corroded.
<b>ANALYSES:</b>	Testing for the presence of arsenic (see separate report on procedure) produced a positive result for this specimen.
	Coating on antlers blanches slightly in a 50% ethanol/water solution, but cleans readily and well with 95% ethanol.
<b>PROPOSED TREATMENT:</b>	
	1. Clean specimen using HEPA filtered vacuum. Vacuum through a screen to protect hair.



2. Clean antlers, glass eyes, and wax and painted areas using 95% ethanol on lightly dampened swabs or polyvinyl alcohol sponges, after testing to determine the solubility of the paints (paints of this era when the specimen was likely to have been mounted should be fairly stable to ethanol).
3. Clean metal tag and wire using 95% ethanol.
4. Reattach lifting skin using B-72 (ethyl methacrylate/methyl acrylate copolymer resin) as 50% solids in reagent grade acetone with a small amount of 95% ethanol added (acetone soluble when dry).
5. Infill small skin voids using either B-72 (as above) bulked with Cabosil (fumed silica) or A4M (4,000 mol. wt.) grade methyl cellulose bulked with L tissue and mulberry tissue (softens in water and/or ethanol/water mixtures when dry).
6. Coat wire on metal tag using B-72 ~10% solids in reagent grade acetone (acetone soluble when dry).
7. Tint infills using Daler Rowney acrylic paints with high lightfastness, thinned in water (ethanol soluble when dry).
8. Check the base of the form for labels or other information and if found, record photographically or digitally.
9. Clean base by vacuuming and then with solvents as testing may show to be appropriate.
10. Prepare a black Volara 2A (irradiation crosslinked, expanded polyethylene foam with carbons black filler) pad to cushion the specimen while on display, making sure the pad does not obscure any label data on the base. Adhere to form using 3M #415 doubled-sided tape (acrylic adhesive).

#### TREATMENT RATIONALE:

By reattaching the skin with a strong but still moderately extensible adhesive, there may be less chance for additional distortion and tearing of the skin as a response to humidity fluctuations in the future. This will also make it possible for staff to undertake routine maintenance on the specimen without further jeopardizing the skin. Repairs will improve the visual appearance of the mount, but will not make it appear as it did originally (e.g., hair will not generally be recolored to try to approximate original coloration). Careful examination will provide an opportunity to recover additional information about the history of the specimen. All materials to be used in the proposed treatments are synthetics and could not be mistaken for original specimen or original specimen preparation materials in x-radiography or other analysis, and should not interfere with biochemical analysis of untreated areas of the skin.

**TREATMENT APPROVAL:** Treatment approval signed by Ellen Cone Busch on 16 September 2002.

#### ACTUAL TREATMENT:

##### Cleaning

1. Vacuumed with a HEPA filtered vacuum, equipped with small brush as the nozzle.
2. Cleaned hair surface with 50% ethanol/water solution on microfiber cleaning cloths and Kimwipes.
3. Cleaned antlers using soot removal sponges, then with 95% ethanol on swabs and Kimwipes.

4. Cleaned wire, metal tag, and seal on L antler using 95% ethanol.
5. To degree possible, cleaned ferrous metal hanging hardware using 95% ethanol

**Repairs**

1. Coated wire, seal, and metal tag on L antler using a thin solution of B-72 (ethyl methacrylate/methyl acrylate copolymer resin) solids in reagent grade acetone with a small amount of 95% ethanol added (acetone soluble when dry).
2. To degree possible, coated hanging hardware with a thin solution of B-72 (ethyl methacrylate/methyl acrylate copolymer resin) solids in reagent grade acetone with a small amount of 95% ethanol added (acetone soluble when dry).
3. To degree possible, consolidated plaster behind both eyes using a thin solution of B-72 in acetone, then secured L eye using HMG adhesive (thick solution of B-72 in acetone). Repaired cracking and flaking eyelines on both eyes using B-72 50% solids in acetone, bulked with fumed silica (Cabosil).
4. Re-attached skin on nose, mouth, and chin using B-72 50% solids in acetone.
5. Made additional fills around eyes and fills in nose and mouth area with 4,000 molecular weight methylcellulose, bulked with alpha cellulose fibers (Bookmakers A4M as a gel in deionized water, bulked with L tissue fibers).
6. Made in infill for front area of void between antlers using synthetic hair (National Fiber Technologies no. 13) attached with B-72 in acetone (HMG adhesive).
7. Painted synthetic hair and other infills using acrylic paints mixed in deionized water (Liquitex, Daler Rowney, Windsor Newton). Paint is ethanol soluble when dry.

**Other**

Left black Volara 2A and 3M 415 double-sided tape for use in making pads at base wooden form in each mount when Marshall Fine Arts arrives to replace the trophies on the walls in Coe Hall.

**PHOTOGRAPHY:**

*October 2000.* ASA 200 Kodak color prints (see photography records, filed by roll and negative number) and images.  
*September 2002.* ASA 200 Ektachome slides and 200 ASA Kodak color prints taken with a Nikon autofocus camera and digital images taken with a Sony Cybershot camera.

**Before treatment**

Roll no: 03: 02-06 04: 23-25,27-29,36,37

**During treatment**

Images: Coe 1 2002: 1610 (seal and tag after cleaning and before coating); 1616 (unpainted synthetic hair fill between antlers); 1628 (L eye with unpainted fills); 1630 (R eye with unpainted fills)

**After treatment**

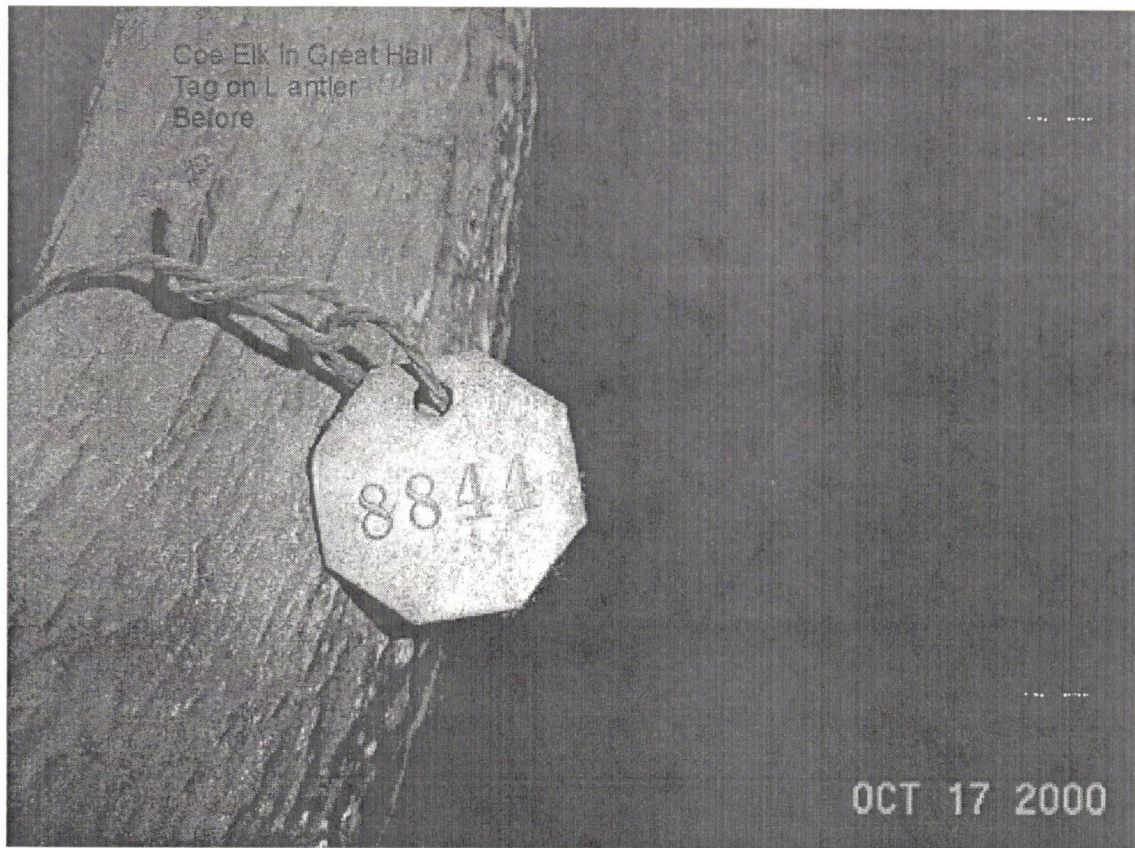
Roll no: 05: 11-15

Images: Coe 2 2002: 1678 (R eye); 1679 (L eye); 1680 (R side nose); 1681 (L side nose); 1682 (front of nose); 1684 (nose and mouth); 1686 (fill between antlers)

REFERENCES:

- Down, J., M. MacDonald, J. Tetreault, and R. Williams. 1992. *Adhesive Testing at the Canadian Conservation Institute - An Evaluation of Selected Poly(vinyl acetate) and Acrylic Adhesives*. Environment and Deterioration Report No. 1603. Canadian Conservation Institute, Ottawa.
- Nowak, R. and J. Paradiso. 1983. *Walker's Mammals of the World*. 4th ed. The Johns Hopkins University Press. Baltimore and London.
- Ruehrwein, R. 1997. *Coe Hall at Planting Fields Arboretum State Historic Park*. The Creative Company, Lawrenceburg, Indiana.









Coe Hall Elk (no. 7). Synthetic hair fill between antlers, during treatment



Coe Hall Elk (no. 07). Synthetic hair fill, after treatment