

PULP ADDICTION

The Use of Dry Cast Pulp for
Seamless Repairs in Works on Paper

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Introduction:

Filling losses with wet pulp is a tried and true paper conservation operation, which involves reprocessing existing paper into a slurry using a blender, and making repairs while the artwork is wet. Leftover wet pulp is typically stored in jars or dried as lumps, for future use.



Traditional pulp storage

At FAMSF, paper conservators have instead cast pulp into small sheets of paper. Collected, they form a library of paper tones. This reprocessed paper is easy to shape and carve. Once made, it as an excellent product to have on hand for immediate use for filling losses, mending tears, and camouflaging stains.



FAMSF Pulp Storage

Filling Losses:

Dry cast pulp repairs do not require wetting of the object and can be easily removed. Seamless fills can be done more quickly than traditional shaped inserts.



Before fill



A patch of dry cast pulp is adhered to the reverse of the loss, and shaved down in situ.



After fill, with inpainting

Camouflaging Tears:

A thin patch of dry cast pulp can easily camouflage dirty tears.



Adhering the thin piece of dry cast pulp with light dots of methylcellulose ensures that the patch won't darken or transparentize from too much adhesive.



Before treatment



After treatment

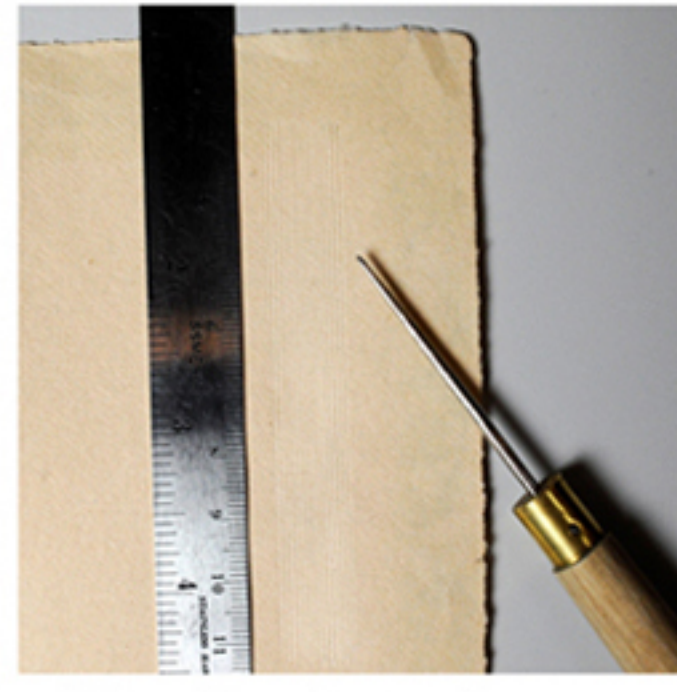
Tips and Methods:

Thinning and Carving:



The dry cast pulp can be easily thinned with tape and carved with a scalpel.

Burnishing and Incising:



The dry cast pulp can be compressed and burnished to give a denser, smoother surface. It can also be incised to impart texture.

Adhesives:



Wheat starch paste and methylcellulose (Dow A4C) both work well with cast pulp. Since the cast pulp is not sized and often used thin, brushing on adhesive can sometimes cause it to darken or transparentize. Applying the adhesive lightly, as dots, often works best.



Mending:

Thin strips cut from dry cast pulp applied with wheat starch paste can make more "invisible" mends on Western paper.



Before mending



After mending

Camouflaging Stains:

An application of dry cast pulp for camouflage can be more benign than bleaching or solvent treatment.

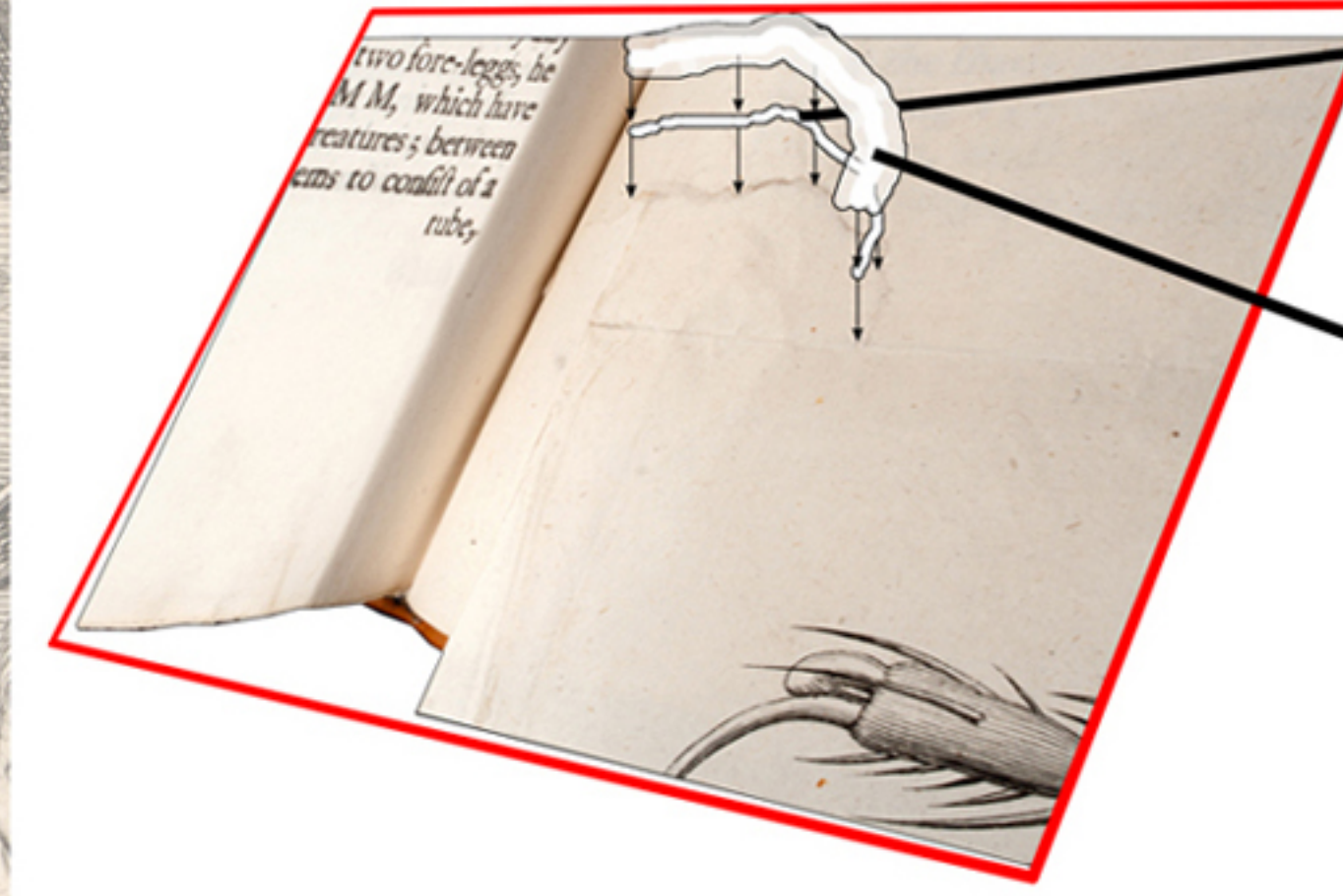
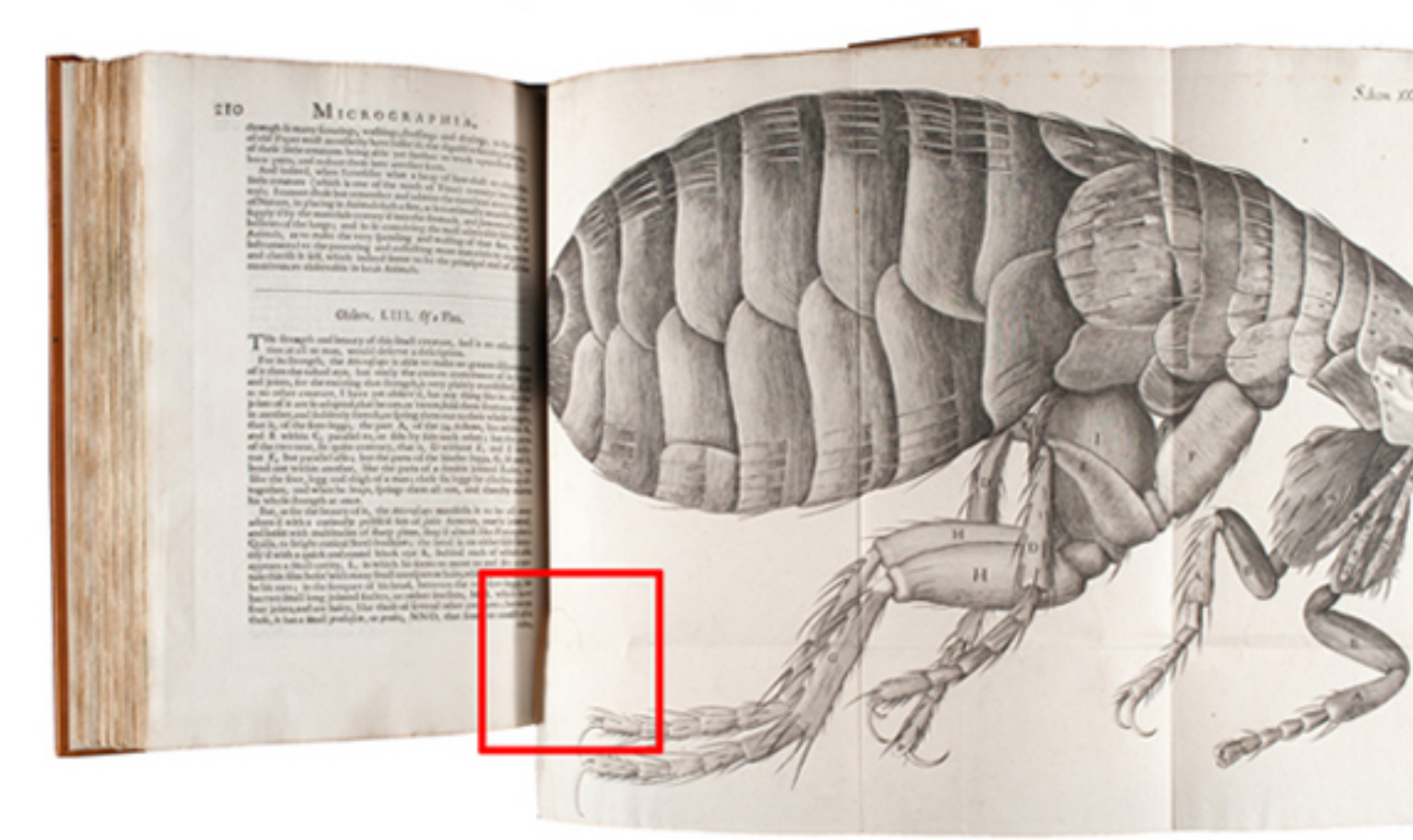


Before treatment



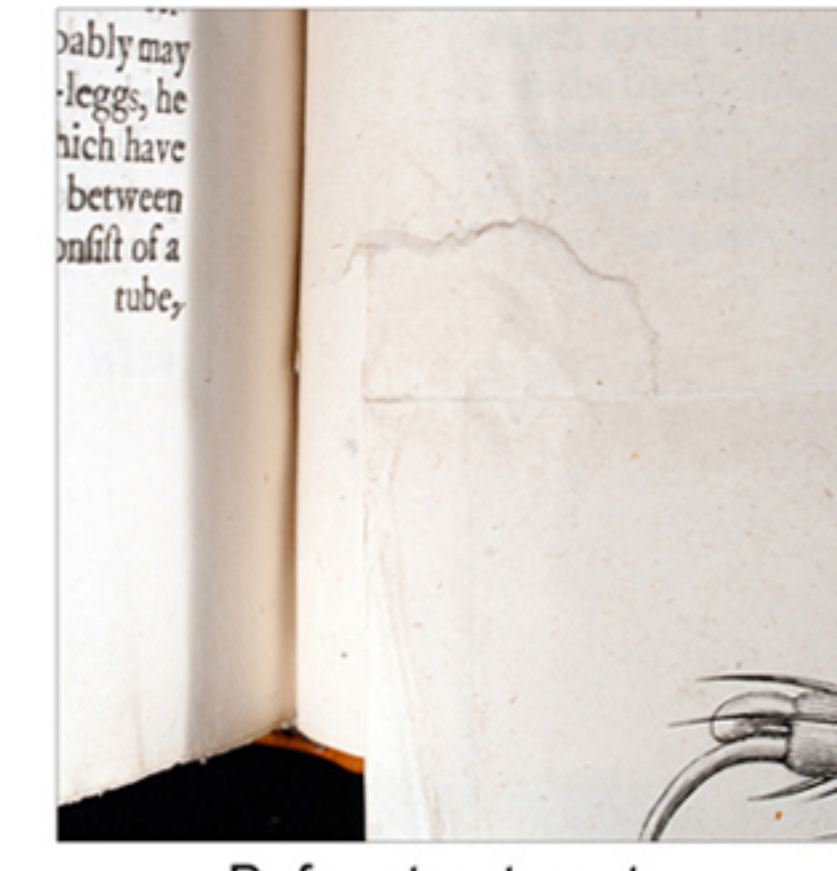
After treatment

Tears with crevices can be built up with layers of dry cast pulp.

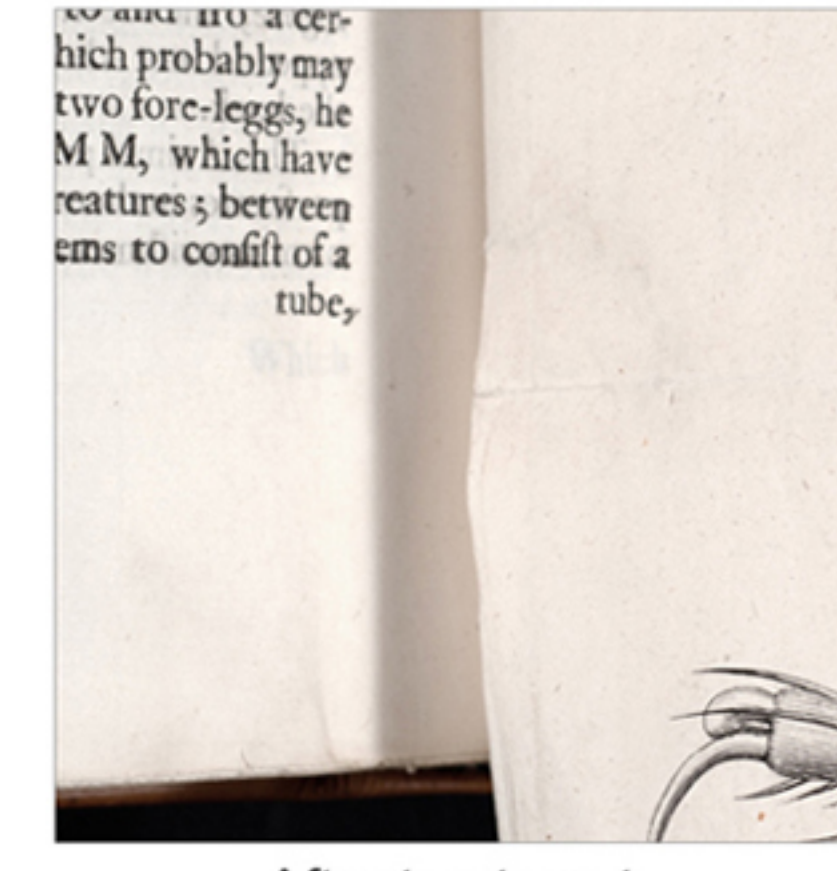


The first layer is a narrow piece of cast pulp placed into the crevice, leveling the tear.

The second and top most layer of cast pulp is slightly wider than the tear. The edges are thinned to give a seamless transition.



Before treatment



After treatment

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