

RESTORATION OF PAPER DOCUMENTS CONTAINING VARIOUS SEALS

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INTRODUCTION

In the restoration, two documents from the parchment and paper collection of the State Historical Archives of Latvia (LVVA) – birth, education, travel and work certificates of artisans and craftsmen, etc. A document with a lacquer seal (hereinafter referred to as GV426) and a document with a suspended wax seal in a metal capsule with a cloth ribbon (hereinafter referred to as GV373).

KEY WORDS:
F5561-US3-GV373 (54.3 X 38.2 CM);
GV426 (50.3 X 34.7 CM)
PAPER, MOULDY, BRITTLE, LACQUER SEAL,
HANGING SEAL, 1607-1896, RESTORATION

DOCUMENT GV426 (50.3 X 34.7 CM)



(Fig. 1) GV 426 Obverse prior to restoration



(Fig. 2) GV 426 Obverse following restoration



(Fig. 3) GV 426 Reverse prior to restoration



(Fig. 4) GV 426 Reverse following restoration



(Fig. 8) GV 426 Drying by pressing between layers of cardboard, non-woven polyester and the padding of the lacquer seal



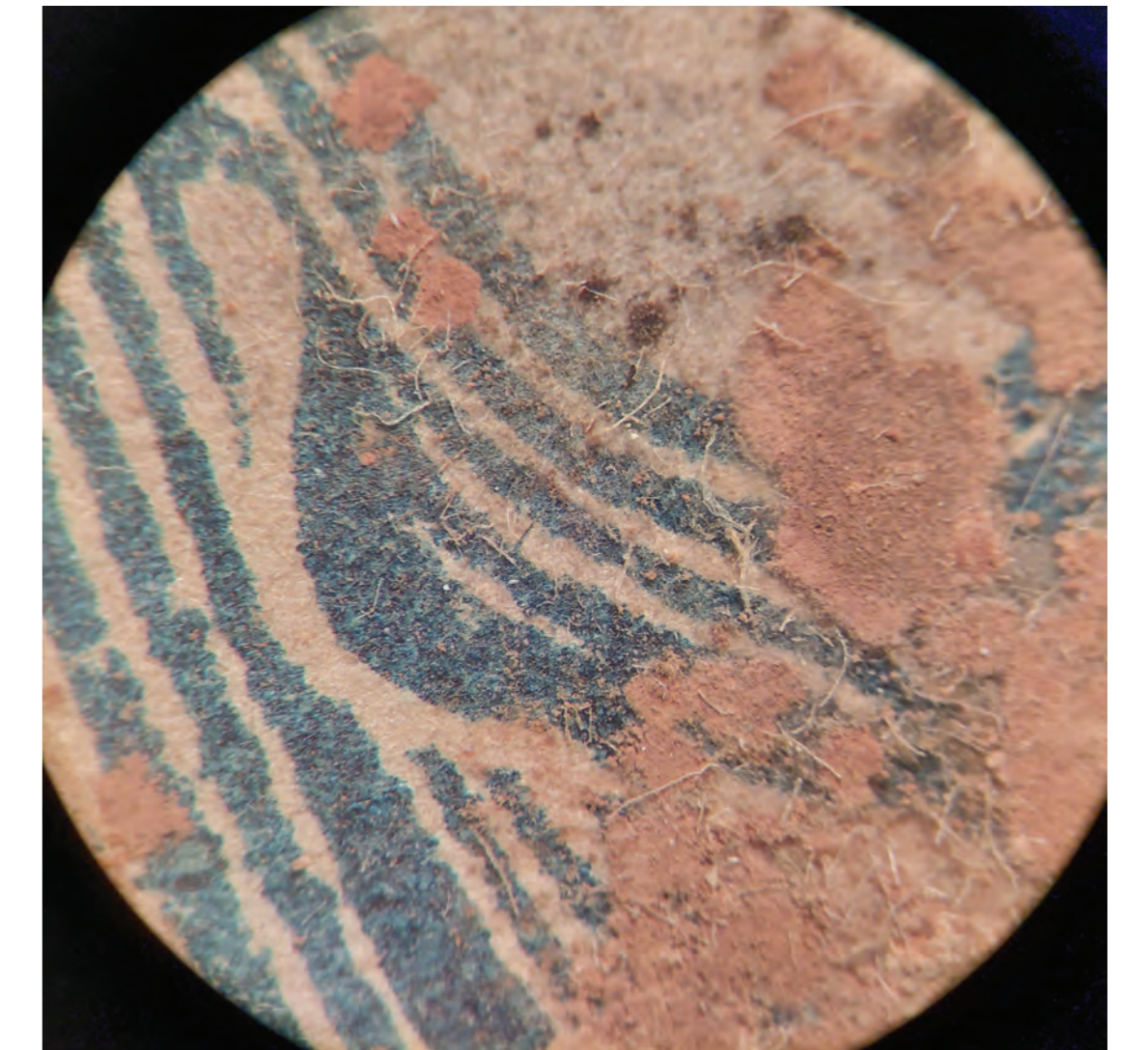
(Fig. 5) GV 426 Fragment prior to restoration, mould growth



(Fig. 6) GV 426 Fragment following restoration



(Fig. 9) GV 426 Sintepon padding for the lacquer seal



(Fig. 7) GV 426 Mould growth and visible separated paper fibre under microscope 20x magnification

RESTORATION

The presence of seals in documents complicates their handling – cleaning, fastening, pressing. The lacquer seal on GV426 is a few millimeters thick, with cracks formed over time and through use. GV373 is made from a large sheet of paper folded in half, with the seal ribbon threaded through both halves of the sheet at the bottom edge. The ribbon is long enough to reach the folded part of the document.

Damage: a layer of superficial dirt, fold lines, yellowing of paper. Over time, exposed to moisture, resulting in staining and mould growth, particularly in GV426. The effect has contributed to colour changes, loss of fragmentary paper mechanical properties and material, etc.

Documents were disinfected in an ethylene oxide chamber before restoration. Tests of pigment resistance to moisture and surface pH analyses were carried out in GV426. Before restoration, average pH of GV426 was 4.7, and 6.6 after restoration of GV426.

During the restoration of GV426, the following were performed:

- dry cleaning, cleaning of mould growth with a soft brush on a cleaning table;
- rinsing in a calcium bicarbonate bath – 20 min;
- treatment with a 1.2% Tylose MH300 solution between layers of Bondina, a material auxiliary to the restoration;
- smoothing out of the paper, correcting separated and loose fragments, general duplication on Japanese paper (Mulberry 45g/m²), using 13% wheat starch glue.

During the restoration of GV373, the following were performed:

- dry cleaning with Wishab sponge and brush;
- smoothing out the seal ribbon by ironing it between non-woven polyester layers;
- smoothing out and correcting pronounced fold lines and loose fragments;
- fragmentary strengthening of paper and filling in of missing material with Japanese paper (Kizuki Kozu 6g/m², Bunko SHI 71g/m²) and 13% wheat starch glue from the inside.

Drying by pressing between layers of cardboard and non-woven polyester (GV426 – in a press, GV373 – locally). For the padding of the lacquer seal, a fragment of sintepon is used, which is placed over the seal between cardboard and polyester. After pressing, the Japanese paper is compared to the originals. Restoration of seals was performed separately. The documents were placed in an archival-quality corrugated cardboard folder for further storage and returned to the LVVA collection.

DOCUMENT F5561-US3-GV373 (54.3 X 38.2 CM)



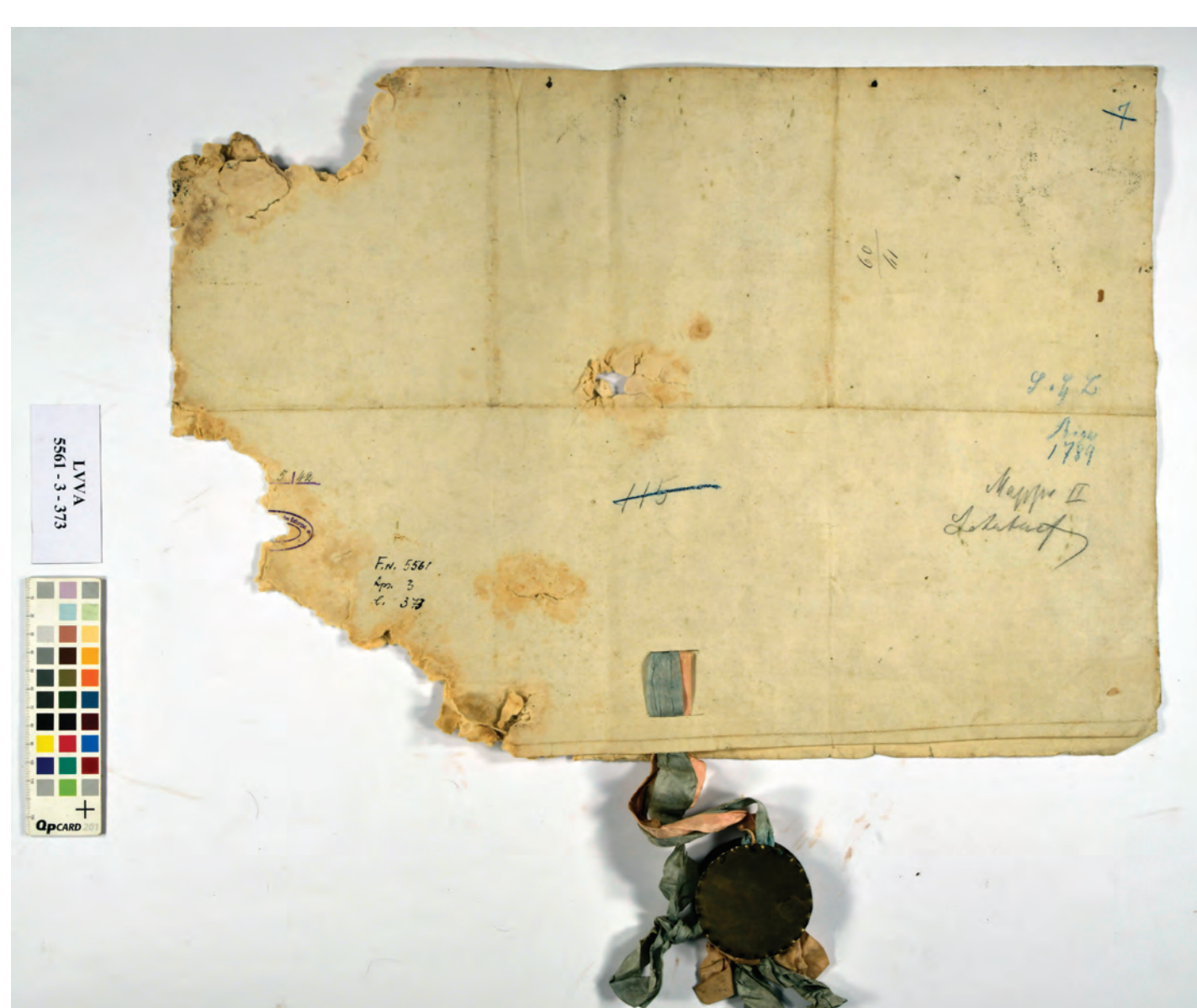
(Fig. 10) GV 373 Obverse prior to restoration



(Fig. 11) GV 373 Obverse following restoration



(Fig. 14) GV 373 Japanese paper fitting for loss filling



(Fig. 12) GV 373 Reverse prior to restoration



(Fig. 13) GV 373 Reverse following restoration



(Fig. 15) GV 373 Locally drying by pressing, between layers of cardboard and non-woven polyester, under weight