



MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

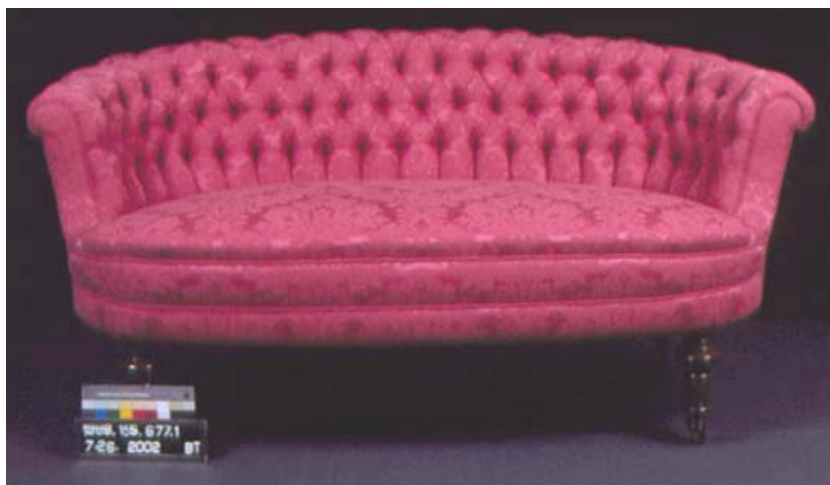
Krutina Furnishing Suite Tacking Edge Analysis by Ann Frisina Textile Conservator



A suite of mid 19th century furniture was brought to the lab for analysis and conservation from the Alexander Ramsey House reception room. This suite includes two love seats, two easy chairs, two armchairs, and two side chairs. A receipt in our collection dated August 24, 1872 documents the purchase: "FR. KRUTINA, First-Class Cabinet Furniture, 96 & 98 East Houston Street, be. Bowery and 2nd Ave."

Our goal with this suite was to deinstall the current show cover and examine the tacking edges for evidence of first generation show cover materials and/or trims. This suite of furnishings is also documented in a black and white glass plate negative taken by the Ramsey's in the 1870s.

A love seat revealed very strong evidence of its first generation show cover. Fragments documenting evidence of white fabric were found under a single tack on the outback top tack rail. All three fragments are the same. Both warp and weft are wool single ply Z twist woven in a plain weave rep structure. Unfortunately, due to the level of multiple tacking campaigns, it was not possible to determine if these fragments were from the first or a later generation of show cover.



Another fragment of this weave structure was found on the proper right inside back center tack rail. This fragment matched the ones found on outside back rail. Both warp and weft are again

a single ply Z twist woven in a plain weave rep weave structure. This inside back tack rail is important because it was covered over with horsehair foundation materials and buttoned, hiding the carved center medallion and tacking edge. The lack of tack holes around the fragment and the present covering of the carved area by a center insert panel added at a later date strongly suggest that this edge was only tacked to once, documenting this fragment as a first generation show cover.



A second piece of the Krutina set, an easy chair, was also deinstalled of its current show cover and examined for earlier show cover fragments along the tacking edge. This easy chair held one important clue. A fragment found on the proper left side seat rail under a tack. The fragment, orange brown in color, is the same spin, ply, and, weave structure as the white fragments found on the love seat.

This additional color is important. When examining the photo it is clear that the suite is covered in the Turkish style with two different colors. This inside seat, outback and arms are all in a light solid material. The seat fronts are finished with a darker solid material. No other surface decoration, i.e. printing, woven patterning, or stamping, is evident on the photo. This leads me to believe that these small fragments are consistent with the whole cloth and are not selvages.

The Ramsey collection also contains a lambrequin of similar weave structure and yarn. While the lambrequin is blue, it is also noted on the bill of sale from the Krutina store in New York documenting that Mrs. Ramsey purchased the suite of furniture as well as lambrequins to be covered with similar fabric in different colors.



A photograph of the furniture as it was originally arranged in the reception room of the Alexander Ramsey house is shown here.



Reception room from library, Ramsey house, 1884
MHS Photograph Collection
Location no. MR2.9 SP3.2gr p47 Negative no. 5547