

# Textile Preservation Associates, Inc.

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## TREATMENT REPORT

Date December 30, 1998

TPA No. 914

Object Matamoros Battalion battle flag

Catalog No M-3-80

Client Texas State Archives  
1201 Brazos Street  
Austin, TX 78711-2927

Contact Christopher LaPlante  
Phone (512) 463-5467 FAX (512) 463-5436

### REPORT OF EXAMINATION

Object submitted for examination

### DOCUMENTATION

7 Kodachrome 25, 35mm color slides were taken before and after treatment.  
Analysis: See attached report.

### Description

Size: Leading edge 57" Fly 67"

The flag is constructed in three vertical sections of green, white, and red silk fabric, respectively. There is an embroidered decoration in shades of brown and gold silk threads on the center (white) bar depicting the national arms of Mexico; an eagle with a snake in his mouth. The eagle has his head turned toward the fly end and has a wingspan of 23 1/4". The tips of the wings and tail extend over the edge of the white bar onto both the red and green bars. Embroidered across the top, 7" above the snakes head, is the word "Batallon". Embroidered 2" beneath the snakes tail is, "Matamoros" and 3" beneath that is the word "Permanente.". All of the lettering is completed in a Script style in 2 1/8" and 3 3/4" heights. There is a 2 1/2" wide double layer of green silk sewn to the leading edge. This was wrapped around a staff

and tacked as a method of attachment. There are fragments of a red ribbon laid atop the green silk through which the tacks were put.

#### Condition

##### Previous Treatment

The flag is stitched to a cotton backing using random rows of running stitch. Some of the lettering has been restored with a dark thread.

##### Present Condition

The silk is severely degraded and fractured throughout creating many loose fragments. The red silk is the weakest and powders when handled. There is approximately 40% of the red stripe missing, including all but an 8" section of the fly end. About 30% of the white stripe is missing, including some of the embroidered lettering. The central embroidery is intact. The green is fractured but there is minimal loss. The green silk is severely faded with a 20" section at the bottom appearing gold. The red ribbon on the hoist end has 50% missing and the rest is fractured.

#### REPORT OF TREATMENT

##### *Documentation*

1. The flag, as received, was photographed on both sides (see photos 1-2).
2. The previous treatment was removed by cutting each stitch, working under 10x magnification, then removing the thread fragments. The flag was photographed on the reverse after the previous treatment was removed (see photo 3).
3. The fibers, fabrics, and sewing threads were analyzed. Information about the construction of the flag, and any evidence of alterations to the original were noted. Scale drawings were made of the flag and an analysis report was prepared. Particle samples were taken for the files.

##### *Stabilization*

4. To relax the fabrics and remove creases, the flag was humidified by light misting with distilled water. When relaxed, the fabrics were flattened and dried under glass weights. Separated pieces were returned to their original location.
5. The flag was sandwiched between two layers of appropriately colored Stabiltex<sup>1</sup>, a multifilament polyester crepeline. Red was placed over the red stripe, ecru over the white and green over the green. The layers were attached by sewing through the voids. Fragments were aligned and sewn around their perimeter to hold them in place.

Care was taken to eliminate sewing through the fabric where possible but in large areas with no damage, the fabrics were secured with random rows of vertical running stitch through all three layers. Sewing was carried out with thread pulled from the Stabiltex. The flag was photographed on both sides after encapsulation (see photos 4-5).

### *Preparation for Exhibition*

6. A buffered, acid-free panel<sup>2</sup> was prepared then covered with nonwoven polyester batting<sup>3</sup> and a previously washed, unbleached, airwing grade, fine cotton fabric<sup>4</sup>.
7. The flag was attached to the padded panel with one row of stitching across the top. Attachment was made through the Stabiltex to avoid additional stress on the flag. The flag was photographed on the panel (see photo 6).
8. Ultra-violet filtering OP-2 Acrylite<sup>5</sup> was laid over the flag, applying a light pressure to the fabric. The entire unit was placed in a silver colored wooden frame from Ivy Industries<sup>6</sup> (Item #Q-5/Finish #221). An aluminum insert was added to the frame to increase its strength and stability and an aluminum backing was constructed for support.
9. A final photo was taken and a treatment report prepared (see photo 7).

### PROGNOSIS

The object should be exhibited under less than five foot-candles of light. Because any light is damaging, it is recommended that the piece be rotated between exhibit and storage, or covered with a dense cloth when not being viewed. Maximum effort should be made to reduce the total exposure to light. Care should be taken to avoid aiming lights directly on the case, which can cause a "greenhouse" effect, or heat build up within the unit.

To best preserve the object, the temperature and humidity level should be kept fairly constant, with temperatures of less than 70 degrees Fahrenheit and a relative humidity of 45% plus or minus 5%. Avoid hanging the object against an outside wall, or place spacers between the wall and the frame to prevent humidity transfer.

If this object is ever stored, it can be placed flat or vertical. We recommend storage in the frame, since it is part of the conservation treatment and will provide a more stable environment.

#### HANGING THE FRAME

There are two metal tabs along the top of the frame for hooking onto a screw or bolt.

#### CARE OF THE PLEXIGLAS

The plexiglas is soft and may scratch so care must be taken during handling. Plexiglas should not be cleaned with ammonia based window cleaners. Either plexiglas cleaner should be purchased, or water with a drop of liquid dishwasher detergent can be used along with very soft rags (diapers or gauze). If paper towels are used they should be extremely soft.

Total treatment hours: 140

Signed:  Date: 12-30-98  
Fonda Ghiardi Thomsen, Fellow AIC,  
Director, Textile Preservation Associates, Inc.

Work on the object was carried out by Cathy Heffner, Conservation Technician, Textile Preservation Associates, Inc. under the supervision of Fonda G. Thomsen, Conservator.

#### Reference list of materials used in the conservation of this object.

1. Stabiltex, a sheer, multifilament, plain weave, polyester: Talas, 568 Broadway, New York, NY 10012 (212) 219-0770.
2. Corrugated Board, buffered, acid free: Holinger Corporation, P.O. Box 8360, Fredricksburg, VA 22404 (800) 634-0491.
3. Batting: "Jasztex" a thermo bonded polyester batting: Museum Services Corporation, 1107 East Cliff Road, Burnsville, MN 55337.  
  
"Poly-fil Traditional Batting" a non-woven, needle punched batting: Fairfield Processing Corporation, 88 Rose Hill Avenue, Danbury, CT. 06810.
4. Cotton, a 100% airwing grade fabric: Fox Reich Textiles, Inc., 54 Danbury Road, Suite 228, Ridgefield, CN 06877 (914) 533-2445.

5. Acrylite OP-2, a colorless cast ultraviolet filtering acrylic sheet,: Cyro Industries, P. O. Box 950, 100 Valley Road, Mt. Arlington, NJ 07856 (416) 675-9433.

6. Ivy Industries, Inc. P.O. Box 7747, Charlottesville, VA (800) 446-1600.

TPA # 914 Matamoros Battalion Flag

Cat # M-3-80

Scale 1/8" = 1" 0 2 4 6 8 = inches

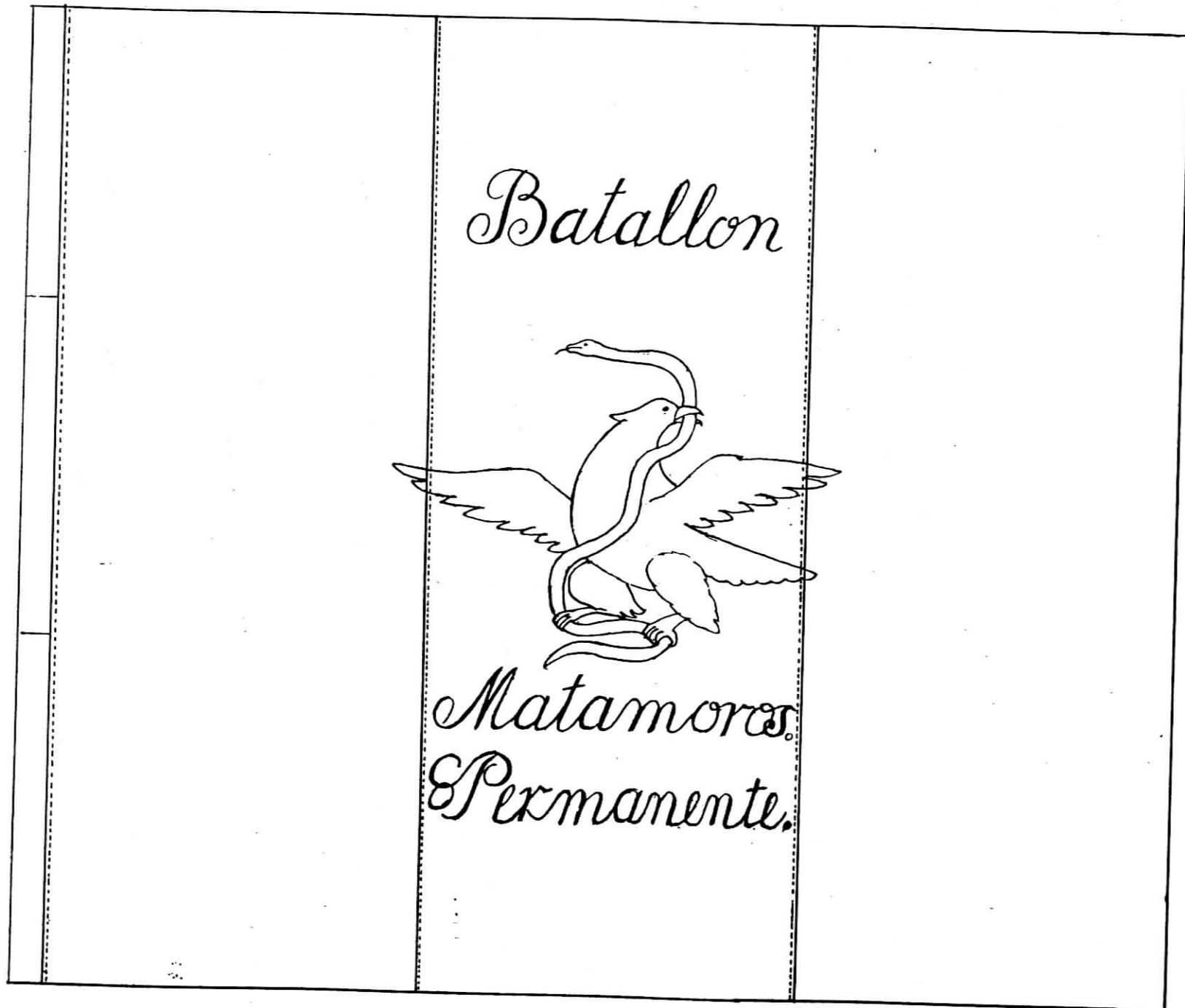
← 67" →

OBVERSE

Drawing # 1

CONSTRUCTION

↑  
57"  
↓



TPA # 414

Matamoros Battalion Flag

Reverse

Drawing # 2

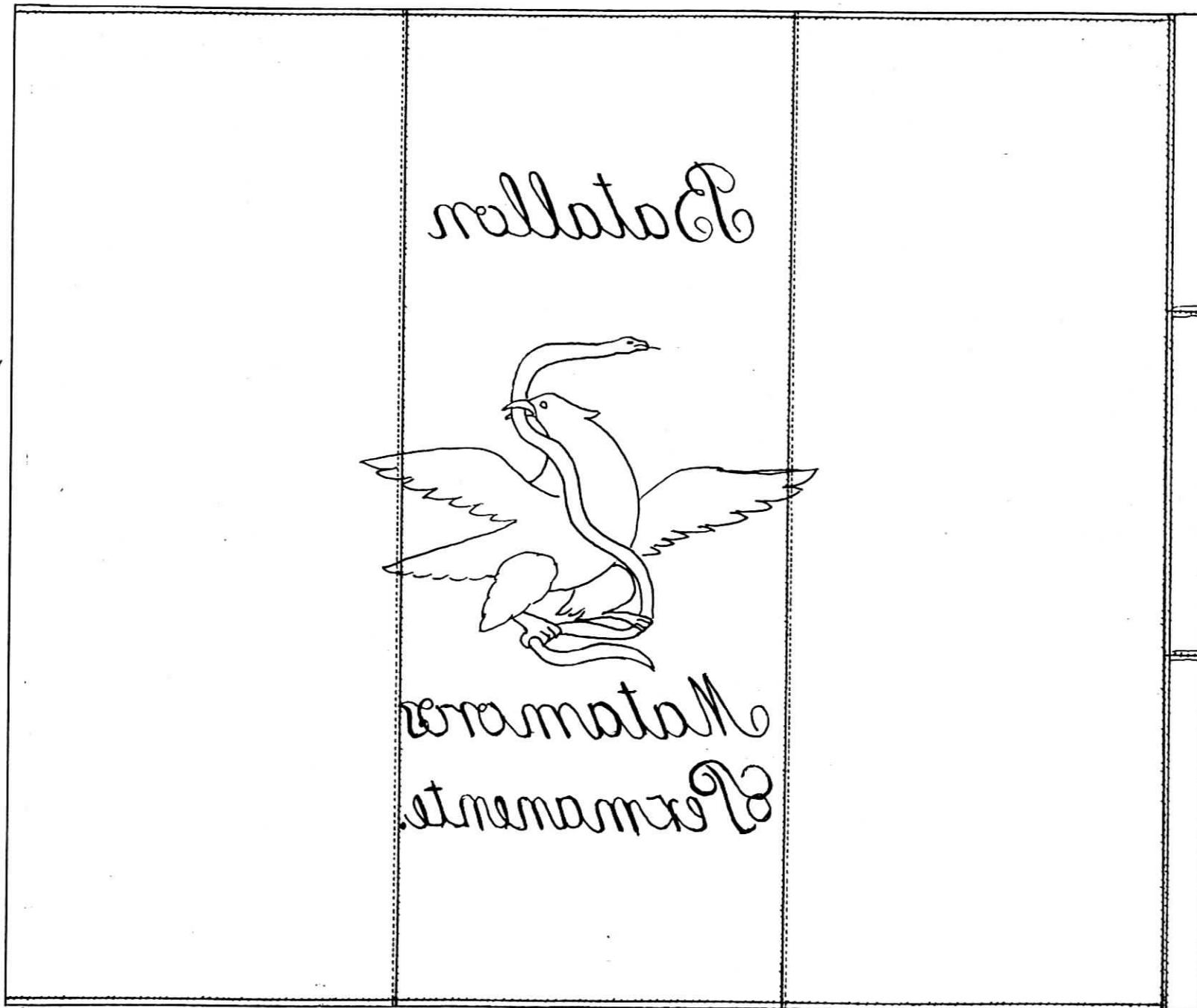
Cat. # M-3-80

Scale 1" = 8" 0 2 4 6 8 = inches

CONSTRUCTION

← 67" →

↑  
57"  
↓



TPA # 914

Matamoros Battalion Flag

Reverse

Drawing # 3

Cat. # M-3-80

Scale 1" = 8" 0 2 4 6 8 = inches

SELVAGE EDGES

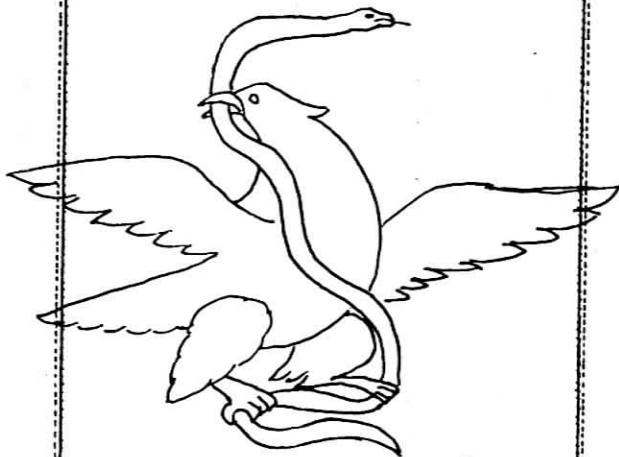
← 67" →

↑ 57" ↓

SE

1/4" wide w/ 34 white threads

matamoros



matamoros  
matamoros

SE - No pattern

SE - " "

SE - No pattern

SE - " "

TPA # 914 Matamoros Battalion Flag

OBVERSE

Drawing # 4

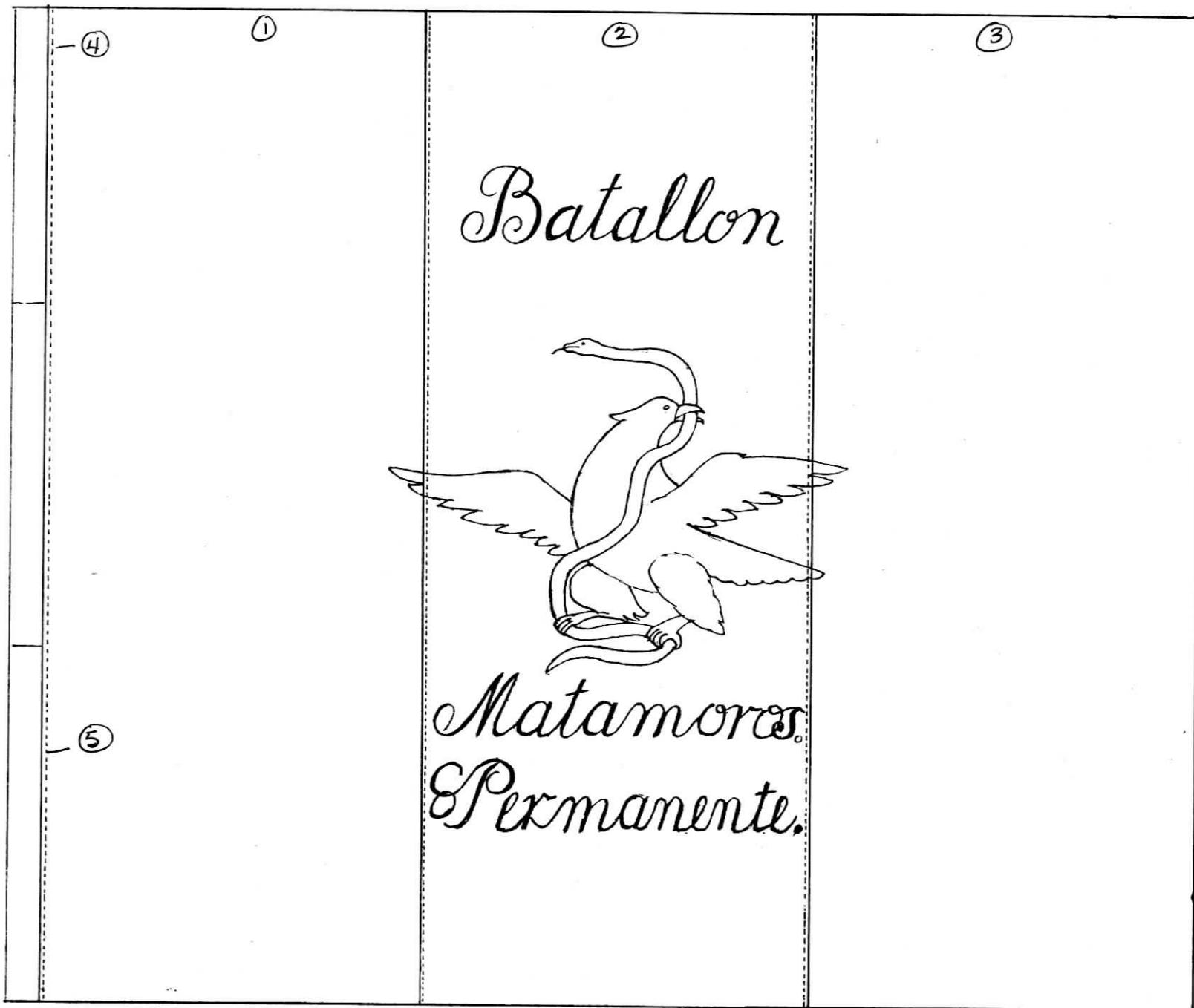
Cat # M-3-80

Scale 1/8" = 1" 0 2 4 6 8 = inches

SAMPLING

← 67" →

↑  
57"  
↓



TPA # 914 Matamoros Battalion Flag

Cat # M-3-80 Scale 1/8" = 1" 0 2 4 6 8 inches

← 67" →

OBVERSE

Drawing # 7  
CONDITION



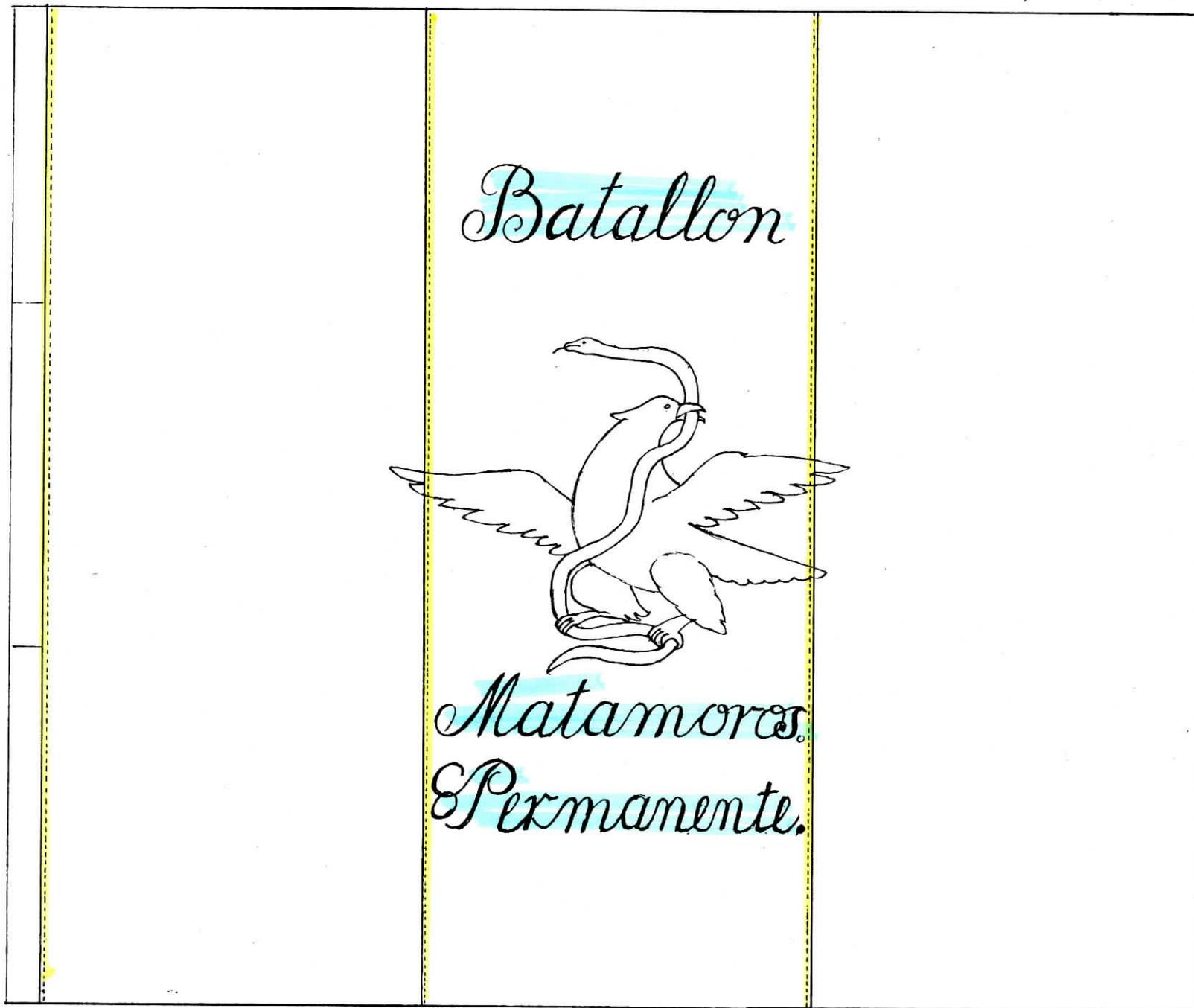
↑  
57"  
↓

TPA # 914 Matamoros Battalion Flag  
Cat# M-3-80 Scale 1/8"=1" 0 2 4 6 8 = inches  
← 67" →

OBVERSE

Drawing # 5  
SEWING THREADS  
2 PLY S SILK  
2 PLY Z SILK

↑  
57"  
↓



TPA # 914

Matamoros Battalion Flag

Reverse

Drawing # 6

Cat. # M-3-80

Scale 1" = 8" 0 2 4 6 8 = inches

SEWING THREADS

2 PLY S SILK

2 PLY Z SILK

← 67" →

↑  
57"  
↓

