

Author: St. John del Rey Mining Company  
Title: Views of Drawing Office Morro Velho  
Imprint: unknown (approximately 1903)  
Dimensions (binding): 23.3 cm x 31.6 cm x 3.3 cm  
Dimensions (text block): 22.4 cm x 30.8 cm x 2.4 cm  
Collection: Benson Latin American Collection  
Examination Date: 3/18/08  
Treatment Date: April 2008  
Conservator: Sarah Norris

### **Treatment Objective**

The goal of this treatment is to stabilize the volume for handling by rebuilding the spine coverings and outer board attachment.

### **Condition**

The individual leaves of this photo album are stiff card, approximately 1.5 mm thick each. Each leaf is attached by a light green flexible cloth hinge to an additional piece of card approximately 1.3 cm wide at the spine, creating a structure typical of an atlas or photo album. The textile hinge pieces fold back on themselves at the spine and are adhered as hinges to the neighboring leaf, connecting one leaf in the volume to the next. The same type of light green textile hinge connects the outer leaves with the endsheets. The endsheets are likewise built with textile hinges, but are made of a thinner stiff card, approximately 1 mm thick. The endpapers are in turn connected to the pastedowns with the same cloth hinge structure, this time with a darker green textile. The pastedowns are made of still thinner stiff card, approximately 0.5 mm thick. Machine made paper with a black and white marbled print was stiff-leaved to the endpapers and adhered as a doublure to the pastedown. The resulting text block is moderately rounded and lined with textile. Machine made purple and white endbands were stuck on, and then a dark purple sheep leather lining was adhered. The hinges that hold the textblock together are still in good condition. However, the leather lining only remains adhered to the volume at the head and tail. Its hinges have completely broken. The textile lining remains partially adhered to the volume, but its hinges have almost completely split, and the textile has pulled away from the spine at the hinges, tail, and most extensively at the head. This has left much of the textblock spine completely exposed.

The case was constructed separately from the textblock. First, shaped boards were covered in deep purple textile textured with a bumpy pattern most likely intended to mimic leather. Flaps of the textile were left open at the head and tail. The covered boards were blind and gold stamped, and then the outer spine piece of deep purple sheep leather was adhered to the insides of the two boards. The textile flaps were then turned in and closed, and the text block was cased in. All that currently remains of the outer leather spine covering is two small strips that emerge from just beneath the textile-covered shaped boards. However, despite the failures of the outer leather spine covering and the leather and textile spine linings, the boards remain firmly attached to the pastedowns, which are in turn still firmly hinged to the endpapers and, in turn, to the rest of the textblock.

Adhered to each page of the volume is one platinum print illustrating drafting operations and fabricated constructions within the St. John del Rey mining company. The

dark portions of the photographs have caused darkening of the photographs and pages they face. The photographs are labeled by hand in a medium brown ink. Though the color of this ink might indicate that it is iron gall, it does not show iron gall's typical haloing or burn-through. Additionally, it does not appear deep black under fluorescent light, indicating that this is not in fact iron gall ink. The ink does not offset with 15 seconds of contact with damp chromatography paper. The photographs are numbered consecutively near their lower right corners in graphite. Grime appears on the pages, especially at the head and foreedge.

### **Treatment Proposal**

1. Remove gapping textile lining.
2. Line spine with Japanese tissue and wheat starch paste.
3. Line spine with new airline linen and Lascaux.
4. Remove endbands from original textile spine lining and adhere to new lining.
5. Tone new textile spine covering.
6. Lift inbetween remaining leather spine lining and cloth hinge.
7. Insert new textile here, but not as a tightback. This area will be easier to lift than inbetween the leather lining and spine piece, and it will leave both leather layers visible for future understanding of the original structure. It will also allow the boards to open from the base of the shoulder as required by the accordion style cloth hinges.

### **Materials Used**

- Methyl cellulose (MC) 2.5% dispersed in hot then cold distilled water (Fisher 4000 cps.)
- Precipitated wheat starch paste mixed 1:4 with distilled water, cooked 20 minutes (Colophon)
- Lascaux 498HV (Talas)
- Machine-made Kozo tissue
- Lens tissue
- Liquitex Professional Acrylics
- Airplane linen

### **Treatment Steps**

1. 4/4 (4 hr) Removed textile spine lining mostly mechanically. The middle portion was removed with a small amount of methyl cellulose to avoid disturbing hinge adhesive. Lined spine with wheat starch paste and kozo. Split leather pieces from lining mechanically. Removed endbands from textile with water bath. Stored leather pieces and endbands in housing. Toned cotton textile with acrylic paint.
2. 4/5 (30 min) Retoned textile. Applied textile spine lining with Lascaux.
3. 4/7 (2 hr) Applied a wash of black acrylic mixed with methyl cellulose to textile (1 part MC : 1/2 part paint.) Toned lens tissue black with acrylics to line textile.
4. 4/9 (1 hr) Adhered endbands to new textile lining with Lascaux. Lifted under leather at hinges. Adhered lens tissue to toned textile with PVA mixed with methyl cellulose. Sized textile with methyl cellulose.
5. 4/11 (3 hr) Applied another black wash to textile with black acrylic and water. Cut textile to size needed for spine piece and created turn-ins with Lascaux off the

book. Adhered inserted textile under lifted leather with Lascaux. Left spine portion baggy.

Total: 10.5 hours