

FLAGS STORAGE A TIME OF GREAT POSSIBILITIES

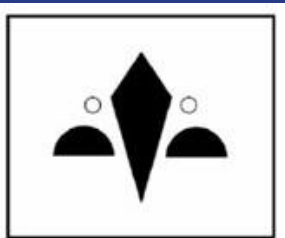
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Inside the Conservators' Studio @ blogspot



Connection to Collection Care

Topics of discussion:

- Materials and condition of flags
- Previous efforts to preserve flags
- Preventive care
- Flat storage systems
- Rolled storage systems
- How to roll
- Folders for smaller flags
- Vacuuming

Strength & Weaknesses of silk



- White fabric is often the most deteriorated
- Both examples show deteriorated white, but the red is mostly complete
- Slits or fracturing is common
- Red often has bled & faded

Wool fibers



Cotton fabrics



- Red is the most common deteriorated color in cotton flags

Embroidered

- ❑ Embroidered areas are heavier
- ❑ These heavy areas cause stress on surrounding fabric – especially when hung



Tears / Splits in Painted Regions



- Painted regions are stiff
- Becoming more brittle and cracking easily
- Paint can be transferred or abraded to neighboring layers
- Typically painted on both sides of the fabric

Paint Condition



Effects of gravity



Associated materials

Tassels and cords



Ribbons

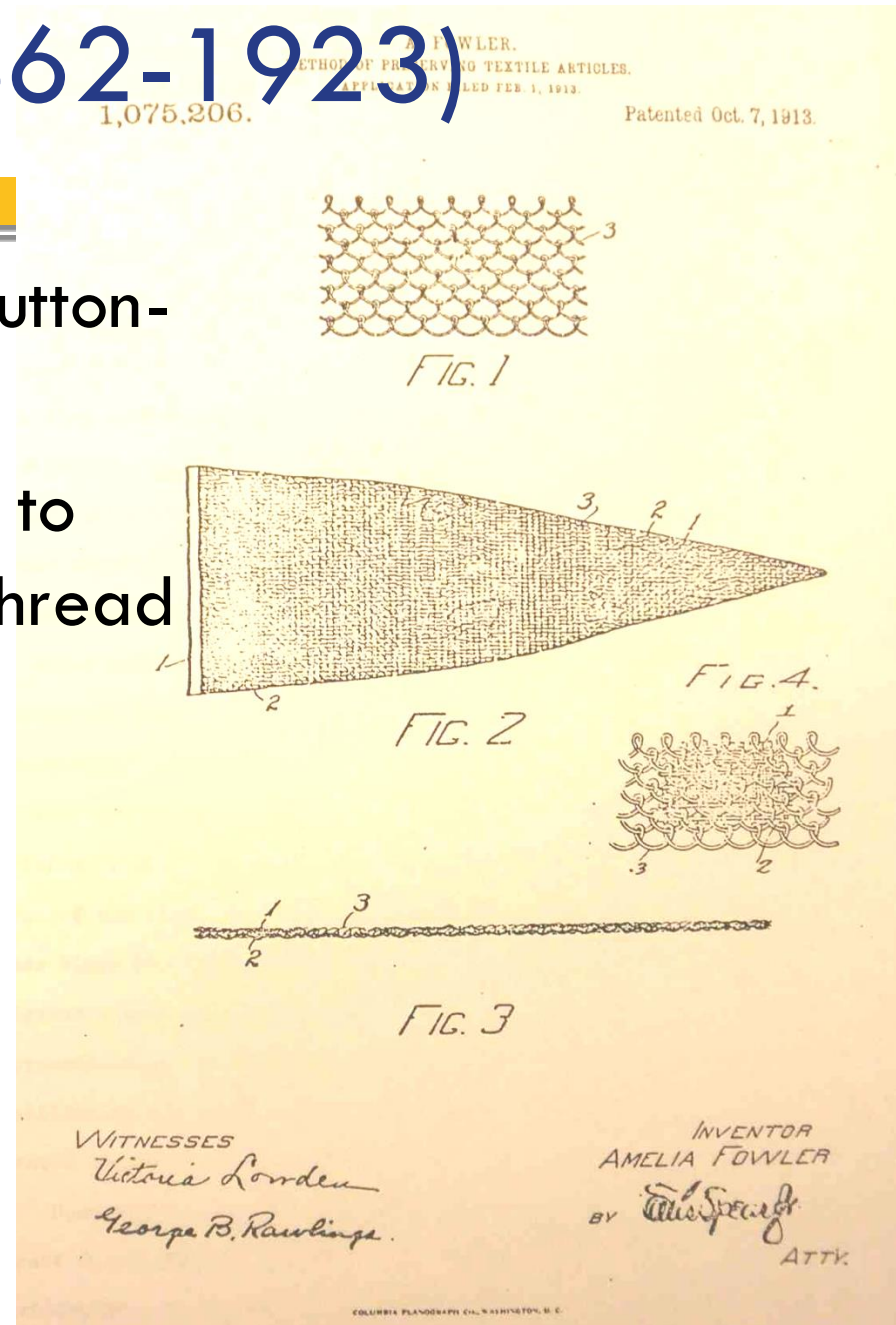


Amelia Fowler (1862-1923)

- Flag stitched to linen with button-hole like stitch
- Stitching performed overall to provide support with linen thread



1st New York Volunteers





Katherine Fowler Richey (1889-1949)

NEW YORK CITY, MONDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 1934 M 2

By O.R. Pilat

Freak Occupations



Modern Betsy Ross Restores Tattered Flags—Her Mother Taught Her the Secret

the battle. The flagbearer, James Austin Sylvester, went out the day after the battle and located and captured President Santa Anna, who had been the self-styled dictator of Western Mexico.

At left Mrs. Katherine Richey holds a tattered Civil War flag which she must make respectable again, while in the background is one already restored. At right she is seen working with a young assistant on one of the extremely rare 13-star American flags.

13-star flags were only made over this period of 17 years. By 1818, when it became obvious that new states were being added so rapidly that the shape of the flag was measured, the idea of adding

Katherine Fowler Richey (1889-1949)

- Worked on most of the major flag collections
- Claimed to have treated 5,000 flags
- Used silk and later a sewing machine



Mrs. Josephine Roser (d. 1995)

- Worked from late 1950s and 1960s.
- Sandwiched flag between Nylon net
- Close parallel rows of machine zigzag stitching
- Used net to create a full sized flag



- Netting is abrasive
- Cuts into the deteriorated silk
- Gives silk a “punched” look



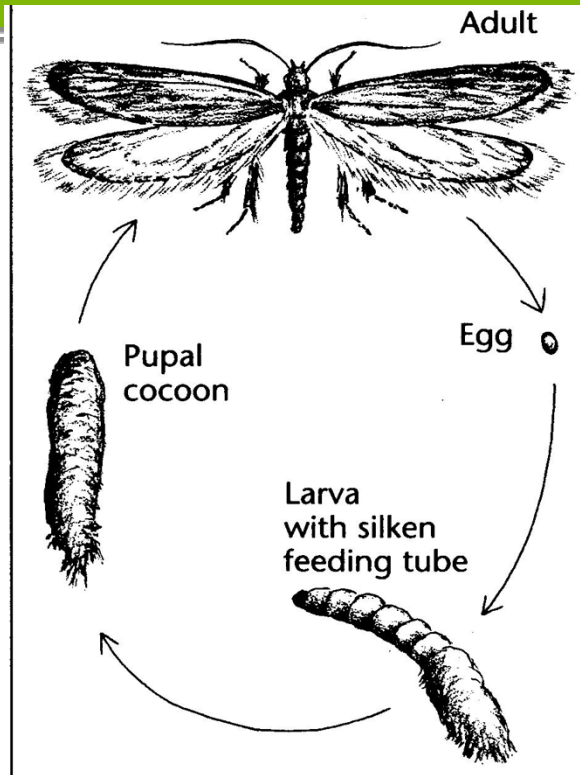
Julia Reckord

- Net backing
- Large diagonal straight stitching, about 1" apart
- She typically used black net which the example does not have



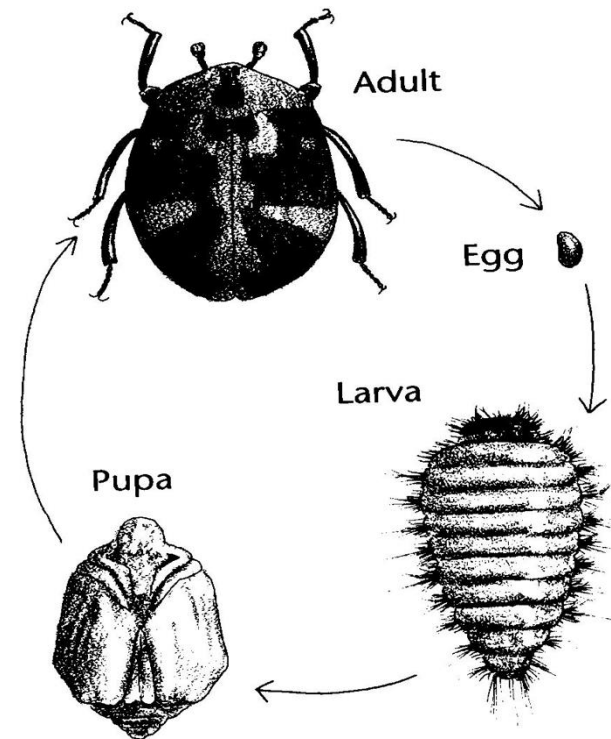
The Life Cycle –

Webbing Clothes Moth



- **Adult** lives 10-28 days
- **Larva** live from 35 days to 2 1/2 years
- **Pupal** cocoon last 8-40 days
- **Larval stage damages textiles.**

Carpet Beetle



- **Adult** lives 20-60 days
- **Larva** live from 60 days to 325 days
- **Pupa** cocoon last 6-24 days
- **Both larva & adult damage textiles.**

Examples of Insect Damage



Moth Balls are Not the Answer

- ❑ Paradichlorobenzene, PDB
- ❑ If they kill pests and other animals, they can harm you
- ❑ The artifact quickly absorbs the volatile chemical and then reemit is for years.
- ❑ A common treatment in museums was:



Vacuuming

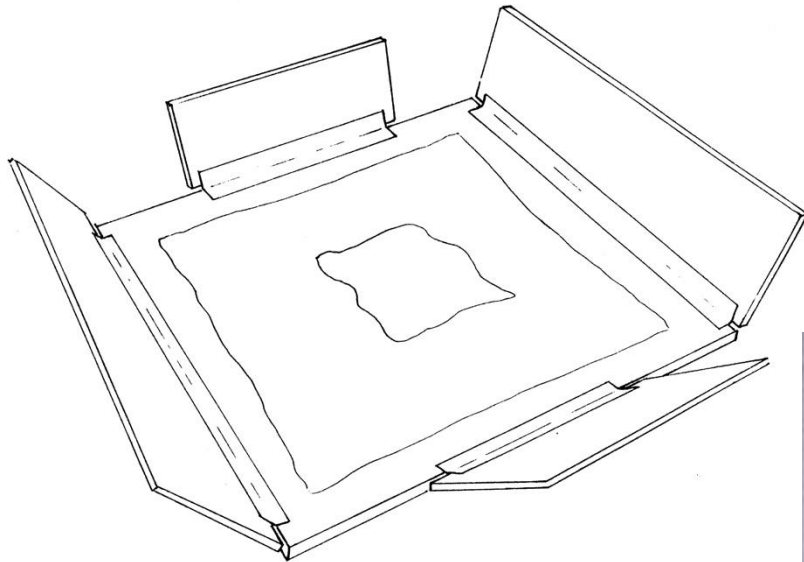
- Upholstery brush
- Small attachments
- Screen
- Optional tools
- Tweezers



- Screen made from Vinyl window screening with cotton binding tape stitched to the edge

STORAGE IDEAS:

Sink Mat



- Good for small to mid-sized textiles
- Several variations that provide support
- Can attach separated elements

https://www.nps.gov/subjects/museums/upload/16-03_508.pdf



STORAGE IDEAS:

Sink Mats

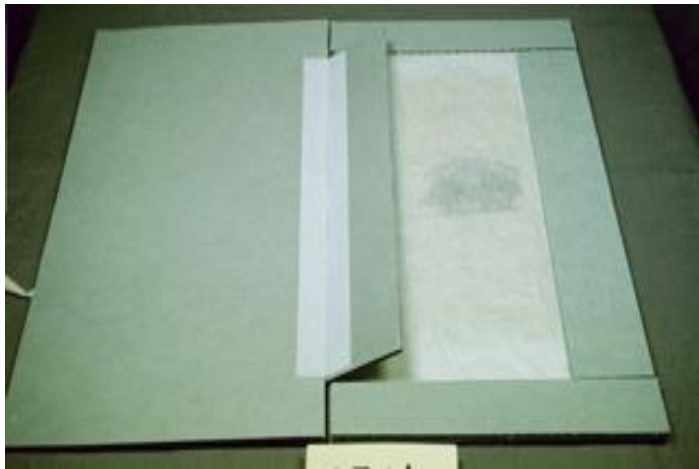


- Several stored flat in a drawer
- Small flags tied to support



STORAGE IDEAS:

Political & Military Ribbons

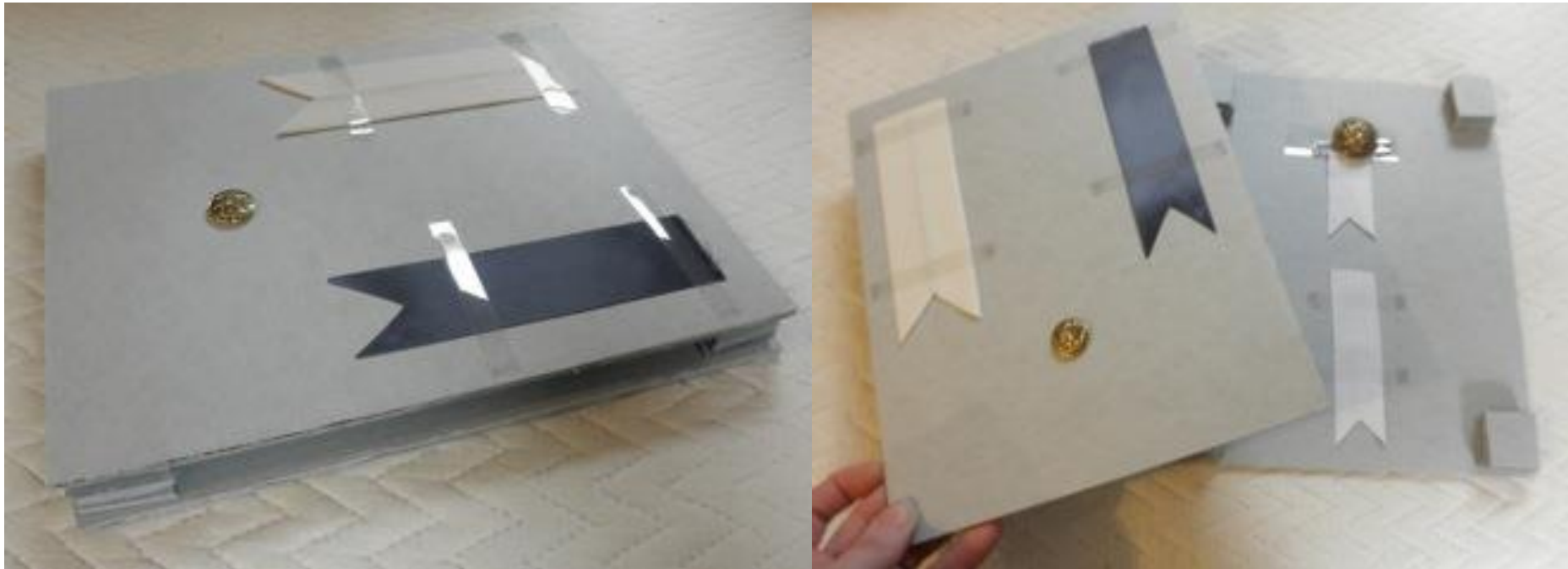


- Individual Collections: Re-house in sink mats
- Large Collections: Secure to boards that can be stacked, with spacers, in boxes or drawers



Flat display

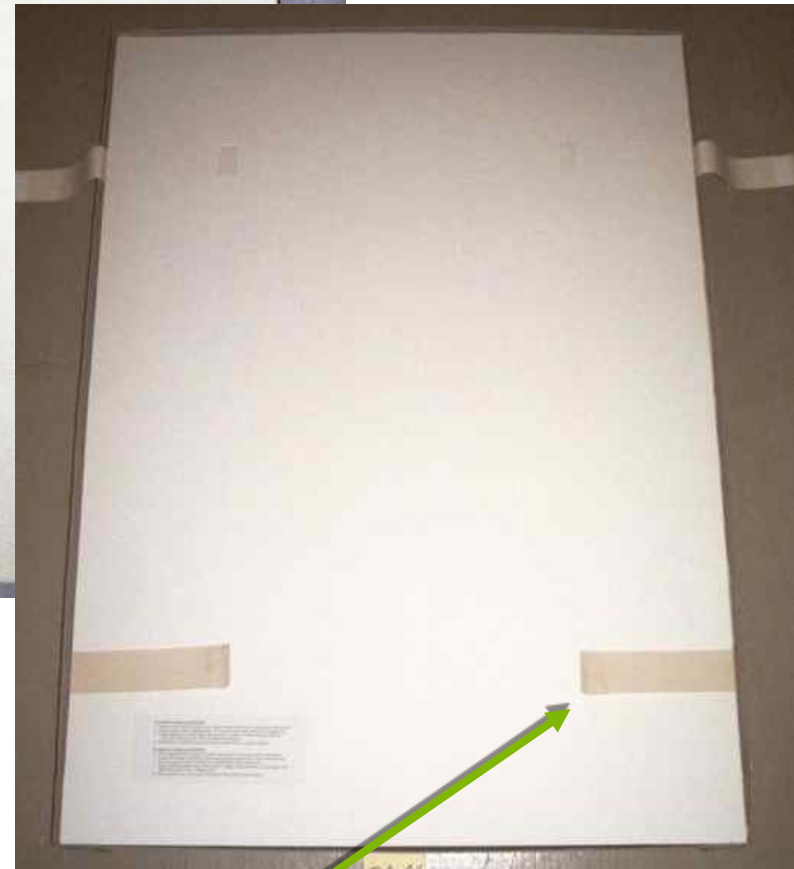
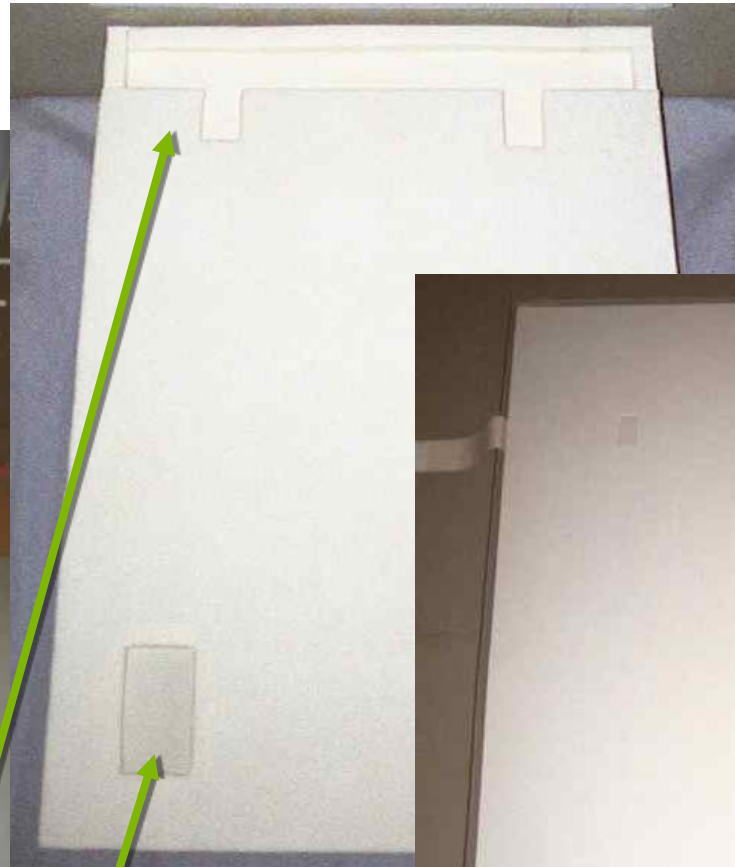
- Display items can be secured with Mylar strips



Banner for Storage/Display



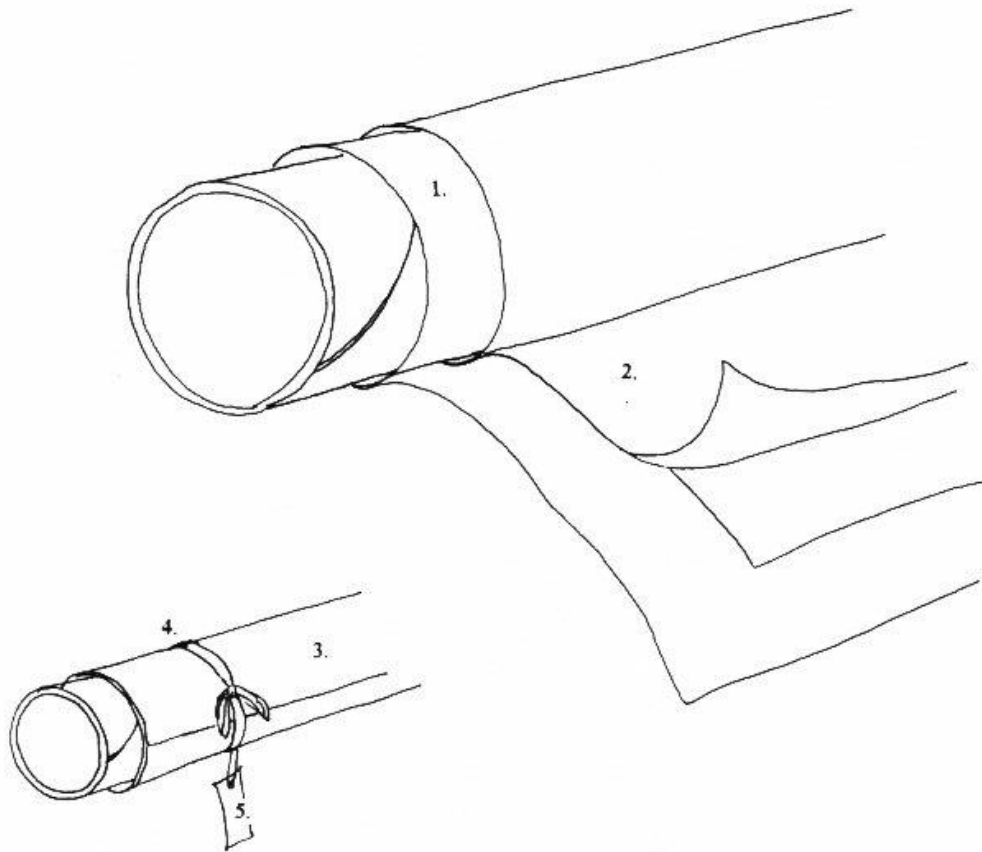
- Reverse side before treatment and the face side after treatment.
- Positioned on an aluminum honeycomb support panel, with secured Velcro taps.



- Recesses for the rod and tassels
- Webbing tabs with Velcro to secure lid to the mount

STORAGE IDEAS:

Rolled



1. Header cloth
2. Textile Artifact / Flag
3. Outer cover
4. Twill tape tie
5. Accession label



https://www.nps.gov/subjects/museums/upload/16-05_508.pdf

Incorrect Rolling - The Warning Signs



Coning: Rolling is off-grain or has been performed with uneven tension

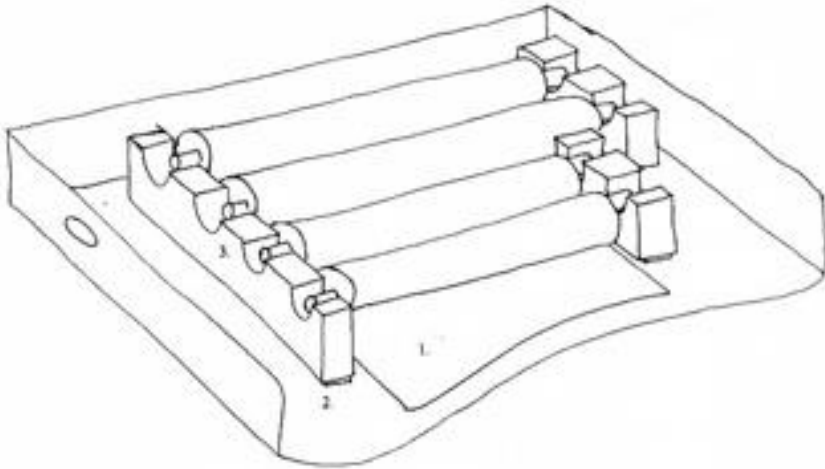
(Note Roller is fatter on right side / more take-up of fabric is occurring on right side / pad out left side with tissue to compensate)



Roller too short: Sides of textile are unsupported. Off-grain distortions and creases are created.

STORAGE IDEAS:

Boxed Rolled Textiles

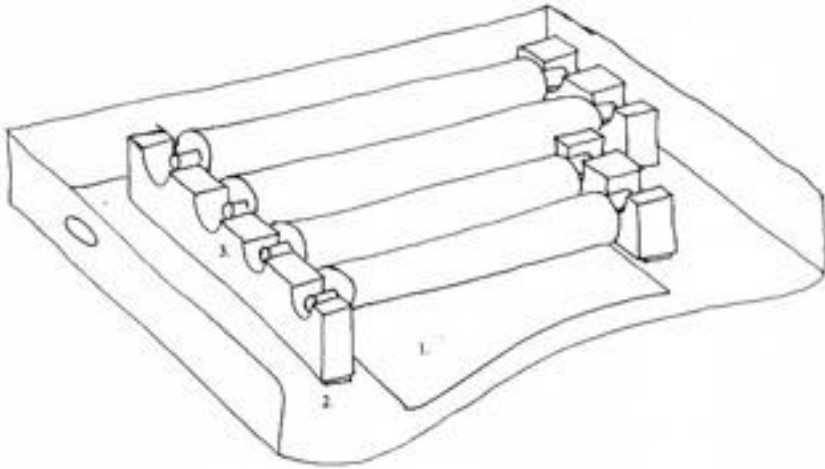


- Suspend the ends of the tube on Ethafoam blocks
- Tubes need to be cut to fit inside box or drawer



STORAGE IDEAS:

Rolled Supports



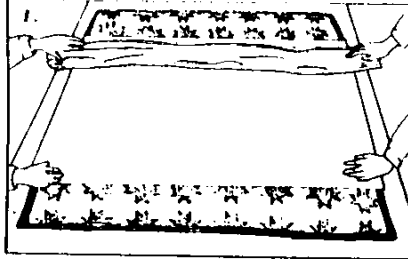
STORAGE IDEAS:

Large Rolled Textiles

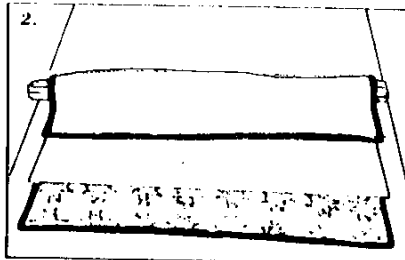


Folding Steps

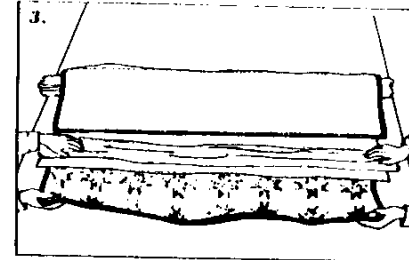
How to Fold and Store a Quilt



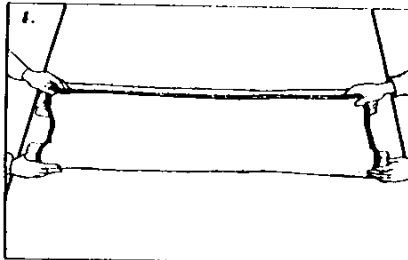
1. Lay the quilt top-up on a clean surface. Place a sheet of acid-free tissue paper on the center of the quilt. Place a roll of crumpled



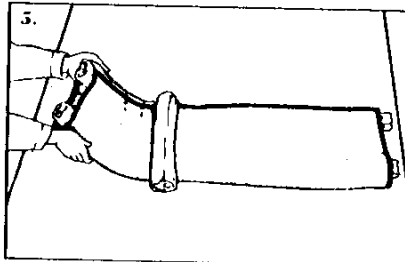
acid-free tissue paper across the top portion of the quilt so that the upper third of the quilt can be folded over the roll. 2. The upper third



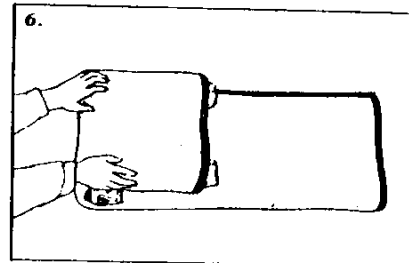
folded over the roll. 3. Place another roll of paper across the quilt, so that the lower third of the quilt can be folded over this roll.



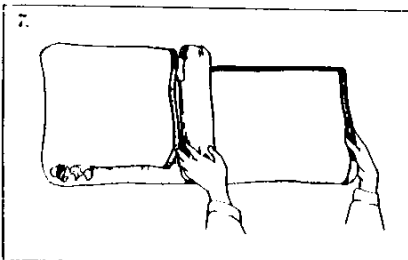
4. Fold the lower third over the roll. 5. Place a shorter roll across the folded quilt, so that



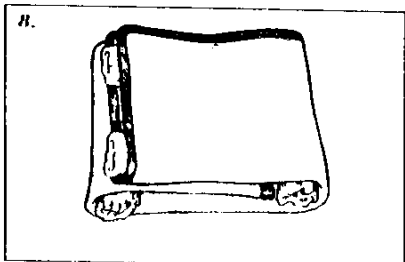
the left side can be folded toward the center.



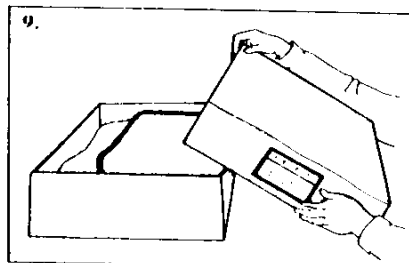
6. Fold the left side toward the center.



7. Place another short roll across the folded quilt, so that the right side can be folded



toward the center. 8. The folded quilt, ready for storage. 9. The folded quilt in an acid-



free box. The box is marked with a label, describing its contents.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY GARY PERKINS FOR THE

Maine State Museum - Flag Collection



- Both display and storage units.
- Rotation of flags within the exhibition location
- Rotation of flags in exhibition and storage



Chautauqua Banner Collection



- Storage room with Metro International shelves.
- Each unit moves with large caster wheels.
- Banners were grouped by sizes.
- Volunteers created covers for the carts and trays.

Chautauqua Banner Collection



- Banners secured to individual handling trays
- Trays made of thick fluted polyethylene
- Trays created with layers of batting and muslin below the banners to create the best surface.



**MAGNETIC MOUNTING SYSTEMS
FOR MUSEUMS
& CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS**



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