

BOUNDARY BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND MEXICO.

MESSAGE

FROM THE

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

TRANSMITTING

Communications from the minister plenipotentiary from Mexico and the Secretary of State, relative to a convention for defining the boundary between the United States and Mexico from the Rio Grande to the Pacific Ocean.

APRIL 21, 1882.—Referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed.

To the Senate and House of Representatives :

I transmit herewith, for the consideration of Congress, a note addressed by the minister plenipotentiary of Mexico to the Secretary of State, proposing the conclusion of a convention between the two countries for defining the boundary between the United States and Mexico from the Rio Grande westward to the Pacific Ocean, by the erection of durable monuments. I also lay before Congress a letter on the same subject with its accompaniment, from the Secretary of War, to whom the proposition was referred by the Secretary of State for the expression of his views thereon.

I deem it important that the boundary line between the two countries, as defined by existing treaties and already once surveyed, should be run anew and defined by suitable permanent monuments. By so doing uncertainty will be prevented as to jurisdiction in criminal and municipal affairs, and questions be averted which may at any time in the near future arise with the growth of population on the border.

Moreover, I conceive that the willing and speedy assent of the government of the United States to the proposal thus to determine the existing stipulated boundary with permanence and precision will be in some sense an assurance to Mexico that the unauthorized suspicion which of late years seems to have gained some credence in that republic that the United States covets and seeks to annex neighboring territory is without foundation. That which the United States seeks, and which the definite settlement of the boundary in the proposed manner will promote, is a confiding and friendly feeling between the two nations, leading to advantageous commerce and closer commercial relations.

I have to suggest that, in accepting this proposal, suitable provision be made for an adequate military force on the frontier to protect the

surveying parties from hostile Indians. The troops so employed will, at the same time, protect the settlers on the border and help to prevent marauding on both sides by the nomadic Indians.

CHESTER A. ARTHUR.

EXECUTIVE MANSION,
Washington, April 18, 1882.

No. 1.

Mr. de Zamacona to Mr. Blaine.

[Translation.]

LEGATION OF MEXICO IN THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, October 28, 1881.

MR. SECRETARY: On the occasion of one of my visits to the Department of State I availed myself of the opportunity to state the wishes of the Mexican Government with regard to the reconstruction of the monuments which mark the boundary line between that republic and the United States. The head of that Department was pleased not only to express views similar to those entertained by the Government of Mexico, but to express a desire that the monuments in question should be constructed in a more solid and durable manner.

I reported this to my government, and have now received instructions to submit to the examination and approval of the Department of State, as I hereby have the honor to do, the inclosed draft of a convention, stating, at the same time, that it contains general ideas only, and that the Government of Mexico is perfectly willing to hear and examine any observations which that of the United States may think proper to make in relation to the matter, either in a counter draft or in verbal discussions.

I have the honor to renew to you, Mr. Secretary, the assurances of my highest consideration.

M. DE ZAMACONA.

A stamp containing the words: "Department of State and of foreign relations: Mexico, August 8, 1881.

The President of the United States of Mexico on the one hand and the President of the United States of America on the other, ardently desiring to put an end to the difficulties arising from the destruction or displacement of some of the monuments which were built for the purpose of marking the boundary line between the two countries, and to avoid such difficulties in future, have thought proper to conclude a convention for the purpose of defining the manner in which the said monuments are to be restored to their proper places and new ones erected, if necessary, to which effect they have appointed as their plenipotentiaries, viz:

The President of the United States of Mexico, ———, and the President of the United States of America, ———,

Who, after exchanging their full powers, which were found to be in good and due form, have agreed upon the following articles:

ARTICLE I.

Each government shall appoint a section consisting of an engineer in chief, an associate, and such number of assistant engineers as it may think proper. The two sections combined shall form "The international boundary commission."

ARTICLE II.

The object of this commission is to restore to their proper places on the [frontier of the]* boundary line, from the Pacific Ocean to the Rio Grande, the monuments which

are to mark said boundary line (which was established by the treaty of February 2, 1848, and by that of December 3, 1853), when those monuments have been destroyed (*sic*), or displaced, and also to erect new monuments on the same line, wherever the chief officers of the two sections shall think proper, and at such points as may be unanimously designated by both. The commission shall take care that the distance between the two [consecutive] † monuments shall never exceed five thousand meters, and this distance may be reduced on those portions of the line which are inhabited.

ARTICLE III.

The commission shall meet, at that point on the Colorado River where the line of Sonora begins, four months after the date of the exchange of the ratifications of this convention, being provided with all things necessary for the work, and shall commence its labors in the direction of the Rio Grande. That division having been finished it shall continue them from the Colorado to the Pacific Ocean.

ARTICLE IV.

All the monuments that shall be set up shall be of cast iron, and shall consist of plates one centimeter in thickness at least, and of the shape and dimensions shown in the accompanying drawing.

ARTICLE V.

The engineers in chief of both sections shall determine, by common consent, what scientific processes are to be adopted for the resetting of the old monuments, and the erection of the new ones, and they shall be responsible for the proper performance of the work. On commencing operations, each one shall report to his government the plan of operations upon which they shall have agreed, and they shall, from time to time, submit reports of the progress made by them in said operations, and, finally, they shall present a full report, accompanied by the necessary drawings, signed by both.

ARTICLE VI.

The expenses of each section shall be defrayed by the government which appointed it; but the cost of the monuments and that of their conveyance to their places of destination shall be equally shared by both governments.

ARTICLE VII.

Whenever the number of the monuments to be set up shall be approximately known, the engineers in chief shall prepare an estimate of their cost, conveyance, and setting up, and when such estimate shall have been approved by both governments the mode of making the payment of the part to be paid by Mexico shall be determined by a special arrangement between the two governments.

ARTICLE VIII.

It being feared that if a time be fixed for the conclusion of the work, it may not be finished when such time arrives, and that it may consequently be necessary to renew this convention, both governments agree to consider it as being in force until the conclusion of said work, provided that such time does not exceed four years and four months from the date of the ratifications.

In testimony whereof, &c.

A copy.

Washington, October 28, 1881.

JOSÉ T. DE CUELLAR, *Secretary*.

[No. 2.]

Mr. Lincoln to Mr. Frelinghuysen.

WAR DEPARTMENT,
Washington, April 11, 1882.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 21st ultimo, covering copies of a note and its inclosures from the Mexican minister at this capital, who submits a proposition on the part

* The words in brackets in the third and fourth lines of article are in the original, but seem wholly superfluous.

† Inserted by translator.

of the Government of Mexico in regard to marking the boundary line between the United States and Mexico from El Paso to the Pacific Ocean.

As requested by you, these papers were duly referred to the Chief of Engineers for his views as to the practicability, duration, and expense of the undertaking, and I now beg to inclose that officer's report on the subject, dated the 8th instant.

The total cost of the work is estimated at \$173,415.

In case that most of the old monuments can be recovered, this estimate, it is stated, would be much reduced. The Chief of Engineers suggests that a reconnaissance should be made with a small party, to determine this before actually commencing the work.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

ROBERT T. LINCOLN,
Secretary of War.

Enclosure—Mr. Wright to Mr. Lincoln.

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF ENGINEERS,
UNITED STATES ARMY,
Washington, D. C., April 5, 1882.

SIR: In reply to the indorsement of March 25 on letter from the honorable Secretary of State asking for a report on the proposition of the Mexican minister in regard to marking the boundary line between the United States and Mexico from El Paso to the Pacific Ocean, I have the honor to report that the length of the line is about 682 miles, and that it will require 223 monuments to mark it as proposed.

Major Emory's report on the original survey of this boundary shows that this line was marked by 52 monuments. The most of these monuments were stone cairns. The cost of marking the line will depend very much on the possibility of finding and identifying the original monuments. This office has no information in regard to the present condition of the monuments, and it can only be ascertained by a reconnaissance along the line.

In order to place the monuments as now proposed, 5,000 meters apart, it will be necessary to retrace the line, and in case the old monuments cannot be recovered it may be necessary to redetermine some of the locations by astronomical work.

The telegraph having been extended to El Paso, Fort Yuma, and San Diego since the original survey of the boundary was made, it will now be possible to determine more exactly the longitude of the ends of the lines forming the boundary between the Pacific Ocean and the one hundred and eleventh meridian of longitude in order to compute the azimuth or direction of these lines. A properly-organized commission, with one astronomical party and one surveying party, would require from the estimate annexed an expenditure of about \$70,000 yearly. It is probable that the whole field work could be finished in two years, and that another year would be required to complete the maps and records of the survey. The total cost of the work is estimated at \$173,415.

In case that the most of the old monuments can be recovered, the cost of this work should be very much less than this estimate. A reconnaissance should be made with a small party to determine this before actually commencing the work.

A drawing showing the form of iron monuments used on the northern boundary of the United States is submitted herewith. This monument would weigh about 285 pounds. That proposed by the Mexican minister weighs 880 pounds, and to transport such monuments across the sandy desert east of the Colorado, where no water or grass is found for 45 miles, would involve considerable labor and expense. It should also be noted that this whole desert is hardly worth the cost of such a monument, and it may be that it is not at present necessary to mark this part of the line by erecting on it monuments so near together as proposed. On other parts of the line stone can be found which will better answer the purpose of erecting monuments, and the expense will be much less.

Lieutenant Michler reports that a cast-iron monument placed on the line between California and Mexico was broken into a thousand pieces by the Indians. Such monuments are not so permanent as the stone cairns. Where stone cannot be found within a reasonable distance, the smaller form of iron monument used on the northern boundary might be adopted. The cost of this would be about \$15 for each monument instead of \$44, and the cost for transportation would be only one-third that required for the larger iron monuments.

In case that the retracing of this boundary line is confided to officers of the Corps of Engineers the estimate submitted should be modified by deducting the amount estimated for chief astronomer and two assistants, \$16,000.

Estimates of probable cost of a commission for surveying and marking the boundaries between the United States and Mexico from El Paso to the Pacific Ocean.

Two parties, one astronomical and one surveying.

ORGANIZATION.

	One year.
1 commissioner.....	\$4,000
1 secretary.....	2,000
1 chief astronomer and surveyor.....	4,000
1 surgeon.....	2,000
2 assistants at \$2,000.....	4,000
4 subassistants at \$1,800.....	7,200
16 men at \$60 per month.....	11,520
2 cooks at \$60 per month.....	1,440
4 teamsters at \$60 per month.....	2,880
2 mess men at \$50 per month.....	1,200
40 pack mules or 6 wagons and 30 mules.....	8,000
34 persons, 1,020 rations per month, at 50 cents.....	6,120
30 to 40 mules, forage (cannot be estimated), say.....	5,000
Camp equipage.....	2,000
Instruments (depends on number on hand).....	3,000
Transportation and miscellaneous.....	5,000
	<hr/>
	69,360
	<hr/>
2 years, at \$70,000.....	140,000
Office work.....	10,000
Proposed by Mexican minister:	
223 iron monuments, 880 pounds each, at 5 cents per pound, \$44 each....	9,812
Transportation on same, at \$61.....	13,603
	<hr/>
Total.....	\$173,415

The letter from the Secretary of State with inclosure is herewith returned.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

H. G. WRIGHT,

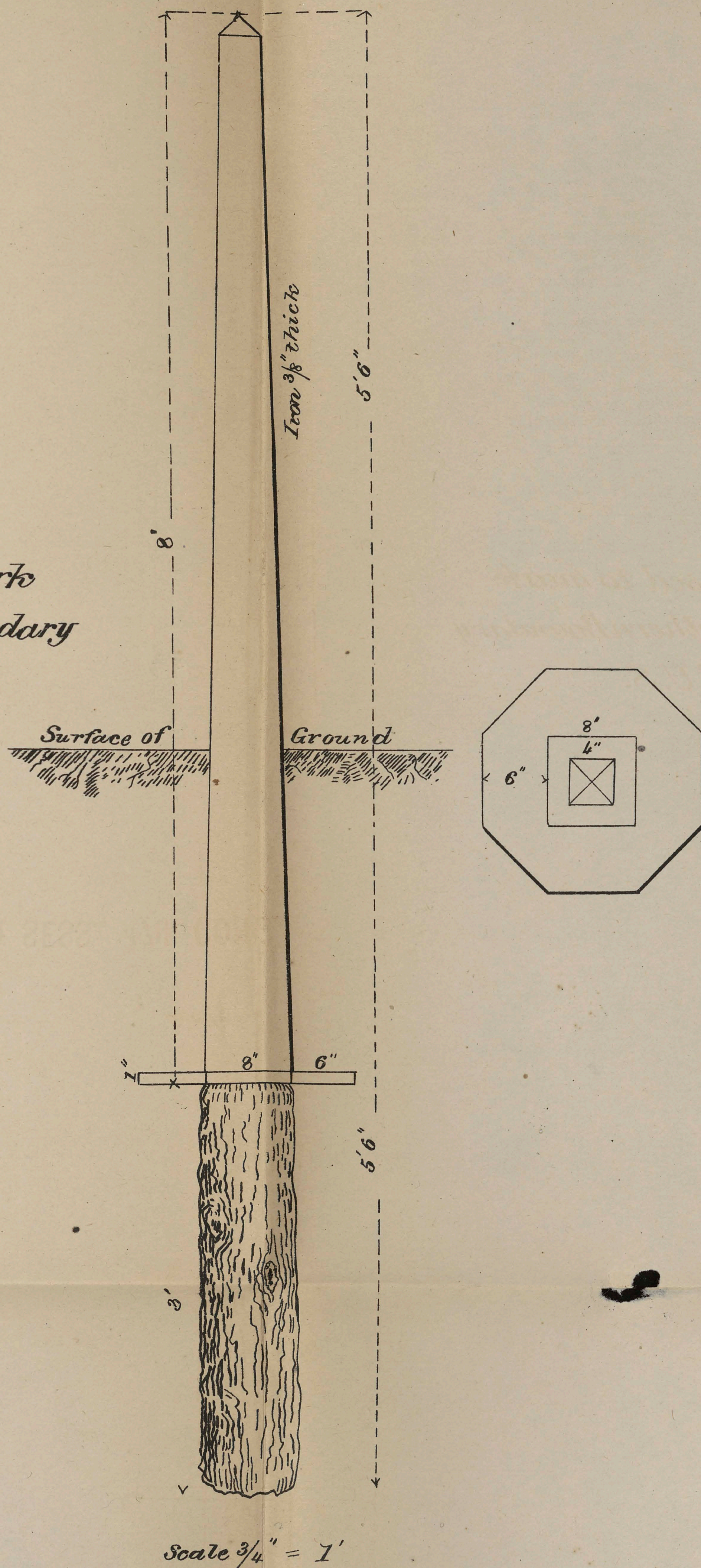
Chief of Engineers, Brig. and Bvt. Maj. Gen.

Hon. ROBERT T. LINCOLN,
Secretary of War.

H. Ex. 180—2

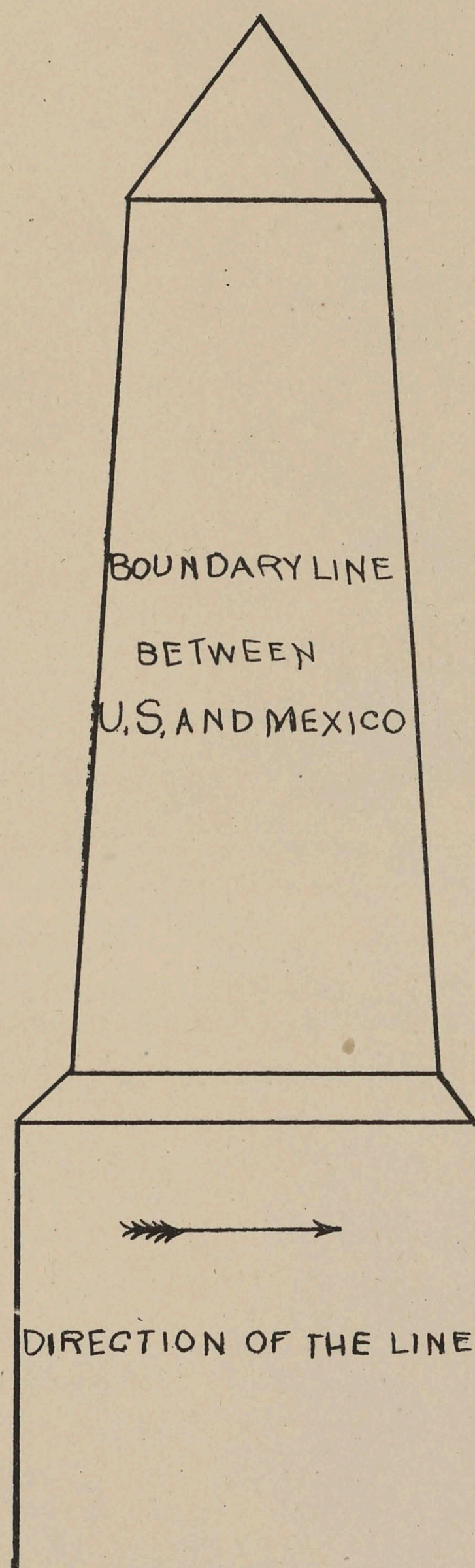


*Monument used to mark
N. E. and Northern Boundary
of U.S.*



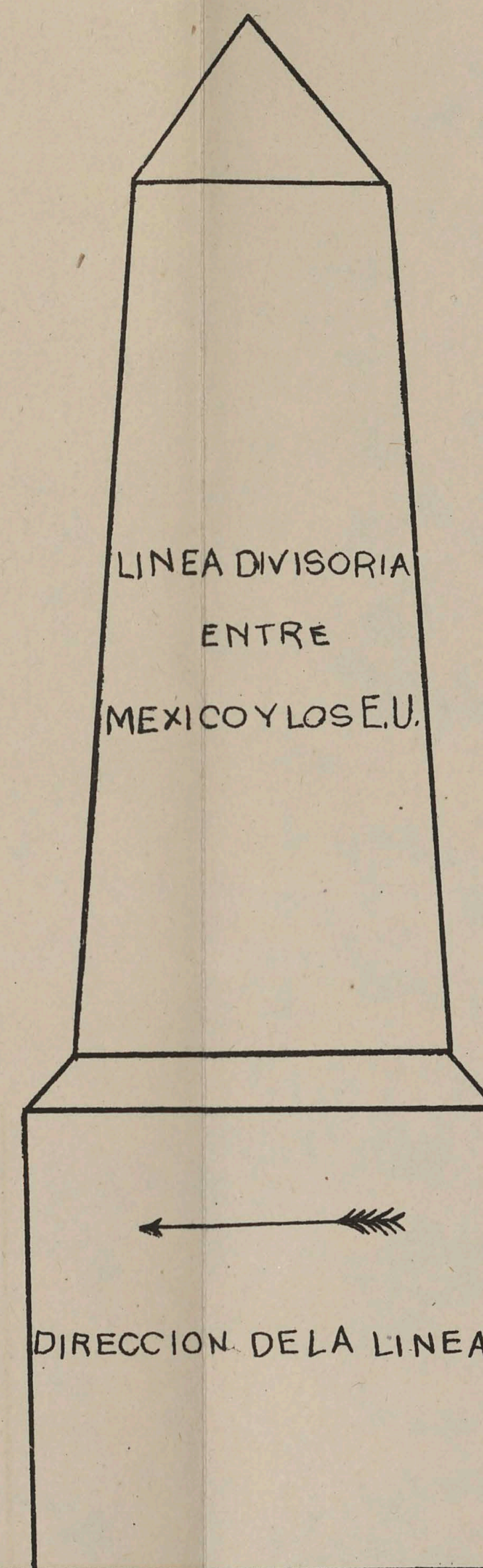
Scale $\frac{3}{4}$ " = 1'

PROYECTO DE MONUMENTOS DE FIERRO PARA LA LINEA DIVISORIA
ENTRE
MEXICO Y LOS E.U.
1881.



Frente que mira a los E.U.

Peso del Monumento, 405 Kilogramos u 880 libras.



Frente que mira a México.

Escala 0^m05 = 1 metro.

