



Ohio Adjutant General's Department

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For Immediate Release

Ohio Civil War flag now part of Adjutant General's Dept. collection

COLUMBUS, Ohio — The flag of the 89th Ohio Volunteer Infantry (OVI) Regiment, carried during the American Civil War, was transferred to the Adjutant General's Battle Flag Collection during a Jan. 17 ceremony hosted by the Ohio Historical Society. The flag had been in the possession of the Ohio Society Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR).

"The battle flags are one of the single most important collections of Ohio military history this state holds," said Maj. Gen. Deborah A. Ashenurst, Ohio adjutant general. "Nothing tells the story of our units like those banners, and to be able to preserve them for future generations will ensure the sacrifice our Soldiers have made in service to their country will not be forgotten."

The 89th OVI was organized in August 1862 with men from Brown, Clermont, Highland and Ross counties. It fought primarily in the western theater and lost severely at the Battle of Chickamauga. Future Ohio Gov. Joseph Foraker served in the regiment.

The flag, known as the regimental colors, was purchased by the ladies of Brown County and sent to the regiment as a replacement for their flags that were captured at Chickamauga. During the Atlanta campaign in 1864, the flag was captured by Confederate cavalry when one of the sutler wagons carrying the flag broke down on a march. After the war, William Barnes, a veteran of Company C and a Williamsburg, Ohio, native, discovered the flag was in possession of a Confederate cavalry officer, J.C. Duncan of Talladega, Ala. Barnes recovered the flag from Duncan on June 30, 1880, without incident.

The flag remained in Barnes' family until it was donated to the Ohio Society DAR in 2001 for display at the Camp Dennison Ohio Civil War Museum near Cincinnati, which is operated by the group.

"We are delighted to have the flag in its rightful home. It has been worrisome knowing that we couldn't properly conserve it, yet it took several years to discover where that home was," said Sandra McCann, state regent for the Ohio Society DAR.

The 6-by-6-foot blue silk flag will be placed carefully into a custom-made textile cabinet at the Ohio History Center in Columbus. Curators there will take detailed photographs and examine the flag thoroughly to determine if it is a candidate for conservation. Flags of this size can cost up to \$30,000 to be properly conserved.

While the flags are owned by The Adjutant General's Department, the Ohio Historical Society maintains and cares for the collection.

"We are lucky to have the great partners at the Ohio Historical Society who care for these treasures on a day to day basis. Their dedicated work will ensure these flags remain for the citizens of Ohio for another 150 years," Ashenhurst said.

The Adjutant General's Battle Flag Collection contains 554 flags, three-quarters of which are from the Civil War. Displayed in the Ohio Statehouse rotunda for many years, the collection has been under the care of the Ohio Historical Society since the 1970s. In addition, the Ohio Army National Guard Historical Collections contains 328 flags, making the 882 total flags, carried by Ohio units from the Mexican War through the Global War on Terrorism, one of the largest collections in the country.

For more information on the collection visit, <http://ohsweb.ohiohistory.org/exhibits/fftc/>.

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