

PRESERVING PENNSYLVANIA'S HISTORIC

CIVIL WAR

BATTLE FLAGS



Presented by the Pennsylvania Capitol Preservation Committee



"THESE TORN AND TATTERED
BATTLE-RENT EMBLEMS OF NATIONAL PRIDE
NEED NO EULOGY." Their history is written in
the blood of Pennsylvania's loyal sons who
fought and died for the preservation of a
nation. Therefore, let them be preserved, as
a tribute to our fallen heroes, and as an ever-
living inspiration of loyalty and patriotism to
the generations that follow.

Senator Franklin Martin, chairman of the Flag Transfer Commission, on Flag Day 1914.





Committee Members

Patty Kim, Representative
Chair

John R. Bowie, Governor's Appointee
Vice Chair

Thomas B. Darr, Supreme Court Appointee
Secretary

Kyle J. Mullins, Representative
Treasurer

Suzanna Barucco, Governor's Appointee

Carolyn T. Comitta
Senator

Andrea B. Lowery
Historical and Museum
Commission
Executive Director

Mary DeNadai
Governor's Appointee

John DiSanto
Senator

Reggie McNeil
Department of General Services
Secretary

Timothy P. Kearney
Senator

Kim L. Ward
Senator

Dawn W. Keefer
Representative

Parke Wentling
Representative

Administrative Staff

David L. Craig, Executive Director

Christopher R. Ellis, Deputy Director

Hayley L. Moyer, Retail/Office Administrator

Tara A. Pyle, Project Assistant

Jason L. Wilson, Historian

Carla E. Wright, Financial Director/Personnel Supervisor



Table of Contents

Introduction and message from the Chair.....	1
About the Collection and Types of Colors.....	3
The “Battle Above the Clouds”–29th PA.....	7
Into the Peach Orchard–141st PA.....	9
Post-War History	11
First Flag Over Sumter–52nd PA	17
The Old 83rd–83rd PA.....	21
The “Schoolteachers’ Regiment” –151st PA.....	23
For the Duration–11th PA.....	25
“Are the Colors Safe”–61st PA.....	29
Spanish-American War Flags.....	35
10th Pennsylvania Infantry:	
Pennsylvania and the Spanish Line, July 31, 1898.....	37
Conservation and Research.....	39
Storage Facility & Public Tours	41
A New Education Center.....	43



"...PAST MEMORIES AND PRESENT troubles combine to increase and make more intense our devotion to the national flag. We witness today, and will witness with uplifted hands and hearts unchanged, that perfidy and rebellion at home, either alone, or aided by habitual arrogance and pretension abroad, **SHALL SERVE ONLY TO GATHER US MORE CLOSELY AROUND THE STANDARD OF OUR COUNTRY.** When the sky is clear, and the winds are still, it leans upon its staff in patriarchal and peaceful repose – an object of calm and contented love. But when it trembles in the storm, **a nation assembles at its silent call**; battalions people every hill; the mighty hosts of the mountains hasten to the field; squadrons sweep over every plain; and sovereign states, sensible that loyalty is the sign of the independence, form themselves into one solid squadron for its defense... **But when this battle of national existence is fought and won, as fought and won it will be, and these two standards shall reappear, within the gates of peace, as in God's good providence they may, not a star less bright than now, nor any stripe stained with dark dishonor, though the blood of many sons may crimson every inch of white, I beg you, on that day, to REMEMBER and believe, that not accident, but design, and THE BRAVE PURPOSE OF THESE BATTALIONS IS FULFILLED IN THAT FUTURE OF THE FLAG."**

*From a speech by Colonel Samuel Black,
commander of the 62nd Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry, on December 21, 1861.*

INTRODUCTION AND MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

The Pennsylvania Capitol Preservation Committee was created by the General Assembly in 1982 and tasked by law with directing programs to conserve, preserve, and restore the Pennsylvania Capitol and Capitol Complex, with specific focus on preserving and maintaining its historic artifacts, architecture, and artwork for future generations.

One of the Committee's first large-scale projects was creating a project to restore some 377 of the Commonwealth's original Civil War battle flags and 22 Spanish-American war flags, which had been housed in several areas and were located in the Capitol's main rotunda cases since 1914. Concern over the fragile condition of the colors and a lack of historic documentation of the collection, prompted the establishment of the "Save the Flags" project. The work included physical treatment and documentation of the flags, as well as research into their historical significance. The raising and donation of private funds encouraged public participation in supporting the preservation of this important one-of-a-kind collection. With the successful conclusion of the flag project, other states have followed Pennsylvania's lead and taken similar actions to conserve their own flag collections.

Almost a decade ago the committee, at the urging of the Department of General Services, began to explore a more suitable "permanent" home for the collection and to update/renovate that location into a state-of-the-art facility in which to move, house, and exhibit the collection. In 2020 all 403 flags were moved to the new Pennsylvania Civil War Battle Flag Education Center. This facility provides upgraded security, temperature and humidity controls, as well as fire suppression for the collection. A separate innovative and interactive Civil War exhibit, focusing on Pennsylvania's Civil War regiments, soldiers, and color-bearers, was opened in October of 2023. This new exhibit will further highlight and raise interest in the Commonwealth's historic battle flag collection.

Overall, these historic colors provide a window into the horrendous nature of Civil War combat. They represent over 340,000 men from the Commonwealth who fought to preserve the Union, 32,000 of whom did not return home. The Capitol Preservation Committee is proud to serve as steward of this historic collection of battle flags and cherishes the honor of their continued preservation.

Patty Kim, Chair
David Craig, Executive Director
Jason Wilson, Historian



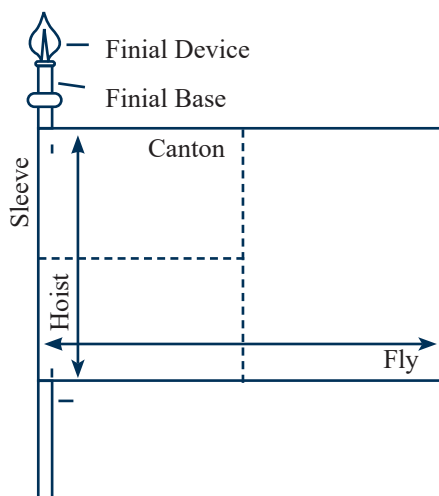
ABOUT THE COLLECTION

"The **Union** forever, Hurrah! boys, hurrah! Down with the traitors, Up with the stars; While we **rally** round the flag, boys, Rally once again, Shouting the battle cry of **Freedom**."

Chorus to the song, Battle Cry of Freedom by George F. Root

FLAG TYPES

With Pennsylvania's commitment to the Union war effort, Governor Andrew Curtin planned to supply every Commonwealth regiment with properly identified battle flags. Two Philadelphia companies, Horstmann Brothers and Evans & Hassall were contracted by the state to supply the regiments with the colors. The flags were made of silk with a combination of machine and hand-sewn detailing that evidenced the pride of the manufacturers. The Infantry and Artillery flags were very large, most usually seventy-two inches square, whereas cavalry standards were smaller, no larger than forty by forty-six inches. Infantry and artillery units were issued three different types of flags – the state color – provided by the Commonwealth – and sometimes a national or regimental color.



The state color consisted of thirteen alternating red and white stripes with the Pennsylvania state seal in the canton. The national color also had thirteen red and white stripes, as well as a star pattern in the canton. The pattern and number of stars varied by the year and location of the flag's production. The regimental color displayed a Federal eagle centered on a blue background. Artillery units' regimental colors, however, featured a crossed red cannon design with a gold background. Cavalry units were generally issued a state standard, national standard, and several swallow-tailed guidons. Both standards

were smaller than infantry-issued colors to enable them to be easily carried on horseback. The state standard consisted of the Pennsylvania coat-of-arms centered on a blue background, and the national standards were similar with the exception of the Federal eagle design.

Regimental units usually carried a combination of flags that were both state-issued and acquired privately by raising money within the unit or as a gift from the soldiers' patriotic hometowns. When flags became damaged the men repaired the flag and/or staff themselves by any means available. Sometimes, however, the colors had become so war-torn, a replacement color was necessary.





FLAGS IN BATTLE

The flag was an essential part of nineteenth century warfare and served many purposes. For one, they served a crucial role on the field of battle—a visual reference for the men of the regiment's location amidst the confusion of battle. In battle, the color-guards remained several feet back from the firing line to avoid being shot by their own men and to protect the flag. Small flank markers or general guide markers were also often carried at both flanks of the regiments. The lieutenants and sergeants positioned themselves behind the color-guards and the rest of the men to discourage potential deserters.

Secondly, the flags were used to rally the men during battle. Many victories would have been lost if not for a brave color-bearer encouraging the men to fight on, while gripping the precious icon. To be appointed as a color-bearer was a great honor despite the danger brought by carrying the colors and the high mortality rates among bearers.





The loss of a flag during battle represented the ultimate disgrace to a regiment, but to attain one from the enemy was the ultimate honor. Despite the imminent danger of carrying the colors, soldiers would risk their lives to prevent the color's capture and lay down their arms to rescue the color from a fallen comrade.



Flags were a symbolic testament of the regiment's courage and valor. As such, many flags were adorned with battle honors either painted directly onto the stripes, or on supplementary battle ribbons or streamers attached to the staff. At the end of the war, some colors were so tattered and worn, soldiers commissioned



the creation of new flags with honors to carry in the 1865 Grand Review and subsequent GAR parades.



29th PA

THE BATTLE ABOVE THE CLOUDS



The 29th Pennsylvania was recruited in Philadelphia and mustered into service in July 1861. After training, the 29th was sent to Harper's Ferry, Virginia and spent the winter of 1861-62 at Pleasant Valley, Maryland. They received their first state color in October of 1861 while on duty with General Nathaniel Bank's troops near Winchester. At the first battle of Winchester in May of 1862, more than 100 men of the regiment were captured including Colonel John K. Murphy. The remainder of the regiment participated in the Second Manassas campaign before serving as provost guards at Williamsport, Maryland and then protecting Chambersburg during the Antietam campaign. The regiment was then assigned to the Twelfth Army Corps and wintered near Stafford Court House, Virginia. During this time the state color was sent back to Evans and Hassall in Philadelphia to have the battle honor "Shenandoah Valley, Virginia" lettered on it. The Twelfth Corps took part in the Chancellorsville campaign in May of 1863, and though the corps lost heavily, the 29th lost only twenty-one men. At Gettysburg, the 29th was part of the heavy fighting on Culp's Hill on the morning of July 3rd.

Following the rebel retreat from Gettysburg, the 29th was sent to the western theater as part of the reinforcements sent to relieve the siege of Chattanooga. The 29th fought at Wauhatchie



on October 28th, 1863, delaying General Longstreet's attack long enough for General Geary to form a line of defense. On November 24th, General Hooker's men opened the attack on the Confederate force occupying Lookout Mountain. The 29th received the honor of leading the advance against the enemy. The 29th mounted the assault up the 45-degree slope which was cut by numerous gullies and ravines. Colonel William Rickards led his men up the ascent along with the 8th Kentucky and 111th Pennsylvania to see who would be first to the summit in what became known as "The Battle Above the Clouds." After climbing almost three miles members of the 29th reached the summit and unfurled the state color signifying that Lookout Mountain, the key to Chattanooga, had fallen to General Geary's "White Star" division. There are indications that the regiment may also have carried their regimental color which is stenciled with the lettering "First Flag on Lookout Mountain." Two days later the 29th unsuccessfully assaulted the Confederate retreat at Ringgold, Georgia.

During the winter furlough the first state color was sent home in favor of a new replacement which was sent to Colonel Rickards. The regiment left Philadelphia for the front in March of 1864. The 29th participated in the Atlanta Campaign losing sixty men killed or wounded at New Hope Church. The regiment fought at Pine Knob and Peach Tree Creek on July 20, 1864, and then settled into the siege of Atlanta, taking the city with the rest of the army on September 2, 1864. The 29th participated in Sherman's March to the Sea, garrisoning the city of Savannah before taking part in the Carolina Campaign and General Johnston's surrender. The regiment returned to Alexandria and was mustered out of service in July of 1865. The second state color was left at Philadelphia's Camp Cadwalader and returned at the July 4, 1866 ceremony.



141st PA

INTO THE PEACH ORCHARD

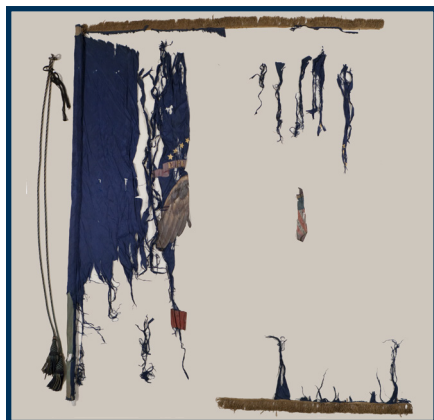


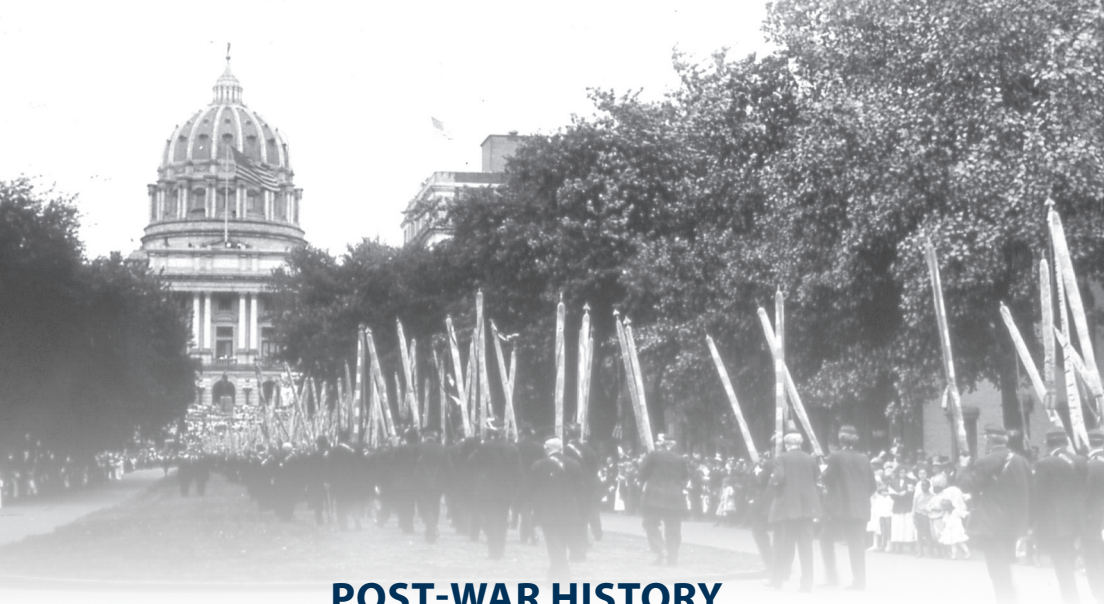
The 141st was recruited from the far northeastern counties of Bradford, Susquehanna, and Wayne in August 1862 and formed at Harrisburg's Camp Curtin later that month. The regiment moved to Washington, DC and took up picket duty near Poolesville, Maryland. Colonel Samuel B. Thomas presented the regiment with their colors on October 23rd, 1862. The regiment rejoined the main army and saw only light action during the battle of Fredericksburg before going into winter quarters at Falmouth. In May of 1863 the 141st fought at Chancellorsville and sustained over 50 percent casualties. The entire color-guard was felled by enemy bullets. Sergeant George C. Beardsley, suffering from a severe wound to the thigh, held onto the flag until he fell. Captain Abraham J. Swart, commanding the color company grabbed the flag and was instantly killed. Major Israel P. Spaulding had grabbed the flag was swiftly superseded by Colonel Henry J. Madill, who having seen the flag fall twice, declared that "if it went down a third time he would go with it." Madill carried the color as his regiment retired.



The 141st next fought at Gettysburg. On July 2, at the Peach Orchard the men helped to repel Kershaw's South Carolinians attack on Federal batteries before Barksdale's Mississippi troops forced them back. As the fight reached crescendo, the entire color-guard was again killed or wounded. Of 209 present for duty, 149 were killed, wounded, or missing in action. Private John J. Stockholm of Company H recalled, "I picked up the State Colors when the second man was shot. Just as I raised it, while it was gathering in my hands, a musket ball cut about half of the staff away, made a line of holes the length of the flag and went through my hat rim." Following the horrendous losses at Gettysburg the regiment took part in the Bristoe Station and Mine Run campaigns before wintering at Brandy Station.

Over the winter months the regiment received much needed reinforcements. The men next fought at the Wilderness, Spotsylvania, North Anna, and Cold Harbor, where they were fortunate to receive few casualties. Taking part in the initial assault at Petersburg on June 18th, the regiment engaged the enemy twice at Deep Bottom, followed by Poplar Springs Church and the Boydton Plank Road. During the Appomattox Campaign the 141st fought at Saylor's Creek and Farmville. Following Lee's surrender, the men returned to Washington, taking part in the Grand Review on May 23rd before mustering out on May 28, 1865.





POST-WAR HISTORY OF THE COLLECTION



Independence Day 1866

Upon mustering out or after receiving a replacement, no specific provisions were established for the receipt and care of the battle flags. As such, some flags were left in Harrisburg, Philadelphia, or Pittsburgh within GAR posts while others were taken into private collections. On June 13, 1865, the War Department ordered the chief mustering officers to turn over all colors in their possession to the governors of the individual states. However, Pennsylvania's Civil War flags were already scattered across the state. The few flags that were already in the state's collection were not properly cared for, and many of the veterans in possession of flags were not yet willing to return the colors. By the end of 1865 it was realized that proper care for the flags was necessary, and the government-issued colors were to be formally returned to state care in a ceremony on Independence Day 1866 at Philadelphia's Independence Hall.

Adjutant General A.L. Russell compiled a list of absent flags, researched the possible location of the colors, and wrote letters requesting them to be officially returned to state care. In the meantime, the city of Philadelphia and state of Pennsylvania worked hard to organize a grand parade and memorable



ceremony. Major General Winfield S. Hancock was appointed as grand marshal of the parade. Children of the Commonwealth who were attending special schools established for war orphans were also invited to participate and won the hearts of a sympathetic public. General Meade also participated and received the loudest applause as the “Hero of Gettysburg.”

At the parade’s end, General Meade stood in front of Independence Hall and officially returned the colors to Governor Curtin with these words:

Sir, of all the honors that have been showered upon me for the humble services which it has been in my power to render to my country, none have been so grateful to me, and of none am I so proud, as being on this occasion the representative of these hardy and noble men who stand before you. . . . This war is over; peace has returned to bless our happy land. By the concurrent action of the Legislature, it has been determined that you should receive on this day, sacred to the memory of liberty, these battle-stained banners, that have passed through their fiery ordeals. In the name of the soldiers of Pennsylvania, I present to you these banners, which were received from the State, and which were borne through the war with honor and credit, and of which we, as soldiers, are justly proud. Receive them, sir, as mementoes of the prowess and deeds of valor of the noble sons of Pennsylvania. (This version taken from the Philadelphia Press, July 5, 1866.)

Governor Curtin responded by honoring the bravery and heroism of Pennsylvania’s veterans. “A Commonwealth may exist without cherishing her material wealth, but no Commonwealth can worthily, or should exist, which does not cherish, as the joy of life, the heroic valor of its children.”² Speeches and fireworks thus concluded the official transfer of possession of the state’s colors. At the time the flag collection totaled 270 colors.



1866-1914

Initially, the collected flags were stored in the old state armory in capitol park. It was not until six years later when action was taken to place the flags on proper display within the capitol building. One year later, the "Battle Flag Room" was completed on the second floor of the South Executive Building, opposite the Adjutant-General's office. The flags were installed unfurled, and in an upright position. From 1873–1893 more colors and other civil war artifacts were given to the state, and additional room was needed to house the collection. Therefore, the collection was moved to the newly constructed Executive, Library, and Museum Building (re-named the Speaker Matthew J. Ryan Legislative Office Building in 1999) and displayed in a new flag room directly at the head of the main stairs. The banners were placed in four long glass cases.



FLAG DAY 1914

On February 28, 1905, Congress approved a joint resolution to return all captured battle flags to their respective states. Pennsylvania received eleven more colors, which led to further crowding in the old cases located in the Executive, Library, and Museum Building. In 1906 the new Capitol building was completed and included niches on the main floor of the rotunda designed to contain decorative statuary. Adjutant-General Thomas J. Stewart suggested those niches be used to display the state's battle flags of the Civil and Spanish-American War. In 1913 Governor John K. Tener authorized the establishment of a commission to arrange for the transfer of the flags to the Capitol rotunda.

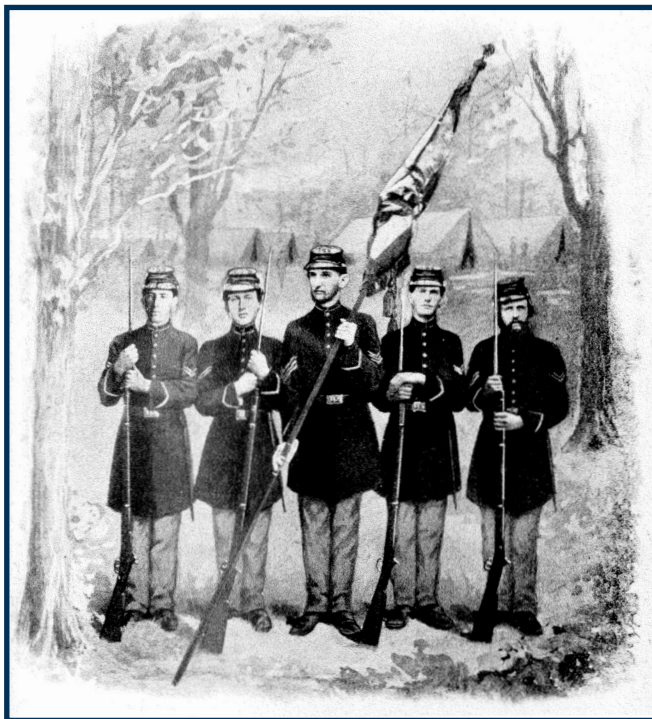
The ceremony occurred on Flag Day 1914. Each flag was encased in a silk chiffon sleeve because as early as 1914 the flags had begun to crumble with age. The aged Civil War veterans marched from the steps of the Museum Building down Fourth Street, to Market, up Front Street, and then up State Street into the Capitol rotunda. Many of the flag-bearers in the 1914 parade were the same who bore them in the 1866 parade.



1914-1985

The glass cases were designed to be air-tight to preserve the remnants of the Civil War colors, but deterioration continued. In fact, in 1929 Governor John S. Fisher vetoed a bill for the preservation of Pennsylvania's flags of the Civil War, Spanish-American War, and World War. In 1939, a brief investigation did prove the cases were not as airtight as planned and the flags appeared to be disintegrating with age. However, nothing further was done.





*A newspaper printed during the Civil War
honors members of the Color Guard that had recently been killed in battle.*

In 1981 re-enactors of Company A of the 87th Pennsylvania showed interest in having the battle flag of the 87th taken out of its case and conserved. On August 26, 1981, Case Number Two was opened, and the flag of the 87th was removed for conservation and participation in the Capitol's 75th Anniversary celebration.

The conservation effort of the 87th's color increased public attention to the collection and served as the impetus for the Capitol Preservation Committee to begin the preservation of all of Pennsylvania's Civil and Spanish-American War colors. The Committee launched the "Save the Flags" campaign, raising money for documentation, conservation, and research on the collection. In 1984 construction of a facility to conserve and house the colors was begun. From mid-1984 through 1985 the six glass cases in the rotunda were opened one by one and the colors were taken to their new location.

52nd PA

FIRST FLAG OVER SUMTER



The 52nd Pennsylvania was organized at Harrisburg's Camp Curtin in October 1861 and largely recruited from the northeastern part of the Commonwealth. Governor Andrew G. Curtin, who took great pride in hand-delivering colors to as many of Pennsylvania's troops as possible, presented the colors to the 51st, 52nd, and 53rd Pennsylvania regiments at a ceremony at Camp Curtin on November 5, 1861. On November 8, the 52nd left via train for Washington and went into winter camp with Brigadier General Silas Casey's division of the 4th Corps. In the spring of 1862, the regiment participated in the siege of Yorktown and pursuit of the fleeing Confederates. Some of the regiment's first casualties were mines or "torpedoes" planted in the road by the fleeing rebels. The 52nd's only major battle occurred on May 31 and June 1st, 1862, at the Battle of Fair Oaks. General Casey's division attacked the rebel position just west of Seven Pines but was forced back by an overwhelming counterattack. The 52nd Pennsylvania lost 119 men in this engagement. Sergeant Henry A. Mott, carrying the state colors, made it through the battle unharmed.



Owing to the heavy losses at Fair Oaks, the division did not have a large role during the Seven Days serving as guards before being recalled to Yorktown in the same capacity. Most of the division, including the 52nd was briefly transferred to North Carolina before transport to near Port Royal, South Carolina. Major General David Hunter initially hoped to launch an April assault on Charleston, but these hopes were soon dashed as the Navy was unable to destroy the forts protecting the harbor. The 52nd debarked on Folly Island in July 1863 and remained as part of the attacking force on Charleston throughout the remainder of its term of service.

After several minor skirmishes and the construction of siege works, many original members of the regiment reenlisted and the regiment was designated a veteran volunteer regiment. On January 27, 1864, Hiram A. Fuller of Company F was appointed regimental color-bearer, a post he would retain until April of 1865. In early July 1864, after a siege of more than a year, the 52nd partook in a boat attack on Fort Johnson. However, the surprise attack quickly encountered problems. As it became apparent that the Confederates were aware of the attack, several boats turned back but five continued on to the fort, capturing a small battery before quickly being overwhelmed by superior numbers. Approximately 150 men were captured in the debacle, including Colonel Henry M. Hoyt, a future governor of Pennsylvania.





The 52nd remained as part of the Union forces at Charleston until the Confederates evacuated the city on the evening of February 17th, 1865. The next morning, noticing the uneasy quietness that pervaded the entire region and hearing of the retreat by some deserters, Major John A. Hennessy of the 52nd procured a boat and with a small contingent of men rowed out to Fort Sumter. At 9:04 am on February 18th, 1865, the flag of the state colors of the 52nd became the first to fly over the fort since its surrender on April 13, 1861. Major Hennessy continued this cycle, placing the flag at Fort Ripley and racing against the 3rd Rhode Island Heavy Artillery to be the first on Castle Pinckney. Finally, Hennessey's boat docked at Charlestown and the state colors were again the first to fly over the city.

Shortly after the occupation the old state colors were forwarded to the state arsenal along with a letter requesting new replacement colors. The replacement color was received in Washington DC in late April of 1865. The regiment was moved from Charleston to New Bern, North Carolina and met Sherman's advancing army near Goldsboro. It remained on provost duty at Salisbury, North Carolina and returned to Harrisburg for mustering out on July 12, 1865. It is not known whether the regiment ever carried their second state color. Both colors were returned to state care on July 4, 1866.





83rd PA

THE OLD 83RD



The 83rd was a northwestern Pennsylvania regiment organized in September 1861 near Erie. The newly created regiment moved directly to Washington and remained there throughout the winter of 1861–62. Senator Edward Cowan presented the first state colors to the regiment on December 21, 1861, on behalf of Governor Curtin. The 83rd was assigned to a brigade in General Fitz John Porter's division which later became the Fifth Corps. In March 1862 the regiment took part in the siege of Yorktown and first met the enemy at Hanover Court House on May 27th. On June 27th, the regiment took part in the battle of Gaines' Mill. Numerous bearers were killed or wounded in this battle and others during the Seven Days. Color Sergeant J. C. McKinley of Company C was wounded and died on July 1st. Another bearer, Corporal Walter Ames took the flag as the regiment fell back. Ames was shot through the heart on July 1st at the Battle of Malvern Hill. The falling banner was taken by Alexander Rogers who was later promoted to Corporal on July 19. Rogers would carry the colors until 1864 when he was killed at the Wilderness. During the Seven Days the 83rd lost 362 men, the fourth highest total in the Army of the Potomac.



In August the regiment was sent north with the army to reinforce General Pope during the Second Manassas campaign. Here on August 30th the regiment lost 97 of 224 men present for action. Held in reserve at Antietam, the regiment again fought at Fredericksburg on December 13th before going into winter quarters. In April of 1863 a new color was created for the regiment arriving at the state agency in Washington in May of that year. It most likely caught up to the regiment sometime around the battle of Chancellorsville.



151st PA

THE “SCHOOLTEACHERS” REGIMENT



The 151st Pennsylvania was a nine-month regiment organized at Harrisburg's Camp Curtin in September of 1862. Soldiers for the regiment came from six Pennsylvania counties and numbered over 100 schoolteachers from throughout the Commonwealth, including most of the instructors and teachers from the McAlisterville Academy in Juniata County. The regiment received their state color from Governor Andrew Curtin while at Camp Curtin before leaving for Washington in late November. The regiment camped in Arlington and then moved to Union Mills, Maryland for guard duty. The regiment was assigned to the Third Division, First Corps, Army of the Potomac and moved to participate in the Chancellorsville campaign in May of 1863, where it suffered sixteen casualties.

The division arrived at Gettysburg on the morning of July 1st and took position on the left flank of the first Corps. Initially held in reserve, the regiment was called up to fill a gap in the line early in the afternoon when superior numbers of Confederate troops began to press the Union lines. The 151st was exposed to withering fire and suffered heavy casualties, eventually losing four color-bearers,



including Sergeant Adam Heilman of Reading. Heilman was shot in the arm, and the breast, while another round struck his cap. After falling back to Cemetery Hill to regroup the regiment was sparsely engaged on the second and third days. Casualties for the three days at Gettysburg tallied 337 of 467 officers and men taken into battle, one of the higher Union regimental losses during the battle. The decimated regiment was relieved of duty on July 19th and mustered out of service on July 27th. Sergeant Heilman recovered from his severe wounds and was able to again carry the colors in the 1866 parade.



11th PA

FOR THE DURATION



The service history for the 11th Pennsylvania Infantry may best illustrate the deadly mortality of the guard and bearers of the course of four years of endemic fighting. The first 11th Pennsylvania was a three-month regiment which served from April until July of 1861. Once mustered out, officers of the regiment lobbied to have the regiment reinstated as a three-year regiment. The new three-year regiment was organized at Harrisburg's Camp Curtin in August of 1861 where it remained until November of that year. It was later assigned to guard the Manassas Gap Railroad in 1862 and as part of the new Army of Virginia, the regiment first engaged the enemy at Cedar Mountain in August of 1862. The regiment next lost more than fifty men protecting Thoroughfare Gap before being driven back by Longstreet's men. Though initially held in reserve the first day at the Battle of Second Bull Run, the regiment was rushed to face the Confederate attack on the Second Day on Bald Hill. After fighting for only an hour on the hill, the regiment lost numerous bearers and guards as well as 176 of its 346 men engaged.

Again at Antietam the 11th took a prominent position in Miller's cornfield. Here, color-bearer Private Daniel Mathew's was quickly wounded. Corporal William Welty took the colors, but quickly fell along with the rest of the color guard. The fallen flag was picked up



by Lieutenant Edward H. Gay who fell with two wounds, before it was finally carried from the field by Sergeant Henry Bitner who bore it for the remainder of the battle. At Fredericksburg the regiment was held in support of the Pennsylvania Reserves assaulting Jackson's men at Hamilton's Crossing. The regiment, the leftmost in line, came under heavy artillery fire as they approached the line. After finding cover in a swale, the regiment advanced another half mile under withering small-arms fire. Colonel Coulter was wounded, and Corporal Kuhns (thrice wounded), Private Chambers (killed), and Corporal Thomas (severely wounded)—all went down. Captain Benjamin F. Haines eventually picked up the colors and the regiment rallied on the colors as it fell back to allow the First and Second Brigades to try their advance.

At Gettysburg during the first day's fighting the regiment lost greatly losing 140 of 212 men present over the three-day battle. After the fall battles, men of the 11th re-enlisted as veteran volunteers. Losing heavily at the Wilderness, Corporal J. J. Lehman was killed in the savage fighting at Spotsylvania Courthouse on May 8. The drastically reduced veterans went on to fight at North Anna, Bethesda Church, and Cold Harbor. The men would fight at the siege of Petersburg at Weldon Railroad, Globe Tavern and the second raid at Weldon before losing 89 men at Hatcher's Run in February of 1865. The regiment last took part in the battle of Five Forks and was present for the surrender at





Appomattox on April 9, 1865. The fragile remains of the state color was returned to state care by Sergeant J. C. Scheurman of Company A, the regiment's last color-bearer on July 1, 1865 when the regiment mustered out of service at Harrisburg. Of the twenty-one men known to have touched the colors or have served as bearers throughout its service, three were killed and eleven wounded, with seven escaping unscathed. The tattered remnants of the 11th also illustrate the great pride which the men held for the colors. Rather than replace this standard with a new one, the regiment authorized repairs to the colors several times during the war. For the second repair, replacement silk of a different color or composition was sewn onto the original stripes to support the shredded material. The black crepe on the center stripe is a remainder of mourning crepe to honor President Lincoln after his assassination.





61st PA

"ARE THE COLORS SAFE"



Recruited in Pittsburgh in the fall of 1861, the 61st was rushed to Washington before it had fully made muster. The first state color was presented to the regiment by state military agent Colonel James Puleston on January 5, 1862. In February of 1862, four companies from the 23rd were detached to bring the new regiment up to strength. The regiment participated in the Siege of Yorktown and moved up the Peninsula with the Army of the Potomac. On May 31, 1862, the 61st was heavily engaged at the battle of Fair Oaks. Fighting against superior numbers the regiment lost 263 of 574 men engaged. Though the flag was riddled with bullets, its bearer Sergeant John Davis of Company E, had escaped without a scratch. During the Seven Days' the regiment guarded the left flank of the

army and was only lightly engaged at Malvern Hill on July 1. The regiment was fortunate to serve as rear guard at Second Manassas and reserve at Antietam and Fredericksburg before going into winter quarters. In the spring the first state color was retired, and a new one given to the regiment in April of 1863.

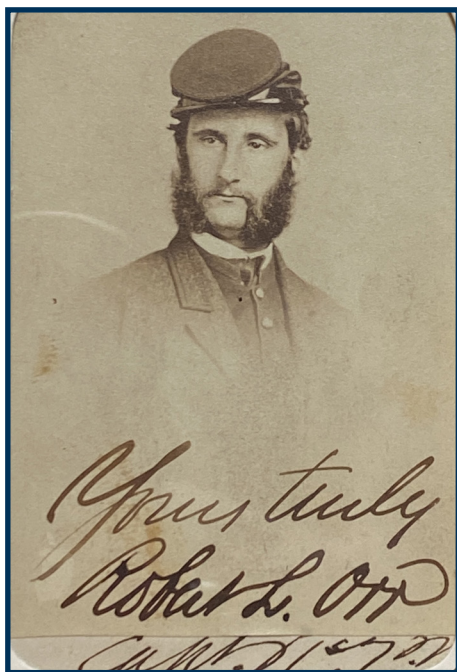


The Union Sixth Corps assaulted the Rebel positions on Marye's Heights on May 3 and Colonel Spear of the 61st was selected to lead one of the columns of attackers. The attack up the hill was to be bayonet only and Spear told his men not to pause to fire on the way up. At 11 am the columns moved forward over the long open ground. Colonel Spear was killed



Recruited in Pittsburgh in the fall of 1861, the 61st was rushed to Washington before it had fully made muster. The first state color was presented to the regiment by state military agent Colonel James Puleston on January 5, 1862. In February of 1862, four companies from the 23rd were detached to bring the new regiment up to strength. The regiment participated in the Siege of Yorktown and moved up the Peninsula with the Army of the Potomac. On May 31, 1862, the 61st was heavily engaged at the battle of Fair Oaks. Fighting against superior numbers the regiment lost 263 of 574 men engaged. Though the flag was riddled with bullets, its bearer Sergeant John Davis of Company E, had escaped without a scratch. During the Seven Days' the regiment guarded the left flank of the army and was only lightly engaged at Malvern Hill on July 1. The regiment was fortunate to serve as rear guard at Second Manassas and reserve at Antietam and Fredericksburg before going into winter quarters. In the spring the first state color was retired, and a new one given to the regiment in April of 1863.

The Union Sixth Corps assaulted the Rebel positions on Marye's Heights on May 3 and Colonel Spear of the 61st was selected to lead one of the columns of attackers. The attack up the hill was to be bayonet only and Spear told his men not to pause to fire on the way up. At 11 am the columns moved forward over the long open ground. Colonel Spear was killed shortly after the advance began. Color-Sergeant David H. Ford was wounded which caused the regiment to waver momentarily until Colonel Alexander Shaler of the 65th New York galloped





up and rallied the men forward. The charge ultimately proved successful dislodging the Confederates from the heights. During Gettysburg, the 61st was part of the thirty-plus mile forced march of the 6th Corps and was stationed in reserve on Wolf's Hill. Over the winter of 1864 the regiment rested and was reinforced.

At the Wilderness on May 5, 1864, the regiment fought against the hidden Rebels for two hours, and then led an assault which was repulsed. The Confederates attacked in the early morning of May 6, but were themselves repulsed. The entire corps then advanced until late morning when they took up defensive positions. Sometime during this back and forth on May 6th, Color-Sergeant Hugh Gorman was killed, and the bullet splintered the flagstaff before entering his body. His dying words were "Are the colors safe?"



Later that day General John B. Gordon's men counterattacked the 6th Corps. As panicked men fled, Colonel George Smith kept some 250 men with the colors. Colonel Shaler ordered the colors forward which rallied the regiment, who advanced and stopped the Rebels. The 61st however lost 151 men during the two days of fighting at the Wilderness.

On May 8th at Spotsylvania the 61st encountered an advancing Confederate battle line during an evening attack. An enemy officer attempted to grab the flagstaff from the bearer, but in hand-to-hand fighting the bearer held on as the 61st drove the rebel force backward. The regiment again lost heavily on the fighting on May 12. After Spotsylvania the regiment was engaged at Cold Harbor and Petersburg before being pulled from the line to help repulse Jubal Early's attack on Washington. The corps was again enroute to Petersburg when it was returned to the Shenandoah to again confront Early's troops at Opequon Creek.

Over the winter the 1864–65, the reduced regiment was



consolidated into a battalion of veterans and a third-issued replacement color was sent to the regiment. Three new companies of replacements were added over the winter months and in December of 1864 the men returned to the siege of Petersburg. The final fighting for the 61st occurred on April 2, 1865, the day the Army of the Potomac broke the lines at Petersburg. The Second Division (of which the 61st was part) was the apex of a wedge driven at the Confederate lines. Major Robert L. Orr told both his color-sergeants that he wanted the 61st to be the first regiment to plant its flags on the enemy works. When he gave the word, he wanted both bearers to advance in front of the line of battle to encourage an all-out effort by the men. Lieutenant-Colonel John W. Crosby was shot and killed soon after the fighting began. Sergeant William Coon, carrying the state color, was quickly wounded as well. Before the colors fell, Sergeant John C. Matthews, already carrying a flag presented by some ladies of Philadelphia, grabbed the state colors, and carried both forward. Major Orr then took the state colors to assist and restored some order to the advancing men, before passing the colors to Sergeant Joseph Fisher who advanced the colors some fifty yards in front of the men, urging them onward. Fisher was soon struck by a shell that shattered his arm and gashed his side. He attempted to go on but soon collapsed from pain and loss of blood. Matthews received a flesh wound but continued onward, planting the Philadelphia colors on the fort. For their heroics that day, Orr, Matthews, and Fisher each received the Congressional Medal of Honor for gallantry during the assault.

The regiment next took part in the Appomattox campaign and served as guard and escort for captured Confederate flags on their journey to army headquarters. The regiment performed provost duty in Danville, Virginia and was moved to Washington and mustered out of service on June 28, 1865.



10th PA

PENNSYLVANIA AND THE SPANISH LINE, JULY 31, 1898



State Standard for the 10th Infantry.

Near the start of the Spanish American War in July 1898 the Americans occupied about a thousand yards of entrenchment south of Manila. By July 31, this line was extended to only 300 yards from the enemy line and the 10th Pennsylvania moved into the advanced position. The Keystoneers commander, Colonel Alexander L. Hawkins, fell ill and Major H.C. Culbertson assumed temporary command. Around eleven that evening the sky opened and a torrential rain began to fall.

Several minutes later, the Spanish line erupted in rifle fire. Although it was pitch black and pouring, the 10th Pennsylvania swiftly returned fire. Colonel Hawkins heard the explosion of battle and pulled himself out of his sick bed to join his embattled regiment. After shooting blindly for roughly four hours, the firing began to diminish. The 10th expended an incredible amount of ammunition counting 36,000 rounds fired. During the battle, six were killed and twenty-nine were wounded from the 10th. There were an estimated 250 Spanish casualties.



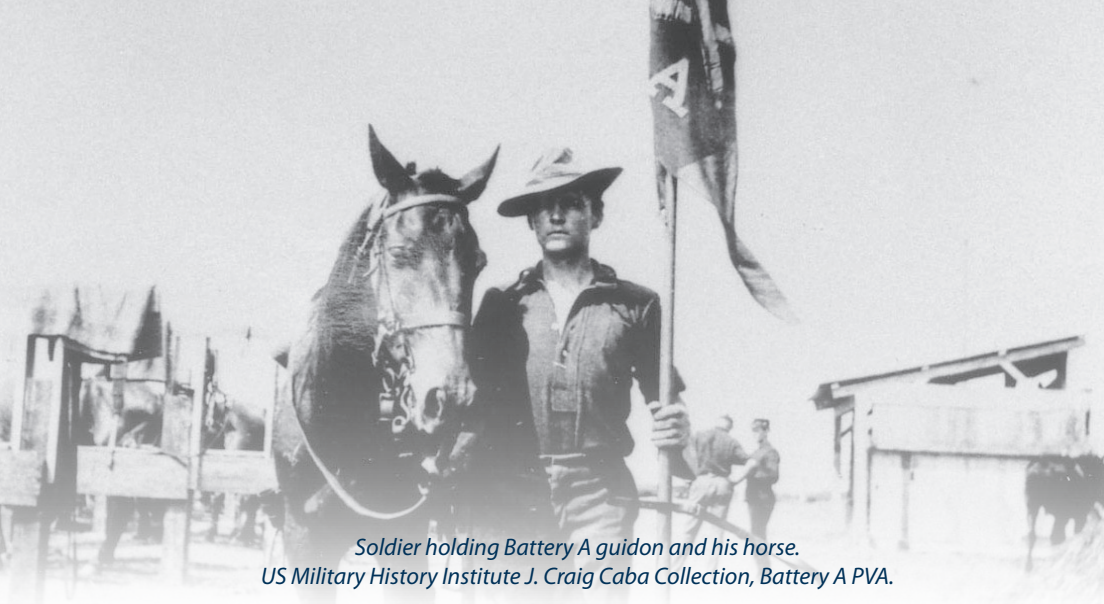
SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR FLAGS



While conducting our Civil War Flag Preservation project the Capitol Preservation Committee also conserved twenty-two Spanish-American War flags, which are also housed with the Commonwealth's collection and can be viewed by appointment. In March 1898 the destruction of the battleship Maine in Havana Harbor precipitated a conflict between the United States and Spain. By April 1898 the United States had declared war against Spain. Only four months later military operations concluded, and Spain was defeated. America obtained the territories of Cuba, Guam, the Philippines, and Puerto Rico when the peace treaty was signed on December 10, 1898.

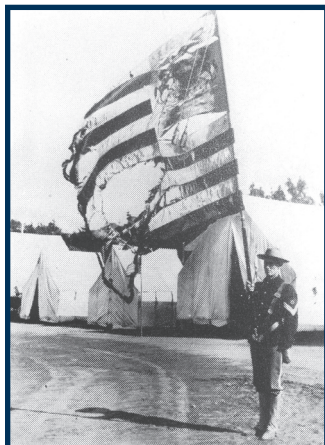


*10th PVI parading in San Francisco on return from Philippines,
Major Culbertson is in command.*



Soldier holding Battery A guidon and his horse.
US Military History Institute J. Craig Caba Collection, Battery A PVA.

The Commonwealth fielded fifteen infantry regiments, three cavalry troops, and three artillery batteries. Pennsylvania volunteers totaled 17,400, but few ever saw combat. Most volunteers remained in camps scattered throughout the states. Two regiments, a cavalry unit, and several artillery units, took part in the near-bloodless occupation of Puerto Rico. The 10th Regiment accompanied the expedition to the Philippine Islands and remained on active duty there until mid-1899. Two Pennsylvanians earned the Medal of Honor for “great coolness, and self-possession,” when a gasket exploded in one of the boilers on the USS Vixen, endangering the vessel and the crew on board. The brave Keystoneers entered the boiler room and put out the fire, saving the ship and their comrades. Overall, twelve Pennsylvanians



received the Medal of Honor. During the war Pennsylvania sustained few losses: 12 were killed in action, 226 died from disease, 74 were wounded. Four died from complications of their wounds, four deaths were accidental, and one soldier committed suicide.

The experiences of these Spanish-American War veterans are documented in the book *Pennsylvania in the Spanish American War: A Commemorative Look Back*, by Richard A. Sauers, published by the Capitol Preservation Committee.

10th PENNSYLVANIA INFANTRY

PENNSYLVANIA AND THE SPANISH LINE JULY 31, 1898

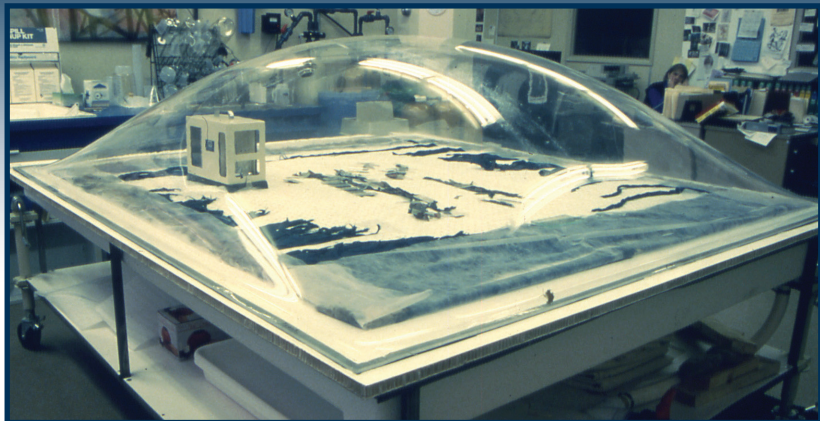


Near the start of the Spanish American War in July 1898 the Americans occupied about a thousand yards of entrenchment south of Manila. By July 31, this line was extended to only 300 yards from the enemy line and the 10th Pennsylvania moved into the advanced position. The Keystoneers commander, Colonel Alexander L. Hawkins, fell ill and Major H.C. Culbertson assumed temporary command. Around eleven that evening the sky opened and a torrential rain began to fall.

Several minutes later, the Spanish line erupted in rifle fire. Although it was pitch black and pouring, the 10th Pennsylvania swiftly returned fire. Colonel Hawkins heard the explosion of battle and pulled himself out of his sick bed to join his embattled regiment. After shooting blindly for roughly four hours, the firing began to diminish. The 10th expended an incredible amount of ammunition counting 36,000 rounds fired. During the battle, six were killed and twenty-nine were wounded from the 10th. There were an estimated 250 Spanish casualties.



CONSERVATION PROCESS & RESEARCH



A flag is humidified and gently unfurls within the plastic chamber.

Even when they were installed, the conditions inside the Capitol rotunda flag cases were far from ideal. Dust had accumulated on the furled flags since the sheer net sleeves encasing them offered only minimal protection. Having the flags displayed for a long time in a vertical position while rolled on their staffs, placed severe stress on the already fragile fabric and painted designs.

The Capitol Preservation Committee's "Save the Flags" project involved removing the flags from the rotunda so they could be unfurled, photographed, documented, treated, and prepared for long-term storage. The flags were placed in specially designed pallets and transferred to the temperature/humidity-controlled conservation facility. The building includes a conservation laboratory and long-term storage facility. To prevent further damage to the flag's fragile silk and paint, they were placed on nonacidic support materials and are housed on stainless steel shelving.

In addition to battle damage, some flags sustained fabric loss as a result of sentimental soldiers who took home pieces of their beloved banners as mementos. Some flags only have the pole sleeve and pieces of the fringe remaining; however, others are in remarkably good condition. Splitting, powdering, and fragmenting of the silk fabric is attributable to decades of improper environmental conditions, and the natural deterioration of the material.



Generally, treatment of the flags was limited to removing the staff, realigning the distorted silk, vacuuming the particles of soil from the surface of the flag, and collecting the organic debris entangled in the fringe. Flags with severely distorted painted designs were placed in a humidification chamber to relax the fabric, thereby reducing the risk of cracking and splitting of the paint and silk. Saturated salt solutions were used to raise the humidity inside the chamber and maintain an appropriate level. The humidity level was carefully monitored to safeguard against mold and mildew growth. As the paint became more pliable at 75–80 percent relative humidity, varying weights of glass plates were used to gently release the distortions. This treatment was very successful and produced some dramatic improvements in paint condition.

Documentation was also an important component of the project. Comprehensive written and photographic documentation of each flag and their associated artifacts (staves, cords, tassels, etc.) are kept on file. This information includes photographs, measurements, and descriptions of condition, design, and construction elements.

In addition, the physical and historical documentation gathered during the conservation project was published in *Advance the Colors: Pennsylvania Civil War Battle Flags*. This two-volume set, by Dr. Richard A. Sauers, contains photographs of the flags, and a history of flags of each Pennsylvania regiment, gathered from official records, historical societies, letters, diaries, newspaper clippings, and other primary and secondary sources. Summary information and a searchable database of the collection is also available at <http://cpc.state.pa.us/flagsearc.php>.



STORAGE FACILITY & PUBLIC TOURS



In 1985 a storage and conservation facility was established at a state-owned facility at 10th and Market Streets in Harrisburg, a few blocks away from the Capitol. The flags, once conserved, were laid out flat and stored on acid-free panels in custom-designed stainless steel storage units. Each unit is approximately seven feet square and can hold eighteen flags. The flag staffs are stored separately in stainless steel pull-out units and cross-referenced to match each of the 403 flags.

The 10th and Market facility was suitable as an initial location for the conservation and storage of the colors, but it was far from ideal. The brick building made it difficult to maintain constant temperature and humidity. The room housing the colors contained windows which also proved problematic for environmental controls and light filtration. Additionally, deferred and eventually discontinued maintenance on the overall building envelope led to concern for the collection's long-term care. In 2010, the Department of General Services indicated that they would be looking to divest themselves of the "Old Publications Building" at 10th and Market Street and that the Committee should begin searching for a new location for the colors. This was no small task and involved several years of investi-

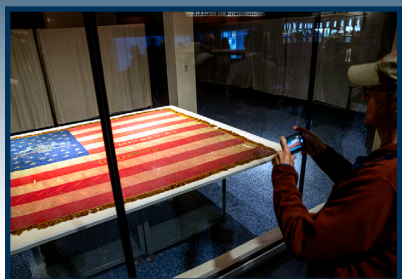


gation for a suitable state-owned location that could be modified for such a large collection.

In 2016 retrofitting of an area at 2221 Forster Street, which had once been Commonwealth Media Center's photo development facility begin in earnest. This new "vault" or room within a room, was meant to ensure that not just a lateral move to another adequate facility was made, but instead that a more state-of-the-art facility with upgraded controls, protections and fire suppression was obtained. By winter of 2020 the facility was complete, and a date and time set for the transfer of the flags from 10th and Market to the 2221 Forster Street facility. Owing unfortunately to the impending Covid epidemic this move was fortunately able to be completed at the very beginning of the statewide shutdown. The flags remained in the new facility until July 2020 when conservators were again able to safely return and begin the process of undoing the packaging and protections for transfer, again photographing the collection to ensure that nothing had shifted or been damaged during the move.



A NEW EDUCATION CENTER



The Commonwealth's collection of battle flags is truly unique among the other archives and museums of the state. The flags once served as tools of war, but also as symbolic emblems of the state and nation, representing the courage, valor, and sacrifice of almost 340,000 men from the Commonwealth who served—32,000 of whom did not make it home. As testament to their significance within the context of Civil War scholarship and study, a primary component of the Committee's vision for this new facility was to update our ability to educate visitors and tour groups about the history of the individual colors, the bearers who carried them, and the regiments who fought under them. Development of the education center was slowed by the Covid epidemic but in January of 2022 the Committee requested bids from interested parties for development of this new exhibition space.

Eighteen months later this new exhibit space and education center opened to the public on October 4, 2023. The new Pennsylvania Civil War Battle Flag Education Center is curated by the Capitol Preservation Committee. As such this new space contains several components which combine to make it a unique approach to showcasing the collection. Visitors are first shown a brief history of the collection. Next, visitors may search and browse (via three large touchscreen monitors), regimental histories, bearers, and photographs (if they exist). There is a traditional exhibition of Civil and Spanish-American War artifacts and accoutrements. Another large screen is available to search and trace where the colors went on an 1861–1865 era map of the Civil War.



Then visitors will enter the actual flag storage area and are able to see colors as requested and to discuss their history and use in battle.

Within the new flag storage area, the flags are stored in large cases—18 flags per case. The flags are protected from light and dust and the temperature and humidity is kept at a constant level. There is an updated security and fire protection system as well, to ensure that the collection is monitored 24/7/365. The storage room is designed to maintain a stable environment,

while accommodating visitors who request to view the collection. The storage facility is a unique resource for the public by providing supervised access to the flags. Visitors can request an appointment to view specific flags by calling the Capitol Preservation Committee. Individual and group tours are welcome. To schedule a tour, please call the Capitol Preservation Committee at 717-783-6484, Monday through Friday 8:00 A.M.-3:00 P.M.



**Tour the collection online at
www.pacivilwarflags.org
or call 717-783-6484 to schedule a tour.**

Credits:
Jason Wilson, Historian
jwilson@cpc.state.pa.us
Amy Zimmerman, Graphic Designer

**Pennsylvania Capitol Preservation Committee
Room 630 Main Capitol Building
P.O. Box 202231
Harrisburg, PA 17120
Phone: 717-783-6484
Fax: 717-772-0742
Web: <http://cpc.state.pa.us>**

**©2024 CPC-001
REV 7/24**