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(<http://easterniowalife.com/2012/02/29/replica-iowa-battle-flags-to-appear-at-re-enactment-of-battle-of-shiloh/>)

Replica Iowa Battle Flags to Appear at Re-enactment of Battle of Shiloh

HIAWATHA — The Civil War was supposed to be over a few months after it began. So, 150 years ago, when 760 soldiers in the 15th Iowa Infantry made their way to Shiloh, Tenn., they expected little resistance and a quick return home.

Instead, Confederate forces attacked General Ulysses S. Grant's troops at Pittsburg Landing. And, when the smoke cleared on April 7 after a two-day battle, more than 3,400 men lay dead, 1,750 of them Union soldiers, 21 of them from Iowa.

The Battle of Shiloh instantly became America's bloodiest battle, with another 16,400 soldiers wounded and 3,800 missing or captured. And, while the Union won this battle, it would take three more years and eight even bloodier battles to win the war.

"Iowa should be proud of what these guys did," says Brandon Jolly, 30, as he opens the door to the Civil War room in the basement of his Hiawatha house. "They should be proud of these flags."

Spread out on a large table are exact replicas of the 6-by-6 1/2-foot flags the Iowans carried into that battle — the 34-star American Flag and the eagle emblazoned state regimental flag. Using the original state flag and period American flags as models, Brandon has re-created the flags stitch-by-stitch for this year's re-enactment of the Battle of Shiloh.

"All of the materials," he says, "are as exact as you can get in the 21st Century."

He fingers the gold fringe he and his adopted son, Steven, 15, tied and trimmed one tassel at a time.

"This means the world to me," says Brandon, a Civil War re-enactor who also served in the Iraq War. "Not just the project, but everything we do. As a veteran, I can't believe these guys could stand so close to each other and blast away."

The original American Flag, most likely tattered and torn, was buried with its bearer in Mississippi after he died less than a month later at the Battle of Corinth.

The original Iowa Flag, tattered, torn and desecrated by souvenir takers, has taken a round-a-bout journey from private ownership to the Iowa Capitol Rotunda to the Iowa Historical Society where it is being restored through the Iowa Battle Flag Project (www.iowaflags.org).

Brandon, a Civil War fan since he became a re-enactor at age 9 with his father in Scott's Tennessee Battery in Scott County, volunteered to make these replicas. He's been sewing Civil War uniforms and accessories for more than a decade.

As his reward, Brandon, a manager at Ovation Networks in Cedar Rapids, will carry the Iowa flag when 500 historical interpreters from around the country gather at Savannah, Tenn., at the end of March. As the Civil War soldiers did, they will ride a paddle-wheeler on the Tennessee River to Pittsburg Landing where the Iowa regiment arrived as the Battle of Shiloh (April 6-7) commenced.

The re-enactors will then march five miles through the National Battlefield Park, commemorating the 150th anniversary of the 15th Iowa Infantry's first battle.

"We're very passionate about it," Brandon says. "We're very proud to carry these flags."

Attached image(s)





Sources and Acknowledgements

Posted at: 15th Iowa *15th Iowa - U.S. Militaria Forum*. Retrieved Mar. 13, 2012, from Web site:
<http://www.usmilitariaforum.com/forums/index.php?showtopic=138339&st=0&gopid=1045321&#entry1045321> IP: 209.170.150.154



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