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PRESS RELEASE

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RARE WAR OF 1812 BATTLE FLAG IS RESTORED

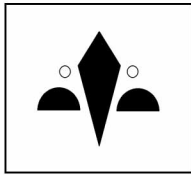
Significant piece of history has ties to Sam Houston, John Williams and Andrew Jackson

Delmar, NY - A rare War of 1812 flag is nearing completion of its restoration. The 200+ year-old "Flag of the 39th Infantry" is unique, and not just because it is one of only a few historic battle flags that still exist from that short two and a half year war.

It is a significant artifact because it was carried by the company ensign, Sam Houston, (governor of Tennessee and first and third President of the Republic of Texas and finally governor of Texas), it served under John Williams, US Senator from Tennessee from 1815 - 1823, and was used to signal the charge of the Battle of Horseshoe Bend in 1814 along side 7th US President Andrew Jackson. The 200+ year-old flag first served as the flag of the Tennessee Volunteers and was later carried by the 39th Regiment of the U.S. Infantry. Both units were under the command of Colonel John Williams during the War of 1812.

The rare and important Williams Flag has an even rarer history; it has remained in Col. John William's family since 1812. It's current owner is William's family historian, Alex Brandau of Knoxville, TN. Brandau is also the author of the controversial book "The Horseshoe Colonel" about the War of 1812 and the true role Andrew Jackson played. It exposes the manipulative nature of Jackson and his politics and significant contributions of Col. Williams.

Like many antique flags, it is hand made of silk and beautifully embroidered. It was later inscribed in ink by William's own hand. The flag had been framed in the past, but in a way that was damaging to the textile.



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Textile Conservator and highly regarded flag expert, Gwen Spicer of Spicer Art Conservation, LLC was contacted by the family to help save the flag. Spicer repaired the tears and slits in the silk and realigned the many pieces of silk that had become loose. “Silk is a delicate fiber, when it ages it can break; artifacts like this flag require delicate handling”, said Spicer. There are only a few qualified textile conservators in the United States, and those who specialize in historic flags are even fewer.

A surprising find occurred when the flag was removed from its frame and released from the board it had been wrapped around. The “flag” was not a whole flag, instead, what remained was only a portion of what was a much larger flag in 1812. “The flag was really just the canton (think only the stars area of the US flag) and the rest of the flag had been cut away”, said Spicer. She added, “the repurposing of fabric was not uncommon”.

The repaired flag is ready for return to the descendants of Col. Williams who say they are open-minded about where it should be displayed next. “Ideally I would like to see the flag at a Museum where it can be viewed by many people”, said Brandau, “This flag It is a piece of United States History”, he added.

The flag has previously been displayed in both the Tennessee State Museum and the Museum of the East Tennessee Historical Society. The family is very clear on one point, the flag is not for sale.

Col. Williams is also the great-great-grandfather of noted playwright, Tennessee Williams.