

AS TO THE PALMETTO FLAG.

Edgar R. Harlan, Curator Historical Department,
Dear Sir: Des Moines, Iowa.

In the July, 1911, number of the ANNALS is the description of a "Palmetto Flag", in possession of the Historical Department, captured at Columbia, South Carolina, February 17, 1865. In the article reference is made to a similar flag in possession of The State Historical Society, at Iowa City.

As the two flags are not identical, it may be worth while to describe the flag in possession of The Historical Society. The material is dark blue bunting, measurement 20x36 feet in its perfect form, before the removal of about 18 inches from the bottom of the flag, the entire length, and also the removal of a strip about six inches in width about half the length of the flag. It is a fair conjecture that these strips were taken as souvenirs by some person.

The emblems on the flag are a palmetto tree in the center, measuring ten feet 8 inches in height, and a crescent in the upper left-hand corner, measuring 4 feet 8 inches from point to point. These emblems are not stitched upon the goods of the flag, but are insertions accurately fitted and nicely stitched. There is also a very slight difference in the foliage of the palmetto as compared with the illustration given in connection with your description of the flag in possession of The Historical Department.

The flag in possession of The Historical Society "was captured at Columbia, S. C., Friday, February 17, 1865, by then First Lieut. William H. Goodrell, Fifteenth Iowa Volunteer Infantry, picket officer on the staff of Gen. William W. Belknap." The language here quoted is that of Brevet Major H. C. McArthur, in a recent published account of the capture of Columbia, who was of the party capturing this flag. Major McArthur further says that the flag was "found stretched along the upper edge of the north wall of the unfinished new Capitol Building." The flag was presented to The Historical Society by General Belknap, commanding Crocker's Iowa Brigade, Seventeenth Army Corps.

J. W. RICH.
Iowa City, Iowa, June 10th, 1912.

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