

March 31, 2020

So What is the Connection, 1898 Qing Dynasty flag



Photo of artifact, flag, MM2019.11.5

(Pennsylvania Military Museum, J. Gleim, Museum Curator)

This Qing Dynasty flag was collected by Manus MacCloskey (4/24/1874-5/11/1963), of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania during his service with the China Relief Expedition during the Boxer Rebellion (1898-1901).

Manus MacCloskey entered the United States Military Academy and graduated 8th in his class in 1898. He joined the 5th Field Artillery and served in the Philippine Insurrection. MacCloskey then went to China as part of the China Relief Expedition, a multi-national military effort to rescue US citizens, European nationals, and other foreign nationals endangered by the Boxer Rebellion.

The Boxer Rebellion was a movement propelled by members of a Chinese secret society determined to rid China of foreign influences and stop the spread of Christianity and its perceived threat to the Confucian and Buddhist underpinnings of Chinese Society.

The China Relief Expedition sought to quell this rebellion, preserving Western commercial interests in China and preventing the slaughter of Chinese Christians and foreign nationals. MacCloskey collected the flag during his time in China, presumably from foreign nationals he interacted with there.



Photo of artifact, battle pennant, MM2019.11.23



Photo of artifact, battle pennant, MM2019.11.23

Later, MacCloskey commanded the 12th Field Artillery, 2nd Division during World War I. He participated in combat at Verdun, Chateau-Thierry, Belleau Wood, and Soisson. By 1919, MacCloskey achieved the rank of Brigadier General. For his service during WWI, BG MacCloskey was awarded the Purple Heart with Oak Leaf Cluster, the Distinguished Service Medal, and the Silver Star citation with Oak Leaf Cluster.