



Pictured above is an Army/Navy 'E' Award Pennant – also known as the Army-Navy Production Award. It belonged to the Dahlstrom Metallic Door Company in Jamestown. It is shaped like a triangle, with a swallowtail, 47 inches wide, and 88 inches long. The left side is red wool, and “ARMY” is printed in the upper left corner. The right side of the pennant is navy blue, with “Navy” printed on the lower right side. The letters are seven inches long. In the center, a 22 inch diameter wreath of gold fabric, cut as laurel and oak leaves, surrounding a 9.5 inch by 7 inch ‘E’ in white fabric. There are also two 5.5 inch diameter white stars, one on each side. This award was presented to Dahlstrom’s and its employees on May 6, 1943.

According to Wikipedia, the Army Navy ‘E’ award came into existence in July of 1942 when the Navy E and Army Navy munitions board award were merged. All factories engaged in war production were eligible to receive the award; however Iowa State University and Dr. Harley A. Wilhelm also received the award for their work on uranium use in the Manhattan Project. Some of the criteria for receiving the award were Quality and Quantity of production; Overcoming production obstacles; avoidance of work stoppages; maintaining fair labor standards; training of additional labor forces; good record keeping in relation to health and safety, and effective management. The white stars found on the banner represent six months each of continuing excellent work. During World War II, Dahlstrom manufactured cabinets for Army and Navy communications equipment as well as other special parts. Each employee of the company received an ‘E’ pin acknowledging their excellence at work.

This award was presented to 4,283 companies during the course of World War II. This amounted to about four percent of the companies engaged in war work. There were at least five firms in Jamestown which received this award. Besides Dahlstrom, they were Art Metal,

Hope's Windows, Crescent Tool and Norquist Products. Of these, only Hope's Windows is still in business. In the Fenton History Center's collection are several artifacts about "E" awards. From a program booklet from the presentation of the award to Art Metal on October 29, 1943, the following is listed as the "Meaning of the E Award". "In 1906 the Navy instituted in the fleet, an award for excellence, which became the Navy 'E'. It was first awarded for excellence in engineering and communications. When the rising tide of war in Europe placed a premium on the productions of the implements of war, the Navy 'E' award was extended to embrace those plants and organizations which showed excellence in producing ships, weapons and equipment for the fighting men of the Navy." "The Army Navy Production award is not easily obtained nor should it be casually received. It carries the obligation to continually better the performance on which this award was based". The program was terminated December 5, 1945.

This banner came to the Fenton History Center by a donor who was a Dahlstrom employee. He rescued it when he was tasked with cleaning out a couple of store rooms when the company was closing. He also rescued a World War II 'Minuteman' banner, which is navy blue and white with the silhouette of a minuteman sewn on. These were awarded when at least ninety percent of the employees bought war bonds through payroll deduction.

In the Fenton's collection are two copies of the program and one copy of the invitation to the ceremony at Dahlstrom's. There are also two photographs taken at that time. We also have the Art Metal program for their ceremony on October 29, 1943. One more artifact would round out the collection of material about the World War II "E" award. If anyone has one of the individual pins they might be willing to donate, it would be most appreciated.

March 2015