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An American flag is shown waving in a bright blue sky filled with white, fluffy clouds. The flag's stars and stripes are clearly visible, and the overall scene conveys a sense of patriotism and national pride.

OUR FLAG



PRINTED UNDER THE DIRECTION
OF THE
JOINT COMMITTEE ON PRINTING

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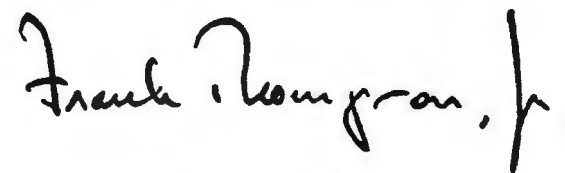
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The booklet "Our Flag" has been a useful and immensely popular publication for some time. Its audience has included countless numbers of schools, patriotic organizations, civic and service groups and individuals. The Committee therefore welcomes this opportunity to have the publication reprinted as a House Document.

The flag is a symbol of our Nation's past, present, and future. It represents the ideals established by the Founding Fathers which have fostered our Country's growth and development over the last two centuries.

This booklet, a publication of the Congress, describes briefly the history of the flag, and sets forth the observances appropriate to its display. The Committee hopes that this information will contribute to a better understanding of our Country's flag, and the principles and Republic for which it stands.



Chairman
Joint Committee on Printing

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

"I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

This wording of the pledge varies slightly from the original, which was drawn up in 1892 in the office of **The Youth's Companion** magazine in Boston. It was first used in the public schools in celebration of Columbus Day, 12 October 1892.

The pledge received official recognition by Congress in an Act approved 22 June 1942. The phrase "under God" was added to the pledge by a Congressional Act of 14 June 1954. At that time, President Eisenhower said that "in this way we are reaffirming the transcendence of religious faith in America's heritage and future; in this way we shall constantly strengthen those spiritual weapons which forever will be our country's most powerful resource in peace and war."

THE STORY OF THE STARS AND STRIPES



The story of the origin of our National flag parallels the story of the origin of our country. As our country received its birthright from the peoples of many lands who were gathered on these shores to found a new nation, so did the pattern of the Stars and Stripes rise from several origins back in the mists of antiquity to become emblazoned on the standards of our infant Republic.

The star is a symbol of the heavens and the divine goal to which man has aspired from time immemorial; the stripe is symbolic of the rays of light emanating from the sun. Both themes have long been represented on the standards of nations, from the banners of the astral worshippers of ancient Egypt and Babylon to the 12-starred flag of the Spanish Conquistadors under Cortez. Continuing in favor, they spread to the striped standards of Holland and the West India Company in the 17th century and to the present patterns of stars and stripes on the flags of several nations of Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Americas.

The first flags adopted by our colonial forefathers were symbolic of their struggles with the wilderness of a new land.



Beavers, pine trees, rattlesnakes, anchors, and various like insignia with mottoes such as "Hope," "Liberty," "Appeal to Heaven," or "Don't Tread on Me" were affixed to the different banners of Colonial America.

The first flag of the colonists to have any resemblance to the present Stars and Stripes was the Grand Union flag, sometimes referred to as the "Congress Colors." It consisted of thirteen stripes, alternately red and white, representing the Thirteen Colonies, with a blue field in the upper left-hand corner bearing the crosses of St. George and St. Andrew, signifying union with the mother country. This banner was first flown by the ships of the Colonial Fleet in the Delaware River in December 1775.

In January 1776, the Grand Union flag became the standard of the Continental Army which had come into being some months before—in June 1775. It was also carried by American Marines and Bluejackets comprising an expeditionary force to the West Indies in 1776.

During the previous year a canton (section) of thirteen stripes appeared on the yellow silk standard of the Philadelphia troop of Light Horse when the latter served as an escort to General Washington who was journeying to Cambridge, Massachusetts, to assume command of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and New Hampshire volunteers.

Some Americans still believe that Betsy Ross made the first flag, although historians dispute this story. Another disputed story is that the first Stars and Stripes displayed in the face of an armed enemy was at Fort Schuylers, 3 August 1777. The flag was improvised. The white part came from a soldier's shirt; a captain's cloak supplied the blue of the union; and the red stripes came from the flannel petticoat of a soldier's wife,



who gladly donated it for the purpose. However, this was probably a Grand Union flag.

Continental Congress passed a resolution that established the Stars and Stripes on 14 June 1777, but did not specify the arrangement of the thirteen stars on the blue union, except to say that they should represent a new constellation. Consequently some had stars in a circle, some in rows, some scattered on the blue field without any apparent design. The flag popularly known as the Betsy Ross flag had the stars in a circle.

The first Navy Stars and Stripes had the stars arranged in staggered formation in alternate lines and rows of threes and twos on a blue field. A close inspection of this arrangement of the stars shows a distinct outline of the X-shaped cross of St. Andrew and the cross of St. George of the English flag. This indicates how difficult it was for the colonists, even at that late date, to break away entirely from the British flag under which they had been born and had lived all the years of their lives.

The Resolution of 14 June 1777 establishing the Stars and Stripes has an interesting history. After the Declaration of Independence, colonial vessels were putting to sea to hamper enemy communications and prey on British commerce. Many of them flew the flags of the particular Colonies to which they belonged. It was necessary to provide an authorized national flag under which they could sail, for England considered armed vessels without such a flag as pirate ships and hanged their crews when they captured them. So the Marine Committee of the Second Continental Congress presented the Resolution, which was on the subject of the Navy.

General Washington, when the Star-Spangled Banner was first flown by the Continental Army, is reputed to have described



its symbolism as follows: "We take the stars from heaven, the red from our mother country, separating it by white stripes, thus showing that we have separated from her, and the white stripes shall go down to posterity representing liberty."

After the admission of Kentucky and Vermont, a resolution was adopted in January 1794, making the flag one of fifteen stars and fifteen stripes.

Realizing that the flag would become unwieldly with a stripe for each new State, Captain Samuel C. Reid, USN, suggested to Congress that the stripes remain thirteen in number to represent the Thirteen Colonies, and that a star be added to the blue field for each new State coming into the Union. A law of 4 April 1818 that resulted requires that a star be added for each new State on the 4th of July after its admission but that the thirteen stripes remain unchanged.

A 48-star flag came with admission of Arizona and New Mexico in 1912. Alaska added a 49th star in 1959, and Hawaii a 50th star in 1960.

There is no fixed order for numbering the stars in the flag, nor are stars assigned to particular States. The stars represent the States collectively, not individually, and no particular star may be designated as representative of any particular State.

Following the War of 1812, a great wave of nationalistic spirit spread throughout the country; the infant Republic had



successfully defied the might of an empire. As this spirit spread, the Stars and Stripes began to take on the characteristics of a mighty symbol of sovereignty. The homage paid that banner is best expressed by what the gifted men of later generations wrote concerning it.

The brilliant Henry Ward Beecher said: "A thoughtful mind when it sees a nation's flag, sees not the flag, but the nation itself. And whatever may be its symbols, its insignia, he reads chiefly in the flag, the government, the principles, the truths, the history that belong to the nation that sets it forth. The American flag has been a symbol of Liberty and men rejoiced in it.

"The stars upon it were like the bright morning stars of God, and the stripes upon it were beams of morning light. As at early dawn the stars shine forth even while it grows light, and then as the sun advances that light breaks into banks and streaming lines of color, the glowing red and intense white striving together, and ribbing the horizon with bars effulgent, so, on the American flag, stars and beams of many-colored light shine out together"

In a 1917 Flag Day message, President Wilson said: "This flag, which we honor and under which we serve, is the emblem of our unity, our power, our thought and purpose as a nation. It has no other character than that which we give it from generation to generation. The choices are ours. It floats in majestic silence above the hosts that execute those choices, whether in peace or in war. And yet, though silent, it speaks to us—speaks to us of the past, of the men and women who went before us, and of the records they wrote upon it.

"We celebrate the day of its birth; and from its birth until now it has witnessed a great history, has floated on high the symbol of great events, of a great plan of life worked out by a great people. . . .

"Woe be to the man or group of men that seeks to stand in our way in this day of high resolution when every principle we hold dearest is to be vindicated and made secure for the salvation of the nation. We are ready to plead at the bar of history, and our flag shall wear a new luster. Once more we shall make good with our lives and fortunes the great faith to which we were born, and a new glory shall shine in the face of our people."

Thus the Stars and Stripes came into being; born amid the strife of battle, it became the standard around which a free people struggled to found a great Nation. Its spirit is fervently expressed in the words of Thomas Jefferson:

"I swear, before the altar of God, eternal hostility to every form of tyranny over the mind of man."

Traditionally a symbol of liberty, the American flag has carried the message of freedom to many parts of the world. Sometimes the identical flag that was flying at a crucial moment in our history has been flown again in another place to symbolize continuity in our struggles in the cause of liberty.

One of the most memorable is the flag that flew over the Capitol in Washington on 7 December 1941 when Pearl Harbor was attacked. This same flag was raised again on 8 December when war was declared on Japan, and three days later at the time of the declaration of war against Germany and Italy. President Roosevelt called it the "flag of liberation" and carried it with him to the Casablanca Conference and on other historic occasions. It flew from the mast of the USS "Missouri" during the formal Japanese surrender on 2 September 1945.

Another historic flag is the one that flew over Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941. It also rippled above the United Nations Charter meeting at San Francisco and over the Big Three Conference at Potsdam. This same flag was flying over the White House on 14 August 1945, when the Japanese accepted surrender terms.

EARLY AMERICAN FLAGS

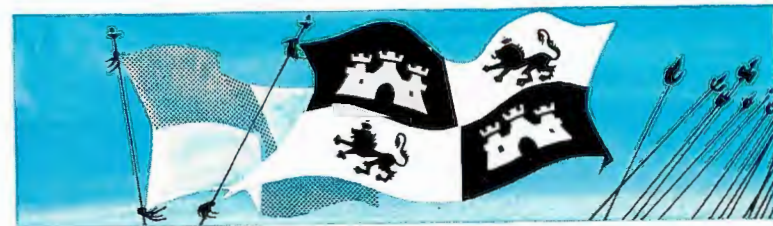


Heraldry is as old as the human race, and the carrying of banners has been the habit of nations since the beginning of time.

Some years ago in northern India, Sir John Marshall, head of the archeological service of the government of India, discovered two abandoned cities: one at a site now called Mohenjo-Daro, the other at Harappa. These cities are believed to have thrived about 3,500 B.C. and were in close contact with the earliest civilizations of Babylonia. Among the objects found in the former city was a seal, used to sign documents, showing a procession of seven men carrying square standards, held aloft on poles like modern flags. These ancient "flags" were not made of cloth as are modern flags, but were rigid, like boards.

Far back in American history, the Vikings carried a flag which bore a black raven on a field of white.

Then in 1492 Columbus sailed to our shores, and his three small ships displayed the Spanish flag bearing two red lions on two white fields and two yellow castles on two red fields.



It is most natural that America should have had its colonial flags as soon as the first colonists settled. And it is not surprising that those flags should have been created in a wide variety.

The Dutch brought their own striped flags when they settled in New Amsterdam, which we now call New York, and pioneers from other nations also brought along the standards of their countries when they settled on our shores.

The British flag, under which the English colonization of America was effected, remained the flag of the colonists for more than a hundred years and is therefore of special significance to our country in the evolution of our National flag.

This flag is represented by the canton of the Grand Union flag (page 12). For centuries the flag of England was the red cross of St. George on a white field and the flag of Scotland was the white cross of St. Andrew on a blue field.

In 1606, after England and Scotland had become one nation, the two crosses were blended in a maritime flag, the Union Jack. The Scottish flag formed the background, with the cross of St. George superimposed on it. To represent the white field of the English flag, the red cross of St. George was mounted on white, making it stand out. A hundred years later this design was adopted and, slightly modified in 1801 by the addition of the Irish cross of St. Patrick, became the flag of Great Britain as we know it today.

Our separation from the mother country came gradually and it was only by degrees that the union flag of Great Britain was discarded. The final breach between the Colonies and Great Britain brought about the removal of the union from the canton of our striped flag and the substitution of stars in a blue field.

Back in the days of the Revolution there were colonial or regimental flags by the score. While the pine tree was a popular design, there were numerous other symbols, such as beavers, anchors, and rattlesnakes, or combinations of these symbols, with appropriate slogans.

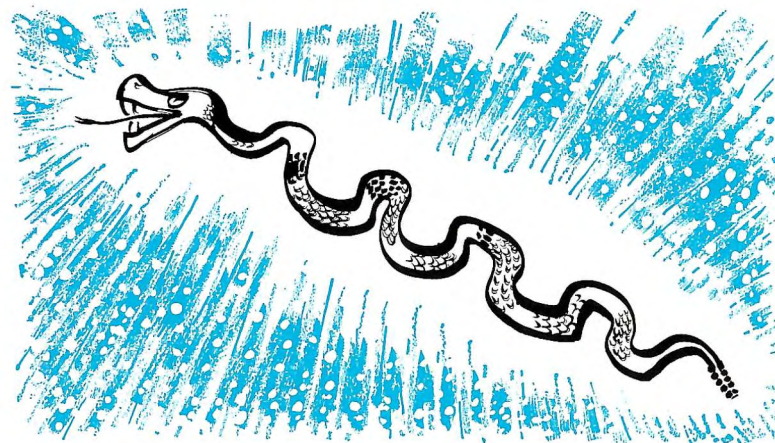
In early accounts of colonial activities, liberty poles and trees bear an important part. A fine old elm in Hanover Square, Boston, where the Sons of Liberty met, was known as the Liberty Tree.

A wide-spreading live oak in Charleston, South Carolina, made a shelter under which the leading patriots of the day gathered to discuss political questions, and there the Declaration of Independence was first read to the people of the city.

When in 1652 the Colony of Massachusetts first established a mint, the general court ordained that all pieces of money should bear on one side a tree, thus bringing into being the famous pine tree shillings.

Later a white flag with a green pine tree and the inscription "An Appeal to Heaven" became familiar on the seas as the ensign of cruisers commissioned by General Washington, a fact noted by many English newspapers at that time.

Meanwhile the rattlesnake theme was gaining increasing prestige with the colonists, and eventually a coiled serpent at the foot of the tree was added to the pine tree design. The slogan "Dont Tread on Me" almost invariably appeared on rattlesnake flags.





A flag of the rattlesnake type was the standard of the South Carolina Navy. Another was the Gadsden flag—consisting of a yellow field with a rattlesnake in a spiral coil, poised to strike, in the center. Below the snake was the motto, "Dont Tread on Me." Similar was the Culpepper flag, banner of the Minute-men of Culpepper (now spelled Culpeper) County, Virginia. It consisted of a white field with a rattlesnake in a spiral coil in the center. Above the rattlesnake was the legend "The Culpepper Minute Men" and below, the mottoes, "Liberty or Death" and "Dont Tread on Me."

One writer of the time quaintly stated that as the rattlesnake's eye exceeded in brightness that of any other "animal," and she had no eyelids, she might therefore be esteemed a symbol of vigilance; that inasmuch as she never began an attack, nor, when once engaged, ever surrendered, she was therefore an emblem of magnanimity and true courage.

It was probably the deadly bite of the rattler, however, which was foremost in the minds of its designers, and the threatening slogan "Dont Tread on Me" added further significance to the design.

The Moultrie flag was the first distinctive American flag displayed in the South. It flew over the ramparts of the fort on Sullivan's Island, which lies in the channel leading to Charleston, South Carolina, when the British fleet, under the command of Sir Peter Parker, attacked on 28 June 1776. The British ships opened fire at about 10:30 a.m. and continued the bombardment for approximately ten hours, but the garrison, consisting of some 375 regulars and a few militia, under the command of Colonel William Moultrie, put up such a gallant defense that the British were forced to withdraw under cover of darkness. This victory not only saved the southern Colonies from invasion for some two years but marked the first defeat of a British naval force for a period of years. The design of this large blue flag with a white crescent in the upper corner next to the staff was suggested by the blue uniforms of the garrison and the silver crescents, which the men wore on their caps, inscribed with the words "Liberty or Death."

The maritime Colony of Rhode Island had its own flag, which was carried at Brandywine, Trenton, and Yorktown. It bore an anchor, thirteen stars, and the word "Hope," and its white stars in a blue field are believed by many to have suggested the "starry blue field" of our National flag.

There were a number of other famous New England flags, and noteworthy among them was the Bunker Hill. This flag, which was one of the first to include the pine tree, was one of those carried by the American colonial troops who opposed the British Regulars at the Battle of Bunker Hill, 17 June 1775.

Strikingly similar to our flag of today was the flag carried by the Green Mountain Boys at the Battle of Bennington on 16 August 1777. It has been claimed that our National flag was fashioned after the pattern of the Bennington flag, but there appears to be nothing in the written history of the flag that would verify this claim.

All of these flags and scores of others disappeared soon after the Stars and Stripes was adopted, yet the insignia shown on some of them was retained in some cases and now appears occasionally on State flags.

THE GRAND UNION FLAG



The Grand Union flag, sometimes called the "First Navy Ensign" and the "Cambridge Flag," among other designations, was the immediate predecessor of the Stars and Stripes. This type of flag was carried on the flagship "Alfred" on 3 December 1775, as the naval ensign of the Thirteen Colonies, after Commodore Esek Hopkins assumed command of the Navy built by Congress. It was raised by General Washington in January 1776, at Cambridge, Mass., as the standard of the Continental Army, and it was also carried ashore by the Marines who made an expedition to the Bahamas in March of 1776. As the flag of the Revolution, it was used on many occasions before 14 June 1777, when the Continental Congress authorized the Stars and Stripes. The canton, with its crosses of St. George and St. Andrew, indicated our relation with the "mother country" until the severance of those ties brought about its replacement with the white stars in a blue field. Washington later wrote that it was flown at Cambridge "out of compliment to the United Colonies."

THE FIRST STARS AND STRIPES

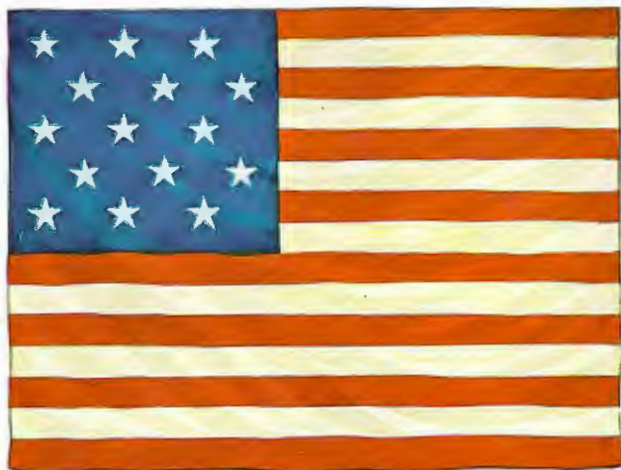


The Stars and Stripes, whose birthday we observe on 14 June, was created on that date, in 1777, when the Continental Congress resolved: "That the flag of the thirteen United States be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white: that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation."

Some of the early flags used by the Army had the stars arranged in circles and some were in rows. There was no prescribed arrangement for the stars.

The first Navy Stars and Stripes, flown by the man-of-war "Guerriere" when she sailed from Boston on 25 July 1818 for Cowes, England, had the stars arranged in staggered formation in alternate lines and rows of threes and twos on the field of blue. However, on 9 September 1818, the Board of Navy Commissioners received a directive from President Monroe that "the Flag of the United States shall conform to the pattern, herewith transmitted, viz: twenty stars in a blue union, and thirteen stripes, red and white, alternately, according to the Act of Congress passed on the fourth of April last; of which you will please to give due notice to the Naval Commanders, and the necessary directions for making the Flags."

FIFTEEN STARS AND STRIPES



Following an Act of Congress on 13 January 1794, this was the flag of our country from 1795 until 1818. The addition of the two stars and two stripes came with the admission of Vermont, 4 March 1791, and Kentucky, 1 June 1792, into the Union. This type of flag figured in many stirring episodes. It inspired Francis Scott Key to write the "Star-Spangled Banner"; it was the first flag to be flown over a fortress of the Old World, when Lieutenant Presley N. O'Bannon, of the Marine Corps, and Midshipman Mann, of the Navy, raised it above the Tripolitan stronghold in Derne, Tripoli, on 27 April 1805; it was our ensign in the Battle of Lake Erie; and was flown by General Jackson at New Orleans. Fearing that too many stripes would spoil the true design of the flag, Congress passed a law on 4 April 1818, returning the flag to its original design of thirteen stripes and providing for a new star to be added to the blue field as additional States came into the Union. Thus, for nearly a quarter of a century, this flag with its fifteen stars and stripes was the banner of our growing Nation.

FLAGS OF THE REVOLUTION



WASHINGTON'S CRUISERS



MOULTRIE



RHODE ISLAND



CONTINENTAL FLAG



BUNKER HILL FLAG



BENNINGTON FLAG

FLAG LAWS AND REGULATIONS

The following codification of existing rules and customs pertaining to the display and use of the flag of the United States of America be, and it is hereby, established for the use of such civilians or civilian groups or organizations as may not be required to conform with regulations promulgated by one or more executive departments of the Government of the United States. The flag of the United States for the purpose of this chapter shall be defined according to title 4, United States Code, chapter 1, section 1 and section 2 and Executive Order 10834 issued pursuant thereto.

Sec. 2. (a) It is the universal custom to display the flag only from sunrise to sunset on buildings and on stationary flagstaves in the open. However, when a patriotic effect is desired, the flag may be displayed twenty-four hours a day if properly illuminated during the hours of darkness.

(b) The flag should be hoisted briskly and lowered ceremoniously.

(c) The flag should not be displayed on days when the weather is inclement, except when an all weather flag is displayed.

(d) The flag should be displayed on all days, especially on New Year's Day, January 1; Inauguration Day, January 20; Lincoln's Birthday, February 12; Washington's Birthday, third Monday in February; Easter Sunday (variable); Mother's Day, second Sunday in May; Armed Forces Day, third Saturday in May; Memorial Day (half-staff until noon), the last Monday in May; Flag Day, June 14; Independence Day, July 4; Labor Day, first Monday in September; Constitution Day, September 17; Columbus Day, second Monday in October; Navy Day, October 27; Veterans Day, November 11; Thanksgiving Day, fourth Thursday in November; Christmas Day, December 25; and such other days as may be proclaimed by the President of the United States; the birthdays of States (date of admission); and on State holidays.

(e) The flag should be displayed daily on or near the main administration building of every public institution.

(f) The flag should be displayed in or near every polling place on election days.

(g) The flag should be displayed during school days in or near every schoolhouse.

Sec. 3. That the flag, when carried in a procession with another flag or flags, should be either on the marching right;

that is, the flag's own right, or, if there is a line of other flags, in front of the center of that line.

(a) The flag should not be displayed on a float in a parade except from a staff, or as provided in subsection (i).

(b) The flag should not be draped over the hood, top, sides, or back of a vehicle or of a railroad train or a boat. When the flag is displayed on a motorcar, the staff shall be fixed firmly to the chassis or clamped to the right fender.

(c) No other flag or pennant should be placed above or, if on the same level, to the right of the flag of the United States of America, except during church services conducted by naval chaplains at sea, when the church pennant may be flown above the flag during church services for the personnel of the Navy.

(d) The flag of the United States of America, when it is displayed with another flag against a wall from crossed staffs, should be on the right, the flag's own right, and its staff should be in front of the staff of the other flag.

(e) The flag of the United States of America should be at the center and at the highest point of the group when a number of flags of States or localities or pennants of societies are grouped and displayed from staffs.

(f) When flags of States, cities, or localities, or pennants of societies are flown on the same halyard with the flag of the United States, the latter should always be at the peak. When the flags are flown from adjacent staffs, the flag of the United States should be hoisted first and lowered last. No such flag or pennant may be placed above the flag of the United States or to the United States flag's right.

(g) When flags of two or more nations are displayed, they are to be flown from separate staffs of the same height. The flags should be of approximately equal size. International usage forbids the display of the flag of one nation above that of another nation in time of peace.

(h) When the flag of the United States is displayed from a staff projecting horizontally or at an angle from the window sill, balcony, or front of a building, the union of the flag should be placed at the peak of the staff unless the flag is at half-staff. When the flag is suspended over a sidewalk from a rope extending from a house to a pole at the edge of the sidewalk, the flag should be hoisted out, union first, from the building.

(i) When displayed either horizontally or vertically against a wall, the union should be uppermost and to the flag's own right, that is, to the observer's left. When displayed in a window, the flag should be displayed in the same way, with the union or blue field to the left of the observer in the street.

(j) When the flag is displayed over the middle of the street, it should be suspended vertically with the union to the north in an east and west street or to the east in a north and south street.

(k) When used on a speaker's platform, the flag, if displayed flat, should be displayed above and behind the speaker. When displayed from a staff in a church or public auditorium, the flag of the United States of America should hold the position of superior prominence, in advance of the audience, and in the position of honor at the clergyman's or speaker's right as he faces the audience. Any other flag so displayed should be placed on the left of the clergyman or speaker or to the right of the audience.

(l) The flag should form a distinctive feature of the ceremony of unveiling a statue or monument, but it should never be used as the covering for the statue or monument.

(m) The flag, when flown at half-staff, should be first hoisted to the peak for an instant and then lowered to the half-staff position. The flag should be again raised to the peak before it is lowered for the day. On Memorial Day the flag should be displayed at half-staff until noon only, then raised to the top of the staff. By order of the President, the flag shall be flown at half-staff upon the death of principal figures of the United States Government and the Governor of a State, territory, or possession, as a mark of respect to their memory. In the event of the death of other officials or foreign dignitaries, the flag is to be displayed at half-staff according to Presidential instructions or orders, or in accordance with recognized customs or practices not inconsistent with law. In the event of the death of a present or former official of the government of any State, territory, or possession of the United States, the Governor of that State, territory, or possession may proclaim that the National flag shall be flown at half-staff. The flag shall be flown at half-staff thirty days from the death of the President or a former President; ten days from the day of death of the Vice President, the Chief Justice or a retired Chief Justice of the United States, or the Speaker of the House of Representatives; from the day of death until interment of an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, a Secretary of an executive or military department, a former Vice President, or the Governor of a State, territory, or possession; and on the day of death and the following day for a Member of Congress. As used in this subsection—

(1) the term "half-staff" means the position of the flag when it is one-half the distance between the top and bottom of the staff;

(2) the term "executive or military department" means any agency listed under sections 101 and 102 of title 5, United States Code; and

(3) the term "Member of Congress" means a Senator, a Representative, a Delegate, or the Resident Commissioner from Puerto Rico.

(n) When the flag is used to cover a casket, it should be so placed that the union is at the head and over the left shoulder. The flag should not be lowered into the grave or allowed to touch the ground.

(o) When the flag is suspended across a corridor or lobby in a building with only one main entrance, it should be suspended vertically with the union of the flag to the observer's left upon entering. If the building has more than one main entrance, the flag should be suspended vertically near the center of the corridor or lobby with the union to the north, when entrances are to the east and west or to the east when entrances are to the north and south. If there are entrances in more than two directions, the union should be to the east.

Sec. 4. That no disrespect should be shown to the flag of the United States of America; the flag should not be dipped to any person or thing. Regimental colors, State flags, and organization or institutional flags are to be dipped as a mark of honor.

(a) The flag should never be displayed with the union down, except as a signal of dire distress in instances of extreme danger to life or property.

(b) The flag should never touch anything beneath it, such as the ground, the floor, water, or merchandise.

(c) The flag should never be carried flat or horizontally, but always aloft and free.

(d) The flag should never be used as wearing apparel, bedding, or drapery. It should never be festooned, drawn back, nor up, in folds, but always allowed to fall free. Bunting of blue, white, and red, always arranged with the blue above, the white in the middle, and the red below, should be used for covering a speaker's desk, draping the front of the platform, and for decoration in general.

(e) The flag should never be fastened, displayed, used, or stored in such a manner as to permit it to be easily torn, soiled, or damaged in any way.

(f) The flag should never be used as a covering for a ceiling.

(g) The flag should never have placed upon it, nor on any part of it, nor attached to it any mark, insignia, letter, word, figure, design, picture, or drawing of any nature.

(h) The flag should never be used as a receptacle for receiving, holding, carrying, or delivering anything.

(i) The flag should never be used for advertising purposes in any manner whatsoever. It should not be embroidered on such articles as cushions or handkerchiefs and the like, printed or otherwise impressed on paper napkins or boxes or anything that is designed for temporary use and discard. Advertising signs should not be fastened to a staff or halyard from which the flag is flown.

(j) No part of the flag should ever be used as a costume or athletic uniform. However, a flag patch may be affixed to the uniform of military personnel, firemen, policemen, and members of patriotic organizations. The flag represents a living country and is itself considered a living thing. Therefore, the lapel flag pin being a replica, should be worn on the left lapel near the heart.

(k) The flag, when it is in such condition that it is no longer a fitting emblem for display, should be destroyed in a dignified way, preferably by burning.

Sec. 5. During the ceremony of hoisting or lowering the flag or when the flag is passing in a parade or in review, all persons present except those in uniform should face the flag and stand at attention with the right hand over the heart. Those present in uniform should render the military salute. When not in uniform, men should remove their headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart. Aliens should stand at attention. The salute to the flag in a moving column should be rendered at the moment the flag passes.

Sec. 6. During rendition of the national anthem when the flag is displayed, all present except those in uniform should stand at attention facing the flag with the right hand over the heart. Men not in uniform should remove their headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart. Persons in uniform should render the military salute at the first note of the anthem and retain this position until the last note. When the flag is not displayed, those present should face toward the music and act in the same manner they would if the flag were displayed there.

Sec. 7. The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, "I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all", should be rendered by standing at attention facing the flag with the right hand over the heart. When not in uniform men should remove their

headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart. Persons in uniform should remain silent, face the flag, and render the military salute.

Sec. 8. Any rule or custom pertaining to the display of the flag of the United States of America, set forth herein, may be altered, modified, or repealed, or additional rules with respect thereto may be prescribed, by the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of the United States, whenever he deems it to be appropriate or desirable; and any such alteration or additional rule shall be set forth in a proclamation.

No person shall display the flag of the United Nations or any other national or international flag equal, above, or in a position of superior prominence or honor to, or in place of, the flag of the United States at any place within the United States or any Territory or possession thereof: Provided, That nothing in this section shall make unlawful the continuance of the practice heretofore followed of displaying the flag of the United Nations in a position of superior prominence or honor, and other national flags in positions of equal prominence or honor, with that of the flag of the United States at the headquarters of the United Nations.

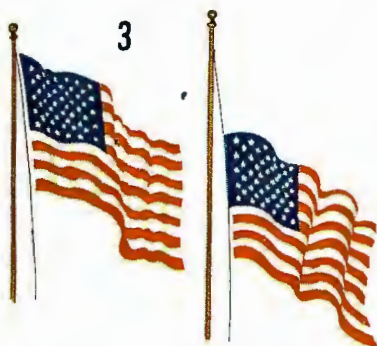
HOW TO DISPLAY THE FLAG

1. When the flag is displayed over the middle of the street, it should be suspended vertically with the union to the north in an east and west street or to the east in a north and south street.

2. The flag of the United States of America, when it is displayed with another flag against a wall from crossed staffs, should be on the right, the flag's own right, and its staff should be in front of the staff of the other flag.

3. The flag, when flown at half-staff, should be first hoisted to the peak for an instant and then lowered to the half-staff position. The flag should be again raised to the peak before it is lowered for the day. By "half-staff" is meant lowering the flag to one-half the distance between the top and bottom of the staff. Crepe streamers may be affixed to spear heads or flag-staffs in a parade only by order of the President of the United States.

4. When flags of States, cities, or localities, or pennants of societies are flown on the same halyard with the flag of the United States, the latter should always be at the peak. When



the flags are flown from adjacent staffs, the flag of the United States should be hoisted first and lowered last. No such flag or pennant may be placed above the flag of the United States or to the right of the flag of the United States.

5. When the flag is suspended over a sidewalk from a rope extending from a house to a pole at the edge of the sidewalk, the flag should be hoisted out, union first, from the building.

6. When the flag of the United States is displayed from a staff projecting horizontally or at an angle from the window sill, balcony, or front of a building, the union of the flag should be placed at the peak of the staff unless the flag is at half-staff.

7. When the flag is used to cover a casket, it should be so placed that the union is at the head and over the left shoulder. The flag should not be lowered into the grave or allowed to touch the ground.

8. When the flag is displayed in a manner other than by being flown from a staff, it should be displayed flat, whether indoors or out. When displayed either horizontally or vertically against a wall, the union should be uppermost and to the flag's own right, that is, to the observer's left. When displayed in a window it should be displayed in the same way, that is, with the union or blue field to the left of the observer in the street. When festoons, rosettes or drapings are desired, bunting of blue, white and red should be used, but never the flag.

9. That the flag, when carried in a procession with another flag or flags, should be either on the marching right; that is, the flag's own right, or, if there is a line of other flags, in front of the center of that line.

10. The flag of the United States of America should be at the center and at the highest point of the group when a number of flags of States or localities or pennants of societies are grouped and displayed from staffs.

11. When flags of two or more nations are displayed, they are to be flown from separate staffs of the same height. The flags should be of approximately equal size. International usage forbids the display of the flag of one nation above that of another nation in time of peace.

GREAT SEAL OF THE UNITED STATES



OBVERSE



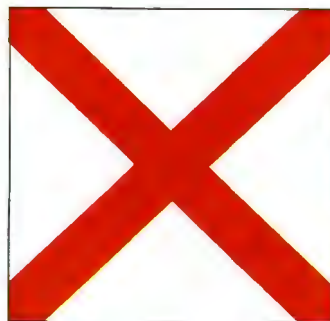
REVERSE



BICENTENNIAL FLAG



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA



ALABAMA
December 14, 1819



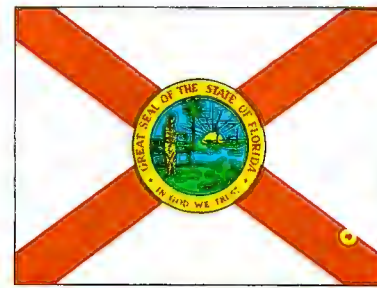
ALASKA
January 3, 1959



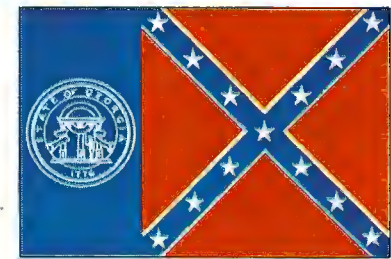
ARIZONA
February 14, 1912



ARKANSAS
June 15, 1836



FLORIDA
March 3, 1845



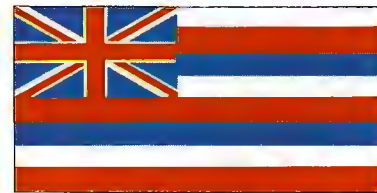
GEORGIA
January 2, 1788



CALIFORNIA
September 9, 1850



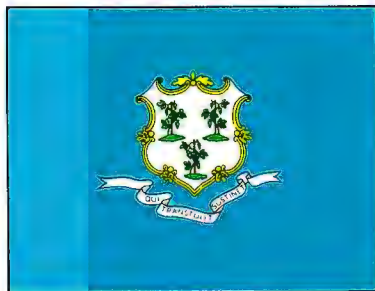
COLORADO
August 1, 1876



HAWAII
August 21, 1959



IDAHO
July 3, 1890



CONNECTICUT
January 9, 1788



DELAWARE
December 7, 1787



ILLINOIS
December 3, 1818



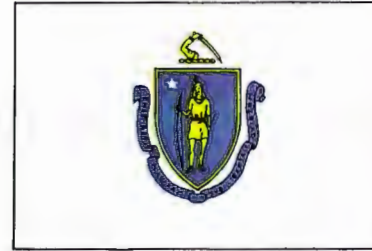
INDIANA
December 11, 1816



IOWA
December 28, 1846



KANSAS
January 29, 1861



MASSACHUSETTS
February 6, 1788



MICHIGAN
January 26, 1837



KENTUCKY
June 1, 1792



LOUISIANA
April 30, 1812



MINNESOTA
May 11, 1858



MISSISSIPPI
December 10, 1817



MAINE
March 15, 1820



MARYLAND
April 28, 1788



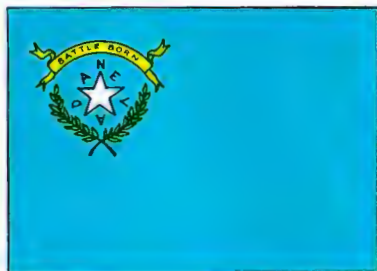
MISSOURI
August 10, 1821



MONTANA
November 8, 1889



NEBRASKA
March 1, 1867



NEVADA
October 31, 1864



NORTH CAROLINA
November 21, 1789



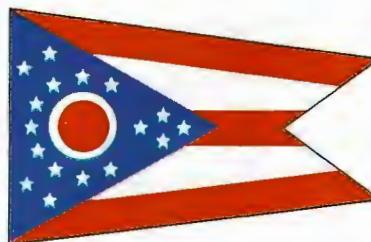
NORTH DAKOTA
November 2, 1889



NEW HAMPSHIRE
June 21, 1788



NEW JERSEY
December 18, 1787



OHIO
March 1, 1803



OKLAHOMA
November 16, 1907



NEW MEXICO
January 6, 1912



NEW YORK
July 26, 1788



OREGON
February 14, 1859



PENNSYLVANIA
December 12, 1787



RHODE ISLAND
May 29, 1790



SOUTH CAROLINA
May 23, 1788



VERMONT
March 4, 1791



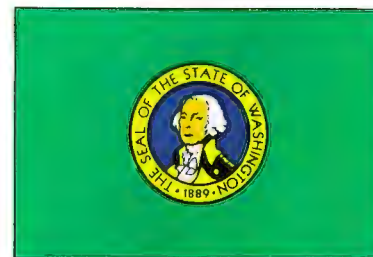
VIRGINIA
June 25, 1788



SOUTH DAKOTA
November 2, 1889



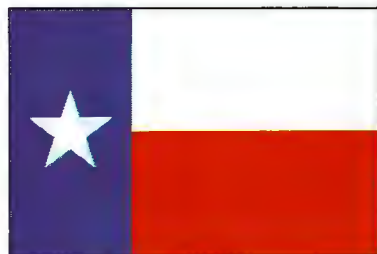
TENNESSEE
June 1, 1796



WASHINGTON
November 11, 1889



WEST VIRGINIA
June 20, 1863



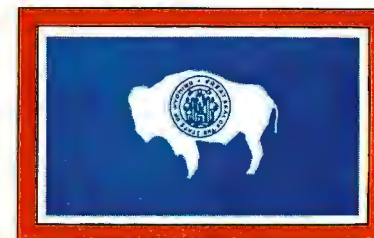
TEXAS
December 29, 1845



UTAH
January 4, 1896



WISCONSIN
May 29, 1848



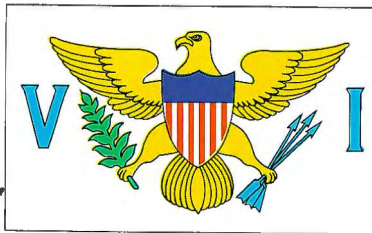
WYOMING
July 10, 1890



GUAM



PUERTO RICO



VIRGIN ISLANDS

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 66

(Submitted by Mr. Hawkins)

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

April 5, 1979

RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES (THE SENATE CONCURRING), That there be printed as a House document a revised edition of "Our Flag", revised under the direction of the Joint Committee on Printing.

Sec. 2. In addition to the usual number of copies, there shall be printed two hundred and seventy-eight thousand additional copies, of which two hundred and twenty-one thousand five hundred copies shall be for the use of the House of Representatives, fifty-one thousand five hundred copies shall be for the use of the Senate, and five thousand copies shall be for the use of the Joint Committee on Printing.

OUR FLAG



The background of the entire page is a vibrant blue sky filled with soft, white, fluffy clouds. In the upper left quadrant, the American flag is depicted waving from a flagpole. The flag features a dark blue canton with white stars and alternating red and white stripes. The title "OUR FLAG" is printed in a large, black, serif font across the middle of the page, partially overlapping the flag and the sky.

OUR FLAG



PRINTED UNDER THE DIRECTION
OF THE
JOINT COMMITTEE ON PRINTING

Frank Thompson, Jr., Representative from New Jersey, *Chairman*
Claiborne Pell, Senator from Rhode Island, *Vice Chairman*
Augustus F. Hawkins, Representative from California
William L. Dickinson, Representative from Alabama
Howard W. Cannon, Senator from Nevada
Mark O. Hatfield, Senator from Oregon

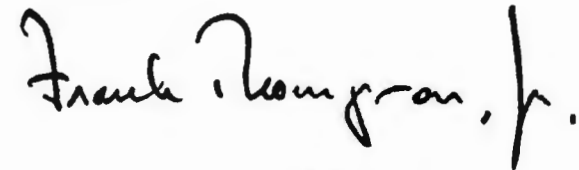
JOINT COMMITTEE STAFF

Denver Dickerson, Staff Director
Faye M. Padgett, Deputy Staff Director
Gordon Andrew McKay, General Counsel
Charles D. Posey, Assistant Staff Director

The booklet "Our Flag" has been a useful and immensely popular publication for some time. Its audience has included countless numbers of schools, patriotic organizations, civic and service groups and individuals. The Committee therefore welcomes this opportunity to have the publication reprinted as a House Document.

The flag is a symbol of our Nation's past, present, and future. It represents the ideals established by the Founding Fathers which have fostered our Country's growth and development over the last two centuries.

This booklet, a publication of the Congress, describes briefly the history of the flag, and sets forth the observances appropriate to its display. The Committee hopes that this information will contribute to a better understanding of our Country's flag, and the principles and Republic for which it stands.



Chairman
Joint Committee on Printing

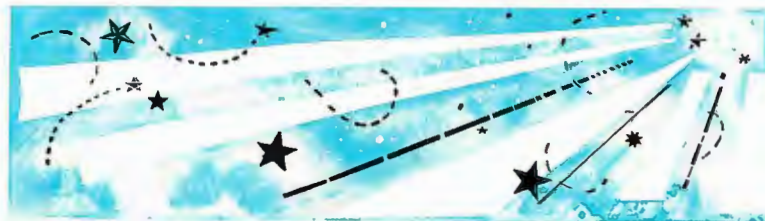
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

"I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

This wording of the pledge varies slightly from the original, which was drawn up in 1892 in the office of **The Youth's Companion** magazine in Boston. It was first used in the public schools in celebration of Columbus Day, 12 October 1892.

The pledge received official recognition by Congress in an Act approved 22 June 1942. The phrase "under God" was added to the pledge by a Congressional Act of 14 June 1954. At that time, President Eisenhower said that "in this way we are reaffirming the transcendence of religious faith in America's heritage and future; in this way we shall constantly strengthen those spiritual weapons which forever will be our country's most powerful resource in peace and war."

THE STORY OF THE STARS AND STRIPES



The story of the origin of our National flag parallels the story of the origin of our country. As our country received its birthright from the peoples of many lands who were gathered on these shores to found a new nation, so did the pattern of the Stars and Stripes rise from several origins back in the mists of antiquity to become emblazoned on the standards of our infant Republic.

The star is a symbol of the heavens and the divine goal to which man has aspired from time immemorial; the stripe is symbolic of the rays of light emanating from the sun. Both themes have long been represented on the standards of nations, from the banners of the astral worshippers of ancient Egypt and Babylon to the 12-starred flag of the Spanish Conquistadors under Cortez. Continuing in favor, they spread to the striped standards of Holland and the West India Company in the 17th century and to the present patterns of stars and stripes on the flags of several nations of Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Americas.

The first flags adopted by our colonial forefathers were symbolic of their struggles with the wilderness of a new land.



Beavers, pine trees, rattlesnakes, anchors, and various like insignia with mottoes such as "Hope," "Liberty," "Appeal to Heaven," or "Dont Tread on Me" were affixed to the different banners of Colonial America.

The first flag of the colonists to have any resemblance to the present Stars and Stripes was the Grand Union flag, sometimes referred to as the "Congress Colors." It consisted of thirteen stripes, alternately red and white, representing the Thirteen Colonies, with a blue field in the upper left-hand corner bearing the crosses of St. George and St. Andrew, signifying union with the mother country. This banner was first flown by the ships of the Colonial Fleet in the Delaware River in December 1775.

In January 1776, the Grand Union flag became the standard of the Continental Army which had come into being some months before—in June 1775. It was also carried by American Marines and Bluejackets comprising an expeditionary force to the West Indies in 1776.

During the previous year a canton (section) of thirteen stripes appeared on the yellow silk standard of the Philadelphia troop of Light Horse when the latter served as an escort to General Washington who was journeying to Cambridge, Massachusetts, to assume command of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and New Hampshire volunteers.

Some Americans still believe that Betsy Ross made the first flag, although historians dispute this story. Another disputed story is that the first Stars and Stripes displayed in the face of an armed enemy was at Fort Schuyler, 3 August 1777. The flag was improvised. The white part came from a soldier's shirt; a captain's cloak supplied the blue of the union; and the red stripes came from the flannel petticoat of a soldier's wife,

who gladly donated it for the purpose. However, this was probably a Grand Union flag.

Continental Congress passed a resolution that established the Stars and Stripes on 14 June 1777, but did not specify the arrangement of the thirteen stars on the blue union, except to say that they should represent a new constellation. Consequently some had stars in a circle, some in rows, some scattered on the blue field without any apparent design. The flag popularly known as the Betsy Ross flag had the stars in a circle.

The first Navy Stars and Stripes had the stars arranged in staggered formation in alternate lines and rows of threes and twos on a blue field. A close inspection of this arrangement of the stars shows a distinct outline of the X-shaped cross of St. Andrew and the cross of St. George of the English flag. This indicates how difficult it was for the colonists, even at that late date, to break away entirely from the British flag under which they had been born and had lived all the years of their lives.

The Resolution of 14 June 1777 establishing the Stars and Stripes has an interesting history. After the Declaration of Independence, colonial vessels were putting to sea to hamper enemy communications and prey on British commerce. Many of them flew the flags of the particular Colonies to which they belonged. It was necessary to provide an authorized national flag under which they could sail, for England considered armed vessels without such a flag as pirate ships and hanged their crews when they captured them. So the Marine Committee of the Second Continental Congress presented the Resolution, which was on the subject of the Navy.

General Washington, when the Star-Spangled Banner was first flown by the Continental Army, is reputed to have described



its symbolism as follows: "We take the stars from heaven, the red from our mother country, separating it by white stripes, thus showing that we have separated from her, and the white stripes shall go down to posterity representing liberty."

After the admission of Kentucky and Vermont, a resolution was adopted in January 1794, making the flag one of fifteen stars and fifteen stripes.

Realizing that the flag would become unwieldly with a stripe for each new State, Captain Samuel C. Reid, USN, suggested to Congress that the stripes remain thirteen in number to represent the Thirteen Colonies, and that a star be added to the blue field for each new State coming into the Union. A law of 4 April 1818 that resulted requires that a star be added for each new State on the 4th of July after its admission but that the thirteen stripes remain unchanged.

A 48-star flag came with admission of Arizona and New Mexico in 1912. Alaska added a 49th star in 1959, and Hawaii a 50th star in 1960.

There is no fixed order for numbering the stars in the flag, nor are stars assigned to particular States. The stars represent the States collectively, not individually, and no particular star may be designated as representative of any particular State.

Following the War of 1812, a great wave of nationalistic spirit spread throughout the country; the infant Republic had



successfully defied the might of an empire. As this spirit spread, the Stars and Stripes began to take on the characteristics of a mighty symbol of sovereignty. The homage paid that banner is best expressed by what the gifted men of later generations wrote concerning it.

The brilliant Henry Ward Beecher said: "A thoughtful mind when it sees a nation's flag, sees not the flag, but the nation itself. And whatever may be its symbols, its insignia, he reads chiefly in the flag, the government, the principles, the truths, the history that belong to the nation that sets it forth. The American flag has been a symbol of Liberty and men rejoiced in it.

"The stars upon it were like the bright morning stars of God, and the stripes upon it were beams of morning light. As at early dawn the stars shine forth even while it grows light, and then as the sun advances that light breaks into banks and streaming lines of color, the glowing red and intense white striving together, and ribbing the horizon with bars effulgent, so, on the American flag, stars and beams of many-colored light shine out together"

In a 1917 Flag Day message, President Wilson said: "This flag, which we honor and under which we serve, is the emblem of our unity, our power, our thought and purpose as a nation. It has no other character than that which we give it from generation to generation. The choices are ours. It floats in majestic silence above the hosts that execute those choices, whether in peace or in war. And yet, though silent, it speaks to us—speaks to us of the past, of the men and women who went before us, and of the records they wrote upon it.



"We celebrate the day of its birth; and from its birth until now it has witnessed a great history, has floated on high the symbol of great events, of a great plan of life worked out by a great people. . . .

"Woe be to the man or group of men that seeks to stand in our way in this day of high resolution when every principle we hold dearest is to be vindicated and made secure for the salvation of the nation. We are ready to plead at the bar of history, and our flag shall wear a new luster. Once more we shall make good with our lives and fortunes the great faith to which we were born, and a new glory shall shine in the face of our people."

Thus the Stars and Stripes came into being; born amid the strife of battle, it became the standard around which a free people struggled to found a great Nation. Its spirit is fervently expressed in the words of Thomas Jefferson:

"I swear, before the altar of God, eternal hostility to every form of tyranny over the mind of man."

Traditionally a symbol of liberty, the American flag has carried the message of freedom to many parts of the world. Sometimes the identical flag that was flying at a crucial moment in our history has been flown again in another place to symbolize continuity in our struggles in the cause of liberty.

One of the most memorable is the flag that flew over the Capitol in Washington on 7 December 1941 when Pearl Harbor was attacked. This same flag was raised again on 8 December when war was declared on Japan, and three days later at the time of the declaration of war against Germany and Italy. President Roosevelt called it the "flag of liberation" and carried it with him to the Casablanca Conference and on other historic occasions. It flew from the mast of the USS "Missouri" during the formal Japanese surrender on 2 September 1945.

Another historic flag is the one that flew over Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941. It also rippled above the United Nations Charter meeting at San Francisco and over the Big Three Conference at Potsdam. This same flag was flying over the White House on 14 August 1945, when the Japanese accepted surrender terms.

EARLY AMERICAN FLAGS



Heraldry is as old as the human race, and the carrying of banners has been the habit of nations since the beginning of time.

Some years ago in northern India, Sir John Marshall, head of the archeological service of the government of India, discovered two abandoned cities: one at a site now called Mohenjo-Daro, the other at Harappa. These cities are believed to have thrived about 3,500 B.C. and were in close contact with the earliest civilizations of Babylonia. Among the objects found in the former city was a seal, used to sign documents, showing a procession of seven men carrying square standards, held aloft on poles like modern flags. These ancient "flags" were not made of cloth as are modern flags, but were rigid, like boards.

Far back in American history, the Vikings carried a flag which bore a black raven on a field of white.

Then in 1492 Columbus sailed to our shores, and his three small ships displayed the Spanish flag bearing two red lions on two white fields and two yellow castles on two red fields.



It is most natural that America should have had its colonial flags as soon as the first colonists settled. And it is not surprising that those flags should have been created in a wide variety.

The Dutch brought their own striped flags when they settled in New Amsterdam, which we now call New York, and pioneers from other nations also brought along the standards of their countries when they settled on our shores.

The British flag, under which the English colonization of America was effected, remained the flag of the colonists for more than a hundred years and is therefore of special significance to our country in the evolution of our National flag.

This flag is represented by the canton of the Grand Union flag (page 12). For centuries the flag of England was the red cross of St. George on a white field and the flag of Scotland was the white cross of St. Andrew on a blue field.

In 1606, after England and Scotland had become one nation, the two crosses were blended in a maritime flag, the Union Jack. The Scottish flag formed the background, with the cross of St. George superimposed on it. To represent the white field of the English flag, the red cross of St. George was mounted on white, making it stand out. A hundred years later this design was adopted and, slightly modified in 1801 by the addition of the Irish cross of St. Patrick, became the flag of Great Britain as we know it today.

Our separation from the mother country came gradually and it was only by degrees that the union flag of Great Britain was discarded. The final breach between the Colonies and Great Britain brought about the removal of the union from the canton of our striped flag and the substitution of stars in a blue field.

Back in the days of the Revolution there were colonial or regimental flags by the score. While the pine tree was a popular design, there were numerous other symbols, such as beavers, anchors, and rattlesnakes, or combinations of these symbols, with appropriate slogans.

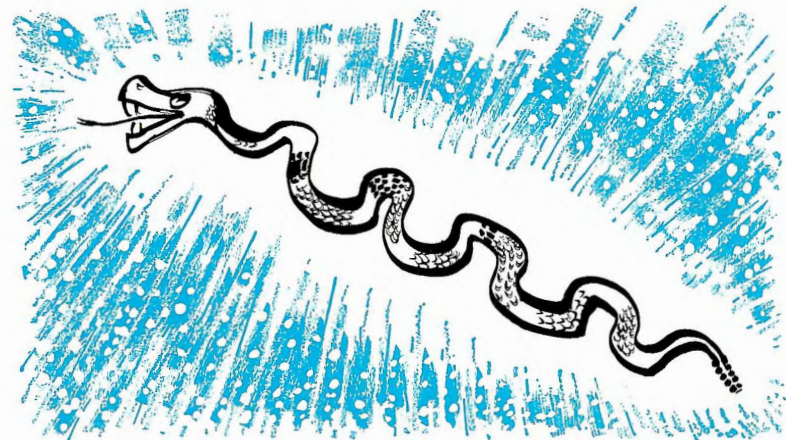
In early accounts of colonial activities, liberty poles and trees bear an important part. A fine old elm in Hanover Square, Boston, where the Sons of Liberty met, was known as the Liberty Tree.

A wide-spreading live oak in Charleston, South Carolina, made a shelter under which the leading patriots of the day gathered to discuss political questions, and there the Declaration of Independence was first read to the people of the city.

When in 1652 the Colony of Massachusetts first established a mint, the general court ordained that all pieces of money should bear on one side a tree, thus bringing into being the famous pine tree shillings.

Later a white flag with a green pine tree and the inscription "An Appeal to Heaven" became familiar on the seas as the ensign of cruisers commissioned by General Washington, a fact noted by many English newspapers at that time.

Meanwhile the rattlesnake theme was gaining increasing prestige with the colonists, and eventually a coiled serpent at the foot of the tree was added to the pine tree design. The slogan "Dont Tread on Me" almost invariably appeared on rattlesnake flags.





A flag of the rattlesnake type was the standard of the South Carolina Navy. Another was the Gadsden flag—consisting of a yellow field with a rattlesnake in a spiral coil, poised to strike, in the center. Below the snake was the motto, "Dont Tread on Me." Similar was the Culpepper flag, banner of the Minute-men of Culpepper (now spelled Culpeper) County, Virginia. It consisted of a white field with a rattlesnake in a spiral coil in the center. Above the rattlesnake was the legend "The Culpepper Minute Men" and below, the mottoes, "Liberty or Death" and "Dont Tread on Me."

One writer of the time quaintly stated that as the rattlesnake's eye exceeded in brightness that of any other "animal," and she had no eyelids, she might therefore be esteemed a symbol of vigilance; that inasmuch as she never began an attack, nor, when once engaged, ever surrendered, she was therefore an emblem of magnanimity and true courage.

It was probably the deadly bite of the rattler, however, which was foremost in the minds of its designers, and the threatening slogan "Dont Tread on Me" added further significance to the design.

The Moultrie flag was the first distinctive American flag displayed in the South. It flew over the ramparts of the fort on Sullivan's Island, which lies in the channel leading to Charleston, South Carolina, when the British fleet, under the command of Sir Peter Parker, attacked on 28 June 1776. The British ships opened fire at about 10:30 a.m. and continued the bombardment for approximately ten hours, but the garrison, consisting of some 375 regulars and a few militia, under the command of Colonel William Moultrie, put up such a gallant defense that the British were forced to withdraw under cover of darkness. This victory not only saved the southern Colonies from invasion for some two years but marked the first defeat of a British naval force for a period of years. The design of this large blue flag with a white crescent in the upper corner next to the staff was suggested by the blue uniforms of the garrison and the silver crescents, which the men wore on their caps, inscribed with the words "Liberty or Death."

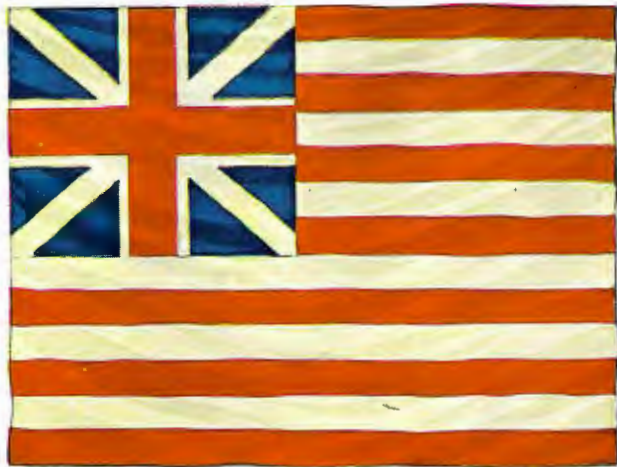
The maritime Colony of Rhode Island had its own flag, which was carried at Brandywine, Trenton, and Yorktown. It bore an anchor, thirteen stars, and the word "Hope," and its white stars in a blue field are believed by many to have suggested the "starry blue field" of our National flag.

There were a number of other famous New England flags, and noteworthy among them was the Bunker Hill. This flag, which was one of the first to include the pine tree, was one of those carried by the American colonial troops who opposed the British Regulars at the Battle of Bunker Hill, 17 June 1775.

Strikingly similar to our flag of today was the flag carried by the Green Mountain Boys at the Battle of Bennington on 16 August 1777. It has been claimed that our National flag was fashioned after the pattern of the Bennington flag, but there appears to be nothing in the written history of the flag that would verify this claim.

All of these flags and scores of others disappeared soon after the Stars and Stripes was adopted, yet the insignia shown on some of them was retained in some cases and now appears occasionally on State flags.

THE GRAND UNION FLAG



The Grand Union flag, sometimes called the "First Navy Ensign" and the "Cambridge Flag," among other designations, was the immediate predecessor of the Stars and Stripes. This type of flag was carried on the flagship "Alfred" on 3 December 1775, as the naval ensign of the Thirteen Colonies, after Commodore Esek Hopkins assumed command of the Navy built by Congress. It was raised by General Washington in January 1776, at Cambridge, Mass., as the standard of the Continental Army, and it was also carried ashore by the Marines who made an expedition to the Bahamas in March of 1776. As the flag of the Revolution, it was used on many occasions before 14 June 1777, when the Continental Congress authorized the Stars and Stripes. The canton, with its crosses of St. George and St. Andrew, indicated our relation with the "mother country" until the severance of those ties brought about its replacement with the white stars in a blue field. Washington later wrote that it was flown at Cambridge "out of compliment to the United Colonies."

THE FIRST STARS AND STRIPES

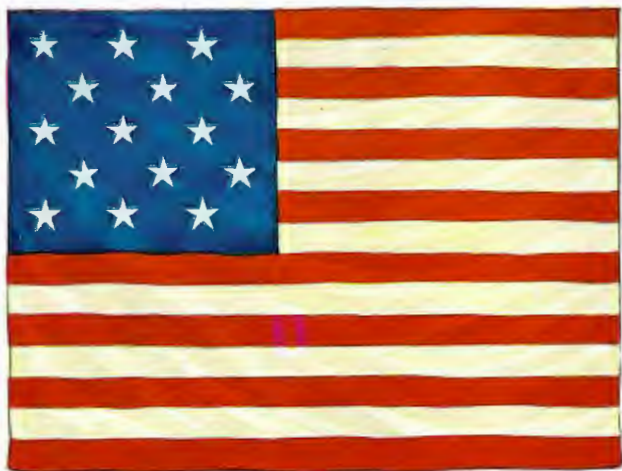


The Stars and Stripes, whose birthday we observe on 14 June, was created on that date, in 1777, when the Continental Congress resolved: "That the flag of the thirteen United States be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white: that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation."

Some of the early flags used by the Army had the stars arranged in circles and some were in rows. There was no prescribed arrangement for the stars.

The first Navy Stars and Stripes, flown by the man-of-war "Guerriere" when she sailed from Boston on 25 July 1818 for Cowes, England, had the stars arranged in staggered formation in alternate lines and rows of threes and twos on the field of blue. However, on 9 September 1818, the Board of Navy Commissioners received a directive from President Monroe that "the Flag of the United States shall conform to the pattern, herewith transmitted, viz: twenty stars in a blue union, and thirteen stripes, red and white, alternately, according to the Act of Congress passed on the fourth of April last; of which you will please to give due notice to the Naval Commanders, and the necessary directions for making the Flags."

FIFTEEN STARS AND STRIPES



Following an Act of Congress on 13 January 1794, this was the flag of our country from 1795 until 1818. The addition of the two stars and two stripes came with the admission of Vermont, 4 March 1791, and Kentucky, 1 June 1792, into the Union. This type of flag figured in many stirring episodes. It inspired Francis Scott Key to write the "Star-Spangled Banner"; it was the first flag to be flown over a fortress of the Old World, when Lieutenant Presley N. O'Bannon, of the Marine Corps, and Midshipman Mann, of the Navy, raised it above the Tripolitan stronghold in Derne, Tripoli, on 27 April 1805; it was our ensign in the Battle of Lake Erie; and was flown by General Jackson at New Orleans. Fearing that too many stripes would spoil the true design of the flag, Congress passed a law on 4 April 1818, returning the flag to its original design of thirteen stripes and providing for a new star to be added to the blue field as additional States came into the Union. Thus, for nearly a quarter of a century, this flag with its fifteen stars and stripes was the banner of our growing Nation.

FLAGS OF THE REVOLUTION



WASHINGTON'S CRUISERS



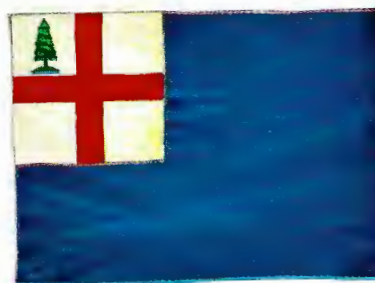
MOULTRIE



RHODE ISLAND



CONTINENTAL FLAG



BUNKER HILL FLAG



BENNINGTON FLAG

FLAG LAWS AND REGULATIONS

The following codification of existing rules and customs pertaining to the display and use of the flag of the United States of America be, and it is hereby, established for the use of such civilians or civilian groups or organizations as may not be required to conform with regulations promulgated by one or more executive departments of the Government of the United States. The flag of the United States for the purpose of this chapter shall be defined according to title 4, United States Code, chapter 1, section 1 and section 2 and Executive Order 10834 issued pursuant thereto.

Sec. 2. (a) It is the universal custom to display the flag only from sunrise to sunset on buildings and on stationary flagstaffs in the open. However, when a patriotic effect is desired, the flag may be displayed twenty-four hours a day if properly illuminated during the hours of darkness.

(b) The flag should be hoisted briskly and lowered ceremoniously.

(c) The flag should not be displayed on days when the weather is inclement, except when an all weather flag is displayed.

(d) The flag should be displayed on all days, especially on New Year's Day, January 1; Inauguration Day, January 20; Lincoln's Birthday, February 12; Washington's Birthday, third Monday in February; Easter Sunday (variable); Mother's Day, second Sunday in May; Armed Forces Day, third Saturday in May; Memorial Day (half-staff until noon), the last Monday in May; Flag Day, June 14; Independence Day, July 4; Labor Day, first Monday in September; Constitution Day, September 17; Columbus Day, second Monday in October; Navy Day, October 27; Veterans Day, November 11; Thanksgiving Day, fourth Thursday in November; Christmas Day, December 25; and such other days as may be proclaimed by the President of the United States; the birthdays of States (date of admission); and on State holidays.

(e) The flag should be displayed daily on or near the main administration building of every public institution.

(f) The flag should be displayed in or near every polling place on election days.

(g) The flag should be displayed during school days in or near every schoolhouse.

Sec. 3. That the flag, when carried in a procession with another flag or flags, should be either on the marching right;

that is, the flag's own right, or, if there is a line of other flags, in front of the center of that line.

(a) The flag should not be displayed on a float in a parade except from a staff, or as provided in subsection (i).

(b) The flag should not be draped over the hood, top, sides, or back of a vehicle or of a railroad train or a boat. When the flag is displayed on a motorcar, the staff shall be fixed firmly to the chassis or clamped to the right fender.

(c) No other flag or pennant should be placed above or, if on the same level, to the right of the flag of the United States of America, except during church services conducted by naval chaplains at sea, when the church pennant may be flown above the flag during church services for the personnel of the Navy.

(d) The flag of the United States of America, when it is displayed with another flag against a wall from crossed staffs, should be on the right, the flag's own right, and its staff should be in front of the staff of the other flag.

(e) The flag of the United States of America should be at the center and at the highest point of the group when a number of flags of States or localities or pennants of societies are grouped and displayed from staffs.

(f) When flags of States, cities, or localities, or pennants of societies are flown on the same halyard with the flag of the United States, the latter should always be at the peak. When the flags are flown from adjacent staffs, the flag of the United States should be hoisted first and lowered last. No such flag or pennant may be placed above the flag of the United States or to the United States flag's right.

(g) When flags of two or more nations are displayed, they are to be flown from separate staffs of the same height. The flags should be of approximately equal size. International usage forbids the display of the flag of one nation above that of another nation in time of peace.

(h) When the flag of the United States is displayed from a staff projecting horizontally or at an angle from the window sill, balcony, or front of a building, the union of the flag should be placed at the peak of the staff unless the flag is at half-staff. When the flag is suspended over a sidewalk from a rope extending from a house to a pole at the edge of the sidewalk, the flag should be hoisted out, union first, from the building.

(i) When displayed either horizontally or vertically against a wall, the union should be uppermost and to the flag's own right, that is, to the observer's left. When displayed in a window, the flag should be displayed in the same way, with the union or blue field to the left of the observer in the street.

(j) When the flag is displayed over the middle of the street, it should be suspended vertically with the union to the north in an east and west street or to the east in a north and south street.

(k) When used on a speaker's platform, the flag, if displayed flat, should be displayed above and behind the speaker. When displayed from a staff in a church or public auditorium, the flag of the United States of America should hold the position of superior prominence, in advance of the audience, and in the position of honor at the clergyman's or speaker's right as he faces the audience. Any other flag so displayed should be placed on the left of the clergyman or speaker or to the right of the audience.

(l) The flag should form a distinctive feature of the ceremony of unveiling a statue or monument, but it should never be used as the covering for the statue or monument.

(m) The flag, when flown at half-staff, should be first hoisted to the peak for an instant and then lowered to the half-staff position. The flag should be again raised to the peak before it is lowered for the day. On Memorial Day the flag should be displayed at half-staff until noon only, then raised to the top of the staff. By order of the President, the flag shall be flown at half-staff upon the death of principal figures of the United States Government and the Governor of a State, territory, or possession, as a mark of respect to their memory. In the event of the death of other officials or foreign dignitaries, the flag is to be displayed at half-staff according to Presidential instructions or orders, or in accordance with recognized customs or practices not inconsistent with law. In the event of the death of a present or former official of the government of any State, territory, or possession of the United States, the Governor of that State, territory, or possession may proclaim that the National flag shall be flown at half-staff. The flag shall be flown at half-staff thirty days from the death of the President or a former President; ten days from the day of death of the Vice President, the Chief Justice or a retired Chief Justice of the United States, or the Speaker of the House of Representatives; from the day of death until interment of an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, a Secretary of an executive or military department, a former Vice President, or the Governor of a State, territory, or possession; and on the day of death and the following day for a Member of Congress. As used in this subsection—

(1) the term "half-staff" means the position of the flag when it is one-half the distance between the top and bottom of the staff;

(2) the term "executive or military department" means any agency listed under sections 101 and 102 of title 5, United States Code; and

(3) the term "Member of Congress" means a Senator, a Representative, a Delegate, or the Resident Commissioner from Puerto Rico.

(n) When the flag is used to cover a casket, it should be so placed that the union is at the head and over the left shoulder. The flag should not be lowered into the grave or allowed to touch the ground.

(o) When the flag is suspended across a corridor or lobby in a building with only one main entrance, it should be suspended vertically with the union of the flag to the observer's left upon entering. If the building has more than one main entrance, the flag should be suspended vertically near the center of the corridor or lobby with the union to the north, when entrances are to the east and west or to the east when entrances are to the north and south. If there are entrances in more than two directions, the union should be to the east.

Sec. 4. That no disrespect should be shown to the flag of the United States of America; the flag should not be dipped to any person or thing. Regimental colors, State flags, and organization or institutional flags are to be dipped as a mark of honor.

(a) The flag should never be displayed with the union down, except as a signal of dire distress in instances of extreme danger to life or property.

(b) The flag should never touch anything beneath it, such as the ground, the floor, water, or merchandise.

(c) The flag should never be carried flat or horizontally, but always aloft and free.

(d) The flag should never be used as wearing apparel, bedding, or drapery. It should never be festooned, drawn back, nor up, in folds, but always allowed to fall free. Bunting of blue, white, and red, always arranged with the blue above, the white in the middle, and the red below, should be used for covering a speaker's desk, draping the front of the platform, and for decoration in general.

(e) The flag should never be fastened, displayed, used, or stored in such a manner as to permit it to be easily torn, soiled, or damaged in any way.

(f) The flag should never be used as a covering for a ceiling.

(g) The flag should never have placed upon it, nor on any part of it, nor attached to it any mark, insignia, letter, word, figure, design, picture, or drawing of any nature.

(h) The flag should never be used as a receptacle for receiving, holding, carrying, or delivering anything.

(i) The flag should never be used for advertising purposes in any manner whatsoever. It should not be embroidered on such articles as cushions or handkerchiefs and the like, printed or otherwise impressed on paper napkins or boxes or anything that is designed for temporary use and discard. Advertising signs should not be fastened to a staff or halyard from which the flag is flown.

(j) No part of the flag should ever be used as a costume or athletic uniform. However, a flag patch may be affixed to the uniform of military personnel, firemen, policemen, and members of patriotic organizations. The flag represents a living country and is itself considered a living thing. Therefore, the lapel flag pin being a replica, should be worn on the left lapel near the heart.

(k) The flag, when it is in such condition that it is no longer a fitting emblem for display, should be destroyed in a dignified way, preferably by burning.

Sec. 5. During the ceremony of hoisting or lowering the flag or when the flag is passing in a parade or in review, all persons present except those in uniform should face the flag and stand at attention with the right hand over the heart. Those present in uniform should render the military salute. When not in uniform, men should remove their headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart. Aliens should stand at attention. The salute to the flag in a moving column should be rendered at the moment the flag passes.

Sec. 6. During rendition of the national anthem when the flag is displayed, all present except those in uniform should stand at attention facing the flag with the right hand over the heart. Men not in uniform should remove their headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart. Persons in uniform should render the military salute at the first note of the anthem and retain this position until the last note. When the flag is not displayed, those present should face toward the music and act in the same manner they would if the flag were displayed there.

Sec. 7. The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, "I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all", should be rendered by standing at attention facing the flag with the right hand over the heart. When not in uniform men should remove their

headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart. Persons in uniform should remain silent, face the flag, and render the military salute.

Sec. 8. Any rule or custom pertaining to the display of the flag of the United States of America, set forth herein, may be altered, modified, or repealed, or additional rules with respect thereto may be prescribed, by the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of the United States, whenever he deems it to be appropriate or desirable; and any such alteration or additional rule shall be set forth in a proclamation.

No person shall display the flag of the United Nations or any other national or international flag equal, above, or in a position of superior prominence or honor to, or in place of, the flag of the United States at any place within the United States or any Territory or possession thereof: Provided, That nothing in this section shall make unlawful the continuance of the practice heretofore followed of displaying the flag of the United Nations in a position of superior prominence or honor, and other national flags in positions of equal prominence or honor, with that of the flag of the United States at the headquarters of the United Nations.

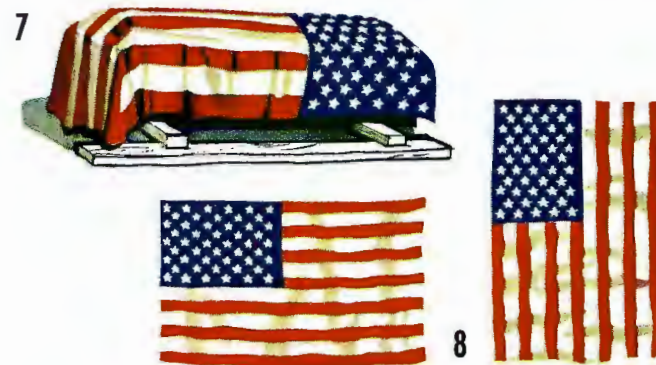
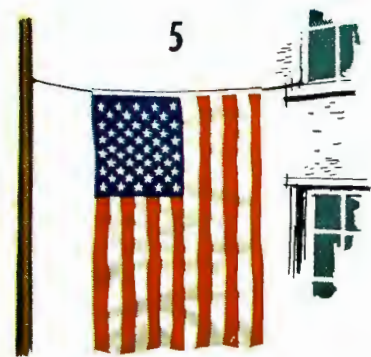
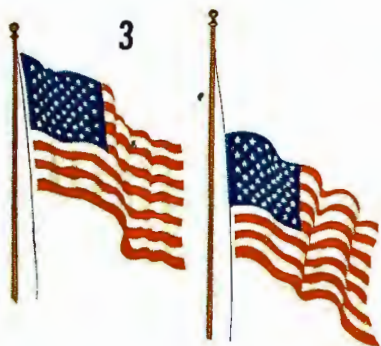
HOW TO DISPLAY THE FLAG

1. When the flag is displayed over the middle of the street, it should be suspended vertically with the union to the north in an east and west street or to the east in a north and south street.

2. The flag of the United States of America, when it is displayed with another flag against a wall from crossed staffs, should be on the right, the flag's own right, and its staff should be in front of the staff of the other flag.

3. The flag, when flown at half-staff, should be first hoisted to the peak for an instant and then lowered to the half-staff position. The flag should be again raised to the peak before it is lowered for the day. By "half-staff" is meant lowering the flag to one-half the distance between the top and bottom of the staff. Crepe streamers may be affixed to spear heads or flag-staffs in a parade only by order of the President of the United States.

4. When flags of States, cities, or localities, or pennants of societies are flown on the same halyard with the flag of the United States, the latter should always be at the peak. When



the flags are flown from adjacent staffs, the flag of the United States should be hoisted first and lowered last. No such flag or pennant may be placed above the flag of the United States or to the right of the flag of the United States.

5. When the flag is suspended over a sidewalk from a rope extending from a house to a pole at the edge of the sidewalk, the flag should be hoisted out, union first, from the building.

6. When the flag of the United States is displayed from a staff projecting horizontally or at an angle from the window sill, balcony, or front of a building, the union of the flag should be placed at the peak of the staff unless the flag is at half-staff.

7. When the flag is used to cover a casket, it should be so placed that the union is at the head and over the left shoulder. The flag should not be lowered into the grave or allowed to touch the ground.

8. When the flag is displayed in a manner other than by being flown from a staff, it should be displayed flat, whether indoors or out. When displayed either horizontally or vertically against a wall, the union should be uppermost and to the flag's own right, that is, to the observer's left. When displayed in a window it should be displayed in the same way, that is, with the union or blue field to the left of the observer in the street. When festoons, rosettes or drapings are desired, bunting of blue, white and red should be used, but never the flag.

9. That the flag, when carried in a procession with another flag or flags, should be either on the marching right; that is, the flag's own right, or, if there is a line of other flags, in front of the center of that line.

10. The flag of the United States of America should be at the center and at the highest point of the group when a number of flags of States or localities or pennants of societies are grouped and displayed from staffs.

11. When flags of two or more nations are displayed, they are to be flown from separate staffs of the same height. The flags should be of approximately equal size. International usage forbids the display of the flag of one nation above that of another nation in time of peace.

GREAT SEAL OF THE UNITED STATES



OBVERSE



REVERSE



BICENTENNIAL FLAG



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA



ALABAMA
December 14, 1819



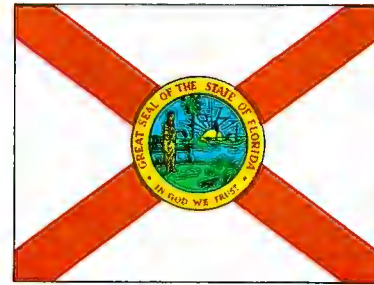
ALASKA
January 3, 1959



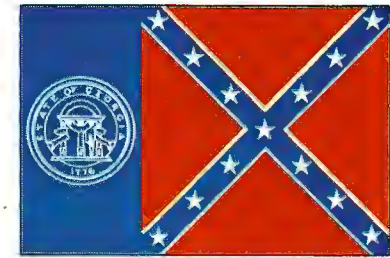
ARIZONA
February 14, 1912



ARKANSAS
June 15, 1836



FLORIDA
March 3, 1845



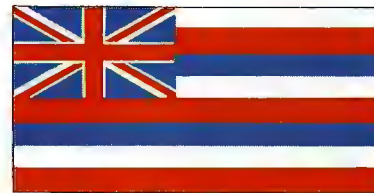
GEORGIA
January 2, 1788



CALIFORNIA
September 9, 1850



COLORADO
August 1, 1876



HAWAII
August 21, 1959



IDAHO
July 3, 1890



CONNECTICUT
January 9, 1788



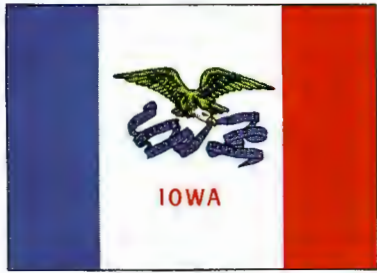
DELAWARE
December 7, 1787



ILLINOIS
December 3, 1818



INDIANA
December 11, 1816



IOWA
December 28, 1846



KANSAS
January 29, 1861



MASSACHUSETTS
February 6, 1788



MICHIGAN
January 26, 1837



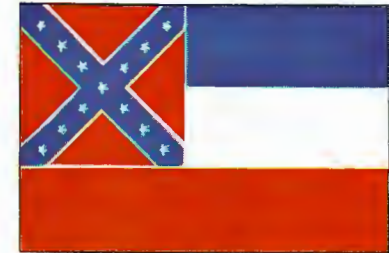
KENTUCKY
June 1, 1792



LOUISIANA
April 30, 1812



MINNESOTA
May 11, 1858



MISSISSIPPI
December 10, 1817



MAINE
March 15, 1820



MARYLAND
April 28, 1788



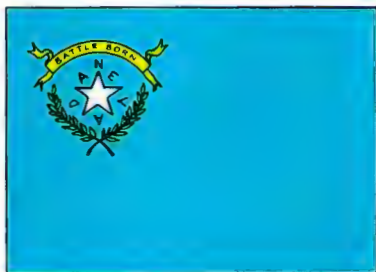
MISSOURI
August 10, 1821



MONTANA
November 8, 1889



NEBRASKA
March 1, 1867



NEVADA
October 31, 1864



NORTH CAROLINA
November 21, 1789



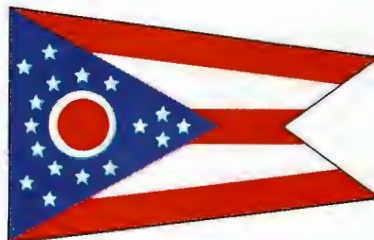
NORTH DAKOTA
November 2, 1889



NEW HAMPSHIRE
June 21, 1788



NEW JERSEY
December 18, 1787



OHIO
March 1, 1803



OKLAHOMA
November 16, 1907



NEW MEXICO
January 6, 1912



NEW YORK
July 26, 1788



OREGON
February 14, 1859



PENNSYLVANIA
December 12, 1787



RHODE ISLAND
May 29, 1790



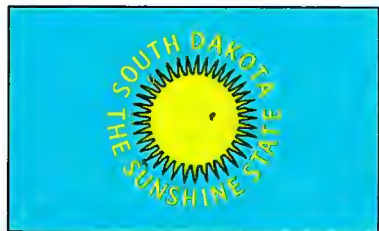
SOUTH CAROLINA
May 23, 1788



VERMONT
March 4, 1791



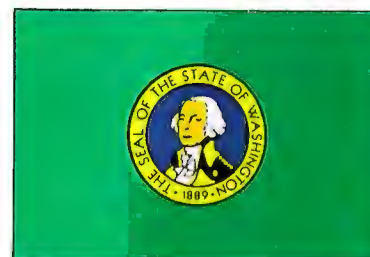
VIRGINIA
June 25, 1788



SOUTH DAKOTA
November 2, 1889



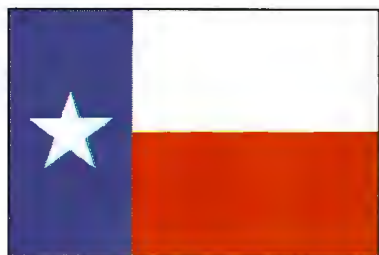
TENNESSEE
June 1, 1796



WASHINGTON
November 11, 1889



WEST VIRGINIA
June 20, 1863



TEXAS
December 29, 1845



UTAH
January 4, 1896



WISCONSIN
May 29, 1848



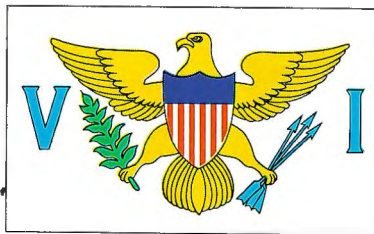
WYOMING
July 10, 1890



GUAM



PUERTO RICO



VIRGIN ISLANDS

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 66

(Submitted by Mr. Hawkins)

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

April 5, 1979

RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES (THE SENATE CONCURRING), That there be printed as a House document a revised edition of "Our Flag", revised under the direction of the Joint Committee on Printing.

Sec. 2. In addition to the usual number of copies, there shall be printed two hundred and seventy-eight thousand additional copies, of which two hundred and twenty-one thousand five hundred copies shall be for the use of the House of Representatives, fifty-one thousand five hundred copies shall be for the use of the Senate, and five thousand copies shall be for the use of the Joint Committee on Printing.

OUR FLAG

