

AMERICA'S STARRY FLAG FIRST SEEN DURING TRYING TIMES OF REVOLUTION

In 1606, in honor of the union of England and Scotland, the English flag, which for years had been white with the red cross of St. George extending to its edges, was changed to a field of blue, across which was placed the upright red cross of St. George and the diagonal white cross of St. Andrew.

This was the flag that floated over the "Susan Constant" at Jamestown and the "Mayflower" at Plymouth. Although the colonies frequently used devices of their own, the English flag was the flag of this country for more than one hundred and fifty years.

So different were the symbols of the colonies, regiments and ships that Washington, in 1776, wrote, "Please fix on some flag by which our vessels may know each other."

The first striped flag was raised at Washington's headquarters, Cambridge, Massachusetts, January 2nd, 1776, and saluted with thirteen guns. About the same time John Paul Jones, as senior first lieutenant, hoisted it with his own hands over Commodore Hopkins' flagship the "Alfred," then lying in the Delaware at Philadelphia.

In 1777 congress appointed a committee consisting of General Washington, Robert Morris and Colonel Ross "to designate a suitable flag for the nation." This committee, as all the world knows, conferred with Mistress Betsy Ross and afterward recommended a flag in which the stripes recently introduced were retained, but in which the crosses, the symbol of British authority, gave place to the stars which were henceforth to shine for liberty.

On June 14th, 1777, in old Independence Hall, Philadelphia, congress adopted the following resolution: "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. The stars to be arranged in a circle." Enter here the Star-Spangled Banner, with thirty-seven years to wait for the song that was to immortalize the name.

The Stars and Stripes was first used in actual military service at

Fort Stanwix, re-named Fort Schuyler, now Romeo, N. Y., on August 6th, 1777, and first carried in battle at a skirmish at Cooch's Bridge, near Wilmington, Delaware, September 3rd, 1777.

On February 14th, 1778, Captain John Paul Jones had the great satisfaction of seeing the Stars and Stripes "recognized for the first time

and in the fullest manner by the flag of France" by salutes first to the "Ranger" and later to the "Independence" of Jones' fleet. This was probably the first recognition by any foreign power of the colors of the United States of America.

John Paul Jones was also the first to see a regular British man-of-war strike her flag to that of the United

States. Jones received his appointment to the command of the "Ranger" on the very day that our national flag was adopted by congress. He said: "That flag and I are twins. We cannot be parted in life or in death. So long as we can float, we shall float together; if we must sink, we shall go down as one."

The flag was not changed until

1795, when two stripes and two stars were added for Vermont and Kentucky. By 1816 four more states, Tennessee, Ohio, Louisiana and Indiana, were in the family and a committee was appointed to give them a place on the flag. Realizing that there must be a limit to the stripes, the committee made a recommendation which was adopted April 14th, 1818, that the flag be permanently thirteen stripes, representing the original thirteen states and that a new star be added for each state as admitted.

The plan of arranging the stars to form one large star was abandoned at that time and the method of placing them in rows was adopted. Since then a star has been added to the flag on the Fourth of July following the admission of a state to the union.

The flag of the United States at the time of the Revolution had thirteen stars; in the war of 1812, fifteen; in the Mexican war, twenty-nine; in the Civil War, thirty-five and in the Spanish-American War, forty-five—the number today is forty-eight, arranged on the blue field in six rows of eight stars each.

The flag-making plant of the navy is at the Brooklyn navy yard. The hunting comes from Massachusetts.

Every case costs the government \$350 or \$11.25 a roll. Every piece must weigh five pounds to forty yards and stand a test of seventy pounds to two square inches. The hunting is steeped in salt water for six hours and then exposed to the sun for another six. If it passes these tests it is pronounced fit for our country's service.

"Morning and Evening Colors" are observed on board all our naval vessels and at naval stations. The ceremony attending the raising and lowering of the flag is very impressive. "The Star Spangled Banner" has



long been played at the raising, but in 1904 Secretary Moody ordered that it be played at the evening ceremony also, instead of "Hail Columbia," which had previously been used when the colors were lowered.

In many schools in this country, and also in the Philippines, Hawaii and Porto Rico, there are frequent salutes to the flag. When it is brought forward every pupil rises and gives military salute, then all together they slowly and distinctly repeat:

"I pledge allegiance to my flag and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."



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