

GALLERY V

"MANIFEST DESTINY" NEW STARS FOR A NEW LAND



ZFC0624 - Hancock & English Presidential Campaign Flag,
13 Stars, ca. 1880

Since the earliest days of the republic, a large segment of the American public had believed it had a divinely ordained "manifest destiny" whereby their descendants would eventually rule the North American continent "from sea to shining sea." The constant thrust toward the Pacific had early been fueled by the Louisiana Purchase and it seemingly found justification in America's victory in its war with Mexico. Following the Civil War, which temporarily delayed the impetus, Americans streamed westward in search of new (and free) land on which to settle. The telegraph and transcontinental railroad helped promote this "spread of civilization."

As territories west of the Mississippi progressively were filled with settlers, the new inhabitants clamored for statehood. Yet, between the close of the Civil War and the nation's centennial celebration in 1876, only three states were admitted to the Union. The star for Nevada became official in July of 1865 (although it had officially been admitted in October 1864); Nebraska followed in 1867 and finally in 1876 Colorado became the "Centennial State." For the next 12 years the flag remained unchanged. Then in 1889, the barriers that had withheld statehood from the western territories were breached, with seven new states in the Great Plains and the Rocky Mountains being added to the Union. The process moved so fast that flag manufacturers were kept guessing about how many stars to include on the flags that would become legal on the succeeding 4th of July.

The fifth gallery shows some of the official and unofficial flags that the country's flag makers produced in the three decades that followed the Civil War.

GALLERY VI

A SYMBOL OF WORLD POWER THE STARS AND STRIPES AT HOME AND ABROAD

By 1896, when Utah joined the Union as its 45th state, there seemed to be no new frontiers ahead. Two years later, an incident in the harbor of Havana, Cuba, prompted to United States to flex the naval power that had been accruing. Within a few months America wrested from Spain island territories in the Caribbean and the Pacific, as well as the Philippines. The Stars and Stripes thereby joined the pantheon of "flags of World Powers."

With international respect for the United States came the cost of an empire and, eventually, the burdens of active participation in world affairs. In the relatively peaceful years before World War I broke out, three new stars were added to the flag - Oklahoma's in 1907, followed by two more (for New Mexico and Arizona) in 1912. The same year two presidential orders at last formalized the star arrangement for official government flags.

Under the 48-star flag, the United States engaged in three major international conflicts - World War I (1917-1918 for U.S. participation), World War II (1941-1945), and the Korean War (1950-1953).



ZFC0149 - United States Flag,
Made in Occupied Belgium,
48 Stars, ca. 1944

The sixth gallery exhibits some of the many flags from those years. In 1959 and 1960, two non-contiguous states were admitted to the Union - Alaska and Hawaii. Since that time American flag has remained unaltered, at least officially. As has been the practice since its earliest years, however, the United States flag has continued to serve as a symbol expressing a wide spectrum of principles and perspectives. The Stars and Stripes is cherished by most Americans and, like the Constitution, serves as a living symbol of the whole nation.

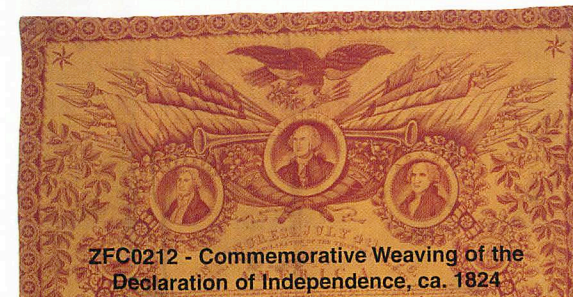
THE ZARICOR COLLECTION OF HISTORIC AMERICAN FLAGS

The Zaricor Flag Collection consists of over 1500 flags, banners and other related materials. The collection, owned by Ben Zaricor and Louise Veninga of Santa Cruz, CA., is one of the largest and most important in the world. Approximately 100 flags and other artifacts from the Zaricor Flag Collection are on public display for the first time ever at the San Francisco Presidio Officers' Club.

Special thanks are extended to Howard Michael Madaus, who served most ably as curator for the San Francisco Presidio Flag Exhibition. Mr. Madaus is recognized as being among the half-dozen most respected historians of the American Flag in the United States. He is currently Chief Curator of The National Civil War Museum in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

Thanks also are extended to the world's leading vexillologist (flag expert), Whitney Smith, whose expertise and efforts contributed greatly to this project. Dr. Smith is the author of 23 books on flags and is the director of the Flag Research Center in Winchester, Massachusetts.

Contact the Zaricor Flag Collection by email at ZFC@goodearthteas.com.



GOOD EARTH® TEAS OFFICIAL SPONSOR

The exhibition, The American Flag: Two Centuries of Concord and Conflict, is sponsored by Good Earth® Teas, Santa Cruz, CA.

www.goodearthteas.com

Presidio Officers' Club

San Francisco, CA

50 Moraga Ave. at Arguello, Main Post

Phone: 415.561.5500 • www.atthepresidio.org

© 2003 Zaricor Flag Collection, Ben Zaricor, Santa Cruz, CA

The American Flag

Two Centuries of Concord & Conflict

Flag Exhibit from the Zaricor Flag Collection

SF Presidio Officers' Club

50 Moraga Avenue

Jan. 14 - Feb. 16, 2003

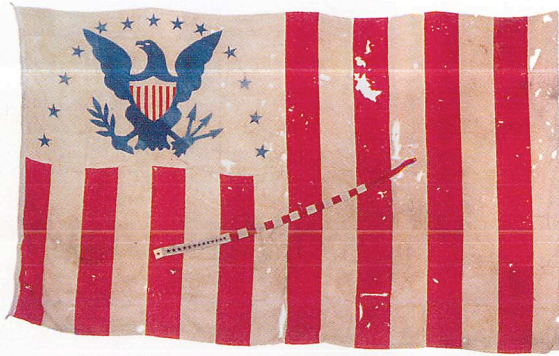
Hours: 10am - 4pm

Closed Mondays

Sponsored by
Good Earth® Teas
Santa Cruz, CA

GALLERY I

A NEW CONSTELLATION 13 STARS AND 13 STRIPES FOR A NEW NATION



ZFC0620 - United States Revenue Cutter Flag, 13 Stars
ca. 1870 - 1880

On June 14th, 1777, the Continental Congress established the first official flag for the United States, whose independence it had proclaimed eleven months previously. This flag, the original Stars and Stripes, was composed of 13 alternating red and white stripes augmented by a blue "union" bearing 13 white stars for the original 13 states. According to the Congressional resolution, the stars were to represent "a new constellation" in the firmament of nations.

While nothing in the resolution specified how those 13 stars should be arranged, it is suspected that the designers intended them to be in a circle. However, practical seamstresses quickly found it far more convenient to arrange the stars in rows. That practice was to give birth to a host of design variations and it set a precedent for unofficial modifications of the flag, which continues today.

The flags in the first gallery depict popular versions of the flag during its first century. While the 13-star flag enjoyed special prominence at the time of the celebration of the Centennial of the United States in 1876, in fact it has been made and used by Americans continuously since 1777.

GALLERY II

A NEW STAR FOR EVERY NEW STATE

In 1791 and 1792 Vermont and Kentucky were admitted into the American Union as states, raising the total from 13 to 15. To acknowledge these new states as equals, in 1794 Congress created a new flag with 15 red and white stripes and 15 stars in its union. For 24 years, Congress never authorized further changes, although five new states were admitted to the Union - Tennessee, Ohio, Louisiana, Indiana, and Mississippi. On the other hand many flag makers did add new stars - and often made a corresponding increase in the number of stripes.



ZFC0422 - United States National Flag
"Great Luminary Pattern", 21 Stars, ca. 1818 - 1819

By 1817, when Mississippi became the twentieth state, Congress took note of the new states that lacked official recognition in the design of the national flag. During its debates in 1818, some wanted the addition of one star and one stripe for every new state to be legalized. Others suggested a permanent return to the old 13-star, 13-stripe U.S. flag from the Revolution. Finally a compromise was reached. The number of stripes was set permanently at 13, but on the 4th of July following the recognition of any new state, its star was to be added to those already on the

The flags presented in the second gallery are representative of the popular (but unofficial) designs in actual use before 1818.

GALLERY III

THE END OF COMPROMISE STARS EXCLUDED, STARS DEFENDED

Between 1816 and 1848, a balance (known as the Missouri Compromise) was maintained in the number of states entering the Union that recognized slavery and those where it was prohibited. Indiana had been balanced by Mississippi; Illinois was admitted to statehood along with Alabama. They were followed by Missouri and Maine, Arkansas and Michigan, and the new states of Florida and Texas were matched by Iowa and Wisconsin. Thus by 1850 there were 15 "slave states" and 15 "free states" composing the Union.

After 1850 the Missouri Compromise was replaced by concessions to the slave states when California, Minnesota, and Oregon were admitted as free states. However, Northern abolitionists became incensed over the federal "Fugitive Slave Law" and the extension of slavery into western territories. Some expressed their total distaste for slavery by refusing to acknowledge the 15 slave states in the United States flag. Stars for these Southern states were sometimes excluded, resulting in flags that bore only 16, 17, or 18 stars. Supporters of slavery countered by making flags with only 15 stars. The Stars and Stripes, like the nation, was beginning to tear asunder.

The flags in the third gallery feature Stars and Stripes with the official star-counts of this period and examples of the "exclusionary flags" with fewer stars.



ZFC0001 - U.S. National Color, California Militia,
33 Stars, ca. 1859 - 1861

GALLERY IV

"GUIDE ON THE COLORS!" AMERICAN FLAGS IN CONFLICT



ZFC0489 - General Custer's Personal Guidon, ca. 1864

The 33-star United States flag flying over Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor was fired on by South Carolina troops in April of 1861. Southern determination to defend "States' Rights" and Northern commitment to maintain the Union were to result in a bloody four-year Civil War.

Initially, the United States Army and the Confederate States Army carried very similar flags into the fray. U.S. troops fought under versions of the Stars and Stripes bearing (successively) 33, 34, and 35 stars. Confederate forces at first used the "Stars and Bars" which reduced the stripes to three bars, the stars in the blue canton initially numbering seven but eventually increasing to 13.

The similarity of the two flags led to a replacement of the Stars and Bars by the Confederate Battle Flag (the "Southern Cross") early in the conflict. In addition to these flags, there were numerous other standards, colors, and guidons borne into combat by North and South. They served as functional battlefield tools upon which the units guided their movements, but they also provided deep inspiration to the soldiers who carried them.

This fourth gallery suggests the wide array of flags utilized by the Union forces during the Civil War - including national unit flags, blue regimental colors with national or state coats of arms, smaller swallowtail guidons for mounted units, and special headquarters flags that permitted ready identification of commanders on the smoke-filled field of battle. They are a reminder that the number and variety of flags flown during the American Civil War exceeded those flown in combat in any other period of American military history.