



“What is a Navy Boat Flag?” from *The American Flag: Two Centuries of Concord and Conflict*, p.24
 (Image source: US Army Military History Institute.)



ZFC0707 13 Star U.S. Boat Flag from the revolutionary privateer *Minerva*, 1782. The 4-5-4 horizontal star pattern is the oldest pattern found on U.S. flags and would reappear in the decades between the 1850s and the 1870s.



ZFC0625 20 Star U.S. 5-5-5 Navy Boat Flag. Third official U.S. flag, which confirms to the circular issued by the U.S. Navy in September of 1818 following the recommendation of President James Monroe, from the Mastai Collection, 1818 -1819.



ZFC0421 20 Star U.S. 5-5-5 Navy Boat Flag. Marked “6 ft Ensign,” a typical naval method of titling flags and conforms to known sizes used by the U.S. Navy, from the Flayderman Collection, 1818 - 1819.



ZFC2386 26 Star U.S. Boat Flag. In the first half of the 19th century U.S. Navy Boat Flags generally bore the full compliment of stars as in this 26 star example. Experts speculate that due to the striking rows of stars and the size, this might be a U.S. Navy Boat Flag.



ZFC1453 31 star U.S. Boat Flag. This flag bears a striking resemblance to a 31 star Boat Flag, with a reversed canton that accompanied Commodore Oliver Hazard Parry to Japan in 1853. Posteriorly this flag would be displayed during the 1861 Pratt St, Riots in Baltimore.



ZFC0029 16 Star U.S. 4-4-4 Navy Boat Flag - Navy Yard Charleston. This flag is marked with both its size and place of manufacture, “6 Ft. BOAT ENSIGN” and “N Y C.,” a prime example of a Navy Yard made flag. From the collections of the Star Spangled Banner Flag House and Museum, 1850s.



ZFC2385 16 Star U.S. 4-4-4 Boat Flag - Johnson Bros. Bath Maine. This flag is marked “(U.S.) Ensign from Johnson Bros: Bath, Maine” a firm that has its origins in the 1840s. The size suggests that this is a civilian Boat Flag, mimicking ZFC0029, 1850s.



ZFC3535 13 Star U.S. Navy 4-5-4 Navy 6 foot Boat Flag, from Commodore Stephen Decatur, preserved by his wife, Anna Rowell Philbrick Decatur, and is marked accordingly, 1850s or 1860s.



ZFC0359 13 Star 4-5-4 hand sewn cotton civilian Boat Flag. This flag is very similar in size to U.S. Navy Size Number 10, but likely a civilian copy, 1850s to 1860s.



ZFC0632 13 Star U.S. 3-2-3-2-3 Navy Boat Flag, "The Old Flag of the War 1861-1865." This #12 Contract wool Boat Flag vessel is unknown; flag conforms to the new style introduced in the 1860s.



ZFC2483 13 Star U.S. 3-2-3-2-3 #12 Navy Boat Flag. This flag was captured by Captain Charles E. Chichester, commander of a battery of Confederate artillery that Union troops unsuccessfully attacked on July 11, 1863 (a week before the doomed assault dramatized in the film "Glory").



ZFC3536 13 Star U.S. 3-2-3-2-3, #11 Boat Flag - Captain Stephen Decatur. This is an American Civil War era U.S. Navy Boat Ensign. The name ARP DECATUR is inscribed in period ink on the hoist, referring to Anna Rowell Philbrick Decatur, the wife of Commodore Stephen Decatur.



ZFC2507 13 star U.S. 4-5-4, #12 Navy Boat Flag used at the amphibious landings at Ft. Fisher, North Carolina, Jan 1865. This flag was used on one of the small boats of Rear Admiral David Dixon Porter's fleet when it attempted to capture Fort Fisher, a powerful bastion protecting the Confederacy's last open port, located in Wilmington, NC.



ZFC0583 13 star U.S. 3-2-3-2-3 Boat Flag, very similar in size to a U.S. Navy Size Number 12, this flag was from the courtroom display collection of Superior Court Judge John T. Ball, of Santa Clara County, California, 1860s to 1870s.



ZFC2458 13 Star U.S. 3-2-3-2-3 #11 Navy Boat Flag, this sewn wool flag was acquired from the descendants of W. Stokes Kirk, a Philadelphia, PA dealer in Civil War surplus. 1860s.



ZFC0633 13 Star U.S. 3-2-3-2-3, printed, #14 Navy Boat Flag, manufactured by United States Bunting Co. of Lowell, Massachusetts. By former General Benjamin Butler in the late 1860s or early 1870s.



ZFC0013 13 Star U.S. 3-2-3-2-3, printed, #14 Navy Boat Flag, manufactured with Holt's patented resist dye process by United States Bunting Co. of Lowell, Massachusetts. by former General Benjamin Butler in the late 1860s or early 1870s. From the Star Spangled Banner Flag House and Museum Collection.



ZFC2382 13 Star U.S. 3-2-3-2-3, printed, #14 Navy Boat Flag, manufactured with Holt's resist dye process by United States Bunting Co. of Lowell, Massachusetts. by former General Benjamin Butler in the late 1860s or early 1870s. From the personal collection of Gettysburg historian John Badger Batchelder, late 1860s through the 1880s.



ZFC0675 13 Star U.S. 3-2-3-2-3, sewn, #8 Navy Boat Flag, from the late 19th century. Note the vertical 3 up and 2 down rows which were a feature of flags made between 1882 and 1899.



ZFC0683 13 Star U.S. 3-2-3-2-3, sewn, #7 Navy Boat Flag, manufactured by Navy Yard N.Y. in Brooklyn in April 1891.



ZFC3546 13 Star U.S. 3-2-3-2-3, sewn, #11 Navy Boat Flag, manufactured by Navy Yard, New York in Brooklyn, from the Decatur Family Collection, 1910 to 1915.



ZFC2598 48 Star U.S. 8-8-8-8-8-8, sewn, #12 Navy Boat Flag, manufactured by Navy Yard at Mare Island, California, after the 13 star US Navy Boat Flag was abolished in 1916. This flag is dated 1919.