



NATIONAL SERVICE FLAG—FLAG!

Recently, a number of special support flags have been sighted in the U.S. as a result of the war in Iraq and the events leading up to it. Pictured here is the most common design which features the National Service Flag in the center of a white flag flanked above and below by the motto (in blue) "We Honor Those Who Serve." This photo



was taken in front of the Gray, Maine Town Office and has been seen in a number of different places in Maine. Let us know if you've seen this or a similar flag in your area.

GOLD STAR MOTHERS

A recent article in the Newark, N.J. *Star Ledger* (April 6, 2003) described the Gold Star Mothers organization (founded 1928), whose members are the mothers of servicemen who died in the course of active

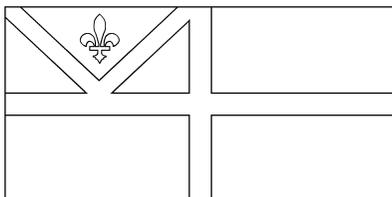
duty. It was named after the custom of replacing the blue star on the National Service Flag with one of gold when the service member is killed in the line of duty. The article was accompanied by a photo of Dorothy Oxendine, President of the national organization. Her only son was killed in Vietnam in 1968. The photo

shows a variant of the NSF used by this organization; on a white field bordered narrowly in red is a large gold star at the top and the initials "U.S.A." in blue at the bottom.

NAVA 37

**MONTREAL, QUÉBEC
CANADA**

OCTOBER 10-12, 2003

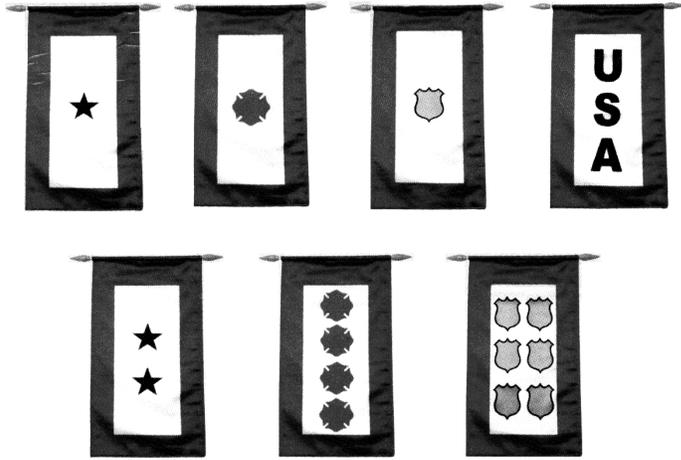


The NAVA 37 Flag



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USS THE SULLIVANS SERVICE FLAG

A special Service Flag was recently made by Richard R. Gideon for the U.S. Navy. It flew at a special commander's changeover on the *USS THE SULLIVANS*. All five Sullivan brothers were killed in active service in World War II. A granddaughter of one of the Sullivan brothers attended the ceremony.

The Navy had to ask permission from the Institute of Heraldry to have the flag made, since National Service Flags are for the families, not for the military itself. The original Sullivan Service flag is in a museum in Iowa (where the Sullivan family was from), and it was a banner, not a flag. But since the Navy wanted a flag, Gideon used current regulations and the original banner's star layout and produced the flag.

The flag measures 6' x 11' 4¼". Richard R. Gideon Flags is lo-



cated in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, <http://www.gideonflags.com> and is authorized by the U.S. Department of Defense to produce the NSF.

SERVICE FLAGS OFFERED BY AMERICAN HEROES.CC

In the wake of 9/11/01, Gateway Seed Company of St. Louis MO, doing business on the internet as AmericanHeroes.cc, is offering a line of four different Service Flags. Each Service Flag is made of polyester and is mounted on a wooden dowel with yellow plastic spearheads and a gold string tied on each end. The non-military designs are copyrighted. The company states "Tradition holds that in the unfortunate event of a death in service, the emblem of the service flag changes to gold." It offers gold overlays at no additional charge. All flags are made in the U.S.A.

The traditional Military Service Flag is available with one to six blue stars and the company is certified by the U.S. Department of Defense to market these banners.

Three designs are new and unique to this company:

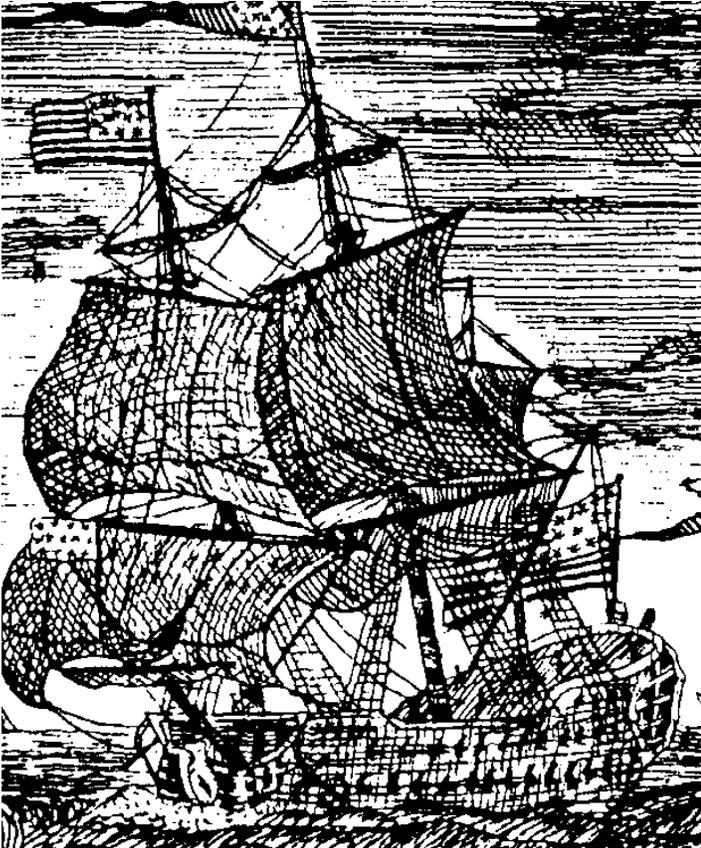
The Law Enforcement Flag shows that a family member serves in law enforcement. In the center of the traditional white flag bordered red is a gray shield, bordered in black.

The Fire & Rescue Flag shows that a family member serves in fire and rescue. It features a red Maltese Cross in the center of the traditional flag.

The Support Flag shows support for U.S. military, law enforcement, and fire & rescue personnel. It can be displayed alongside any other service flag and shows patriotism. It displays the letters "USA" vertically in blue.

ADDITIONAL 18th CENTURY STARS & STRIPES

Three more contemporary 18th-century images of the United States flag have come to light to add to the survey published in *NAVA News* #167 (April-June 2000). The entries in the survey should read:



24.1 U.S. Ensigns (and pennant and jack) in engraving made at Philadelphia. American; dated 1785.

This engraving is part of a nautical scene.
Stars: 13 multipointed (probably intended to be 5- or 6-pointed) dark on light, arranged in three rows of 5-5-3 (staggered) on one and 4-5-4 (staggered) on the other (same on the jack and pennant).
Canton: Light, extends to the 9th stripe and one and to the 7th on the other. “Rests” on a W stripe.
Stripes: 13 dark and white, 7 dark and 6 white.
Image source: Dr. Henry Moeller.

The author, Dave Martucci, would appreciate copies or references of any further illustrations for this series.
Note: the following conventions are used in this presentation: “staggered” means the stars are set equidistant from each other in each row causing some rows to be shorter and some to be longer horizontally; “R” means red, “W” means white, and “B” means blue.



35.1 Flag of the American States on map of “North America”, engraved by Samuel John Neele (1758-1824), published by G.G. & J. Robinson, London. British; dated 1793.
 The map and flag are hand-colored.
Stars: 13 multipointed (probably intended to be 6-pointed) W, arranged in rows of 3-2-3-2-3 (staggered).
Canton: B, extends to the 7th stripe. “Rests” on a W stripe.
Stripes: 13 R and W, 7 R and 6 W.
Image source: Daniel I. Caplan, MD.



35.2 U.S. America (Flag) on chart from Rees’ Encyclopedia. British; dated 1794.
 This chart was purchased separately from the encyclopedia it purports to come from. Source is assumed.
Stars: 13 6-pointed W, arranged in rows of 3-2-3-2-3 (staggered).
Canton: hatched B, extends to the center of the 8th stripe. Does not “rest” on any stripe; rather it extends to the center of the flag.
Stripes: 13 R and W, 7 R and 6 W.
Image source: Matthew Larsen.

THE STEPNEY FLAG STORY



by Joel Leneker

This flag for the village of Stepney, Connecticut was designed by *Save Our Stepney Task Force* (SOS) in order raise community awareness of the integrity and character of the village. In August 2001, SOS accepted a grant from the Regional Youth/Adult Substance Abuse Project (RYASAP) to produce a prototype Stepney flag within a year's time. The award was given to SOS under the RYASAP Neighborhood Pride grants category. SOS enlisted its members and the children of Stepney Elementary School for their

ideas about a coat of arms that exemplified the community of Stepney.

SOS took its design inspiration from the coat of arms of Stepney, England, located south of London, which is divided into four quadrants and includes a tower and nautical motif against a medieval design. The group decided the images for the coat of arms would symbolize Stepney's past, present, and future.

Under the leadership of Doree Voychick, Art Instructor at Stepney Elementary School, Stepney's schoolchildren had the op-

portunity to submit drawings that showed what they saw for the future of the community. Three students drew a pastoral setting with a path and a sun. SOS chose to include the three ideas into one, composite design. The winning designs were drawn by fourth-graders Sarah Lewis, Caitlin Lombardi, and Chelsea Price.

The Symbols

The shield is divided per saltire and is bordered in white and then blue. A blue locomotive with green front and yellow details on red represents Stepney's past. The Housatonic Rail-

road first arrived in Stepney in 1840 to usher in industry and a new era. In 1861, at the outbreak of the Civil War, P.T. Barnum and Elias Howe traveled by train with a group of hired ruffians to break up the peace rally held at the Stepney Green.

Next is a yellow path on green. Then a red and yellow sun on blue.

The part of the coat of arms that speaks to Stepney's present is symbolized by the red and green maple leaves with a blue stem on gold, distinctly beautiful every fall. Both leaves appear to tie in with Stepney's past and future in a celebration of the present.

The new Stepney coat of arms appears in the fly of a white flag. Its colors of red, golden yellow, green, and indigo reflect aspects of Stepney's history, as well as its present and future. Red symbolizes the blood that was shed in the New England colonies during the American Revolution, and it is the color of the heart. Yellow represents the grain harvests of Stepney's past, green speaks to the lush Stepney countryside, and indigo is the color of the waters of the Pootatuck River.

The strong diagonals of the new Stepney coat of arms are intended to support the concept of Stepney as a crossroads for the area's commerce and culture since the community's settlement by second and third generation English colonists in 1720. At that time, the Stepney area belonged to Stratford.

The name Stepney first appeared in the Stratford land records of 1735. For this reason, the year 1735 is shown below the coat of arms in blue. It appears below the motto "From Great Things to Greater," which is an English translation of the Latin motto on the Stepney, England arms, shown in green on a white ribbon, outlined in blue. Above the arms are the words "Stepney" in green and "Connecticut" in blue.



About Save Our Stepney

Save Our Stepney Task Force was organized in 2001 to preserve and enhance the character of the communities of the village

of Stepney, Connecticut, incorporated in the Town of Monroe. Included in the Organization's scope of concern are identifying, documenting, improving and/or preserving historic, cultural and natural properties and features of the community. Activities include public events, education, beautification, and cultural enrichment. Community involvement and cooperation with other civic groups and the Town of Monroe are encouraged.

One Year Free Membership

We invite you to join us in our activities of preserving, improving and celebrating the village of Stepney. Your purchase of a Stepney Flag entitles you to one year's free membership in the Save Our Stepney Task Force. By joining Save Our Stepney you add your own expertise to our collective efforts making us more effective and efficient. Simply send US\$45 for each flag along with your name, address, phone number, email address and areas of interest or expertise to: Save Our Stepney, c/o Joel Leneker, 70 Huntingtown Road, Stepney, CT 06468, email lenekedsgn@aol.com, phone (203) 375-0830.

The Banners of King Arthur and

by Gustavo Tracchia

PROLOGUE

When history, legend, and religion combine with flags and banners, vexillologists cannot resist learning more.

King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table present such a case. While in fact they could not have used flags or coats of arms, and their very existence is uncertain, these legendary figures have seen literature and art bestow upon them an intriguing range of flags, banners, and coats of arms. Even these fanciful symbols interest the vexillologist, as windows into the era in which they were invented.



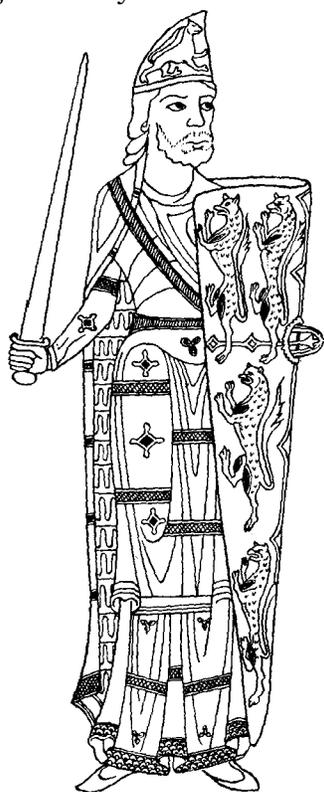
Arthur was likely a 5th- or 6th-century Romano-British chieftain named Artorius who fought invading Anglo-Saxons, organizing a successful resistance and establishing an uneasy peace following the Roman withdrawal from Britain.

As a Celtic chieftain, he would have dressed in fur or a leather coat, with a wool cloth around the waist. Roman accounts of that era said of the Celts, “they shine with striped cloaks”—not quite the medieval image of knights in armor with shining shields. And, according to Roman accounts, the ancient Britons used vexilloids—figures of animals like rams, stags, boars, and bears engraved in leather, rather than medieval flags—colorful and richly-embroidered banners with striking heraldic devices.

The slow but steady invasion of Saxons, Jutes, and Angles from mainland Europe eventually replaced the Romano-British order, but some of the ancient Celtic chieftains became folk heroes in oral narratives. After the Norman Conquest in 1066, these narratives eventually inspired the legendary tales of King Arthur, popularized in the 12th century by Geoffrey of Monmouth in his *History of the Kings of Britain*.

During Henry II’s reign in the

1150s, the Norman chronicler Master Robert Wace amplified Arthur’s story in verse to suit court tastes. He was the first to mention the famous Round Table, and said “I know not if you have heard tell the marvelous gestes and errant deeds related so often of King Arthur. They have been noised about this mighty realm for so great a space that the truth has turned to fable and an idle song. Such rhymes are neither sheer



Count Geoffrey of Anjou, called Plantagenet. A line drawing from the earliest known colored armorial illustration, c. 1127. The shield is blue with gold lions.

bare lies, nor gospel truths. They should not be considered either an idiot’s tale, or given by inspiration. The minstrel has sung his ballad, the storyteller told over his tale so frequently, little by little he has decked and painted, till by reason of his embellishment the truth stands hid in the trappings of a tale. Thus to make a delectable tune to your ear, history goes masking as fable.”

By the 13th century, romances reflected the rising interest in manners and courtly love. They converted Arthur and his colleagues into medieval knights more acceptable to contemporary audiences, with clothes and appearance closer to the Norman fashion of William the Conqueror, and heraldic arms and banners appropriate to the times.

Heraldry is a second-millennium phenomenon, beginning in the 1000s. The earliest true heraldic arms are those of Geoffrey V, Count of Anjou, known as “Plantagenet”, dating from 1127. Heraldry spans three periods: 1) the Heraldry of Warfare, between the 11th and 13th centuries (during the Crusades), 2) Tournament Heraldry, during the 14th and 15th centuries (the Renaissance and Baroque periods), and 3) Ornamental Heraldry, from the 16th century onwards.

However, during the Age of Chivalry, enthusiasm for heraldry led to the retroactive assignment of arms to many figures of the past. In this era, heroes of Homeric poems, Biblical prophets, and even the twelve Apostles were all given arms and banners. Ladies of nobility as well as other non-combatants, such as clerics, members of the middle class, and even peasants, followed the custom of the knights and adopted armorial bearings. The 12th-century poems and narratives about Arthur, Camelot, Excalibur, Avalon, Lancelot, and Merlin inspired many such examples of “fictitious heraldry”.

The arms and banners attributed to the Knights of the Round Table first appeared as illustrations and descriptions in literary works of the 12th and 13th centuries. Later writers added more designs and devices and much later, more knights. Readers would eventually come to take these heraldic attributions as fact.

Expanding the Arthurian legends, stories from England, France, and Germany included characters later

the Knights of the Round Table

incorporated by other writers into the Round Table, such as *Le Chevalier de la Charrette* (The Knight of the Cart) by Chrétien de Troyes, Ulrich Von Zatzikhoven's writings about the adventures of Lanzelet (Lancelot), and Thomas Malory's *La Morte d'Arthur*. De Troyes was the first writer (circa 1170) to give the name of Camelot to Arthur's headquarters and capital city (said to be today's Cadbury Castle, near Somerset). Malory wrote *La Morte d'Arthur* (The Death of Arthur), one of the finest of the English romances about Arthur, when in London's Newgate Prison during the 15th-century War of the Roses.

The number of members of the Round Table changes depending on the author and narrative. Seven knights originally sat at the Round Table: Arthur, Gauvain, Hector, Kay, Lancelot, Percival, and Pellinore. But others would include Uther Pendragon—Arthur's father, Ban de Benoic—Lancelot's father, and Tristan, who came from a brief German romance from the 13th century. Kings and knights from other realms also joined this exclusive club, over time increasing its membership to over thirty members.

Some authors of Arthurian epics were experts in heraldry; in fact, Chrétien de Troyes appears to have been a herald himself. Wolfram von Eschenbach (1170-1220) and Hartmann von Aue (1160-1210) were themselves knights. All went to considerable lengths to describe their heroes' armorial bearings.

When family references were made, the heraldic principle of differencing arms was followed, giving a sense of legitimacy to the arms and their bearers. Cadencies are most evident in the arms attributed to Lancelot's family and on the arms of Perceval de Galles, famous for his quest for the Holy Grail.

In some cases, the same character may have different arms and banners, reflecting confusions and inconsistencies among the many Arthurian authors. Such conflicts

and duplications are typical of the collective narratives and poems of the time. Even the deeds and tasks of each character change depending on the author, the era, and the events described.

The arms and banners of fourteen important Knights of the Round Table follow, as depicted in various Arthurian works through the ages.



William Longespée, grandson of Count Geoffrey of Anjou, bearing the same arms differentiated by the alteration of the background color from blue to red.

ARMS OF THE KNIGHTS OF THE ROUND TABLE

1. ARTHUR

A blue field with three golden crowns displayed two over one.

The Nine Heroes Tapestry (circa 1400), in the collection of The Cloisters, a branch of New York City's Metropolitan Museum of Art, depicts Arthur with a blue pennant with the three crowns, one below the other. However, his tunic, also blue, shows the crowns in a two-over-one configuration.

Other arms are attributed to King Arthur. Some English sources show

the three crowns on red, while in the Tudor period they are sometimes described as the three crowns on red in the 2nd and 3rd quarters while the 1st and 4th quarters show a white cross on green with the Virgin Mary with the child in gold in the canton. Francois R. Velde's work on Arthurian heraldry notes that Arthur was represented by thirteen crowns on blue after a 15th-century mistranslation of "thirteen" for "three".

Edward I was an Arthurian enthusiast who granted to many cities the use of three crowns—the probable origin, for example, of the arms of the city of Oxford. The three crowns are said by some to symbolize Arthur's supremacy over other kings, to others they represent the realms of North Wales, South Wales, and Logres.

Henry VII also claimed direct descent from King Arthur, perhaps to reconcile warring factions. He named his eldest son, the heir apparent and Prince of Wales, Arthur. His claim is further supported by the Round Table displayed in the great hall of Winchester Cathedral. The table hangs on a wall with the Tudor rose at its center and radiating from it compartments of green and white bearing the names of each knight, with Arthur's uppermost.

2. BEDEVERE

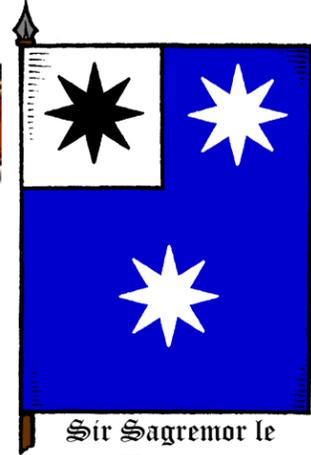
A yellow field with a red gonfalon (a banner hanging from crossbar with tails) in the center.

The gonfalon was a symbol of Bedevere's status as Arthur's constable (Count of the Stables or Master of the House). In medieval times, the constable was a high-ranking official of the court, analogous to an army chief of staff or the keeper or governor of a royal castle.

Together with Kay, Bedevere was Arthur's best friend, later created Duke of Normandy by Arthur. Arthur entrusted Bedevere to throw Excalibur back into the lake and accompanied the mortally wounded Arthur to the barge that would take him to Avalon, an island said to be

Continued on page 10

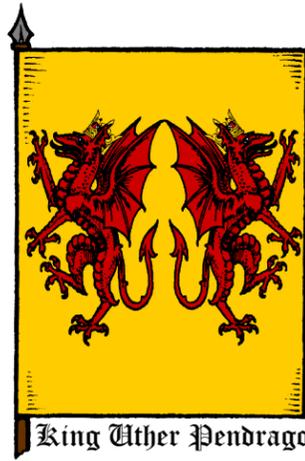
The truth stands hid



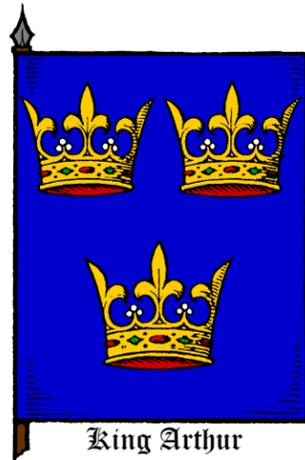
Sir Sagremor le Desreuz



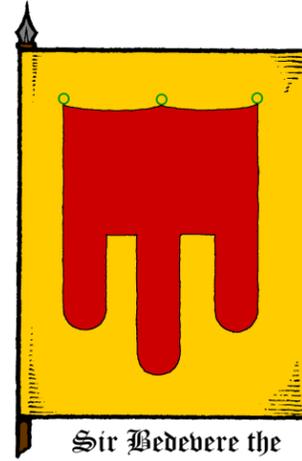
Sir Tristan de Lyones



King Uther Pendragon

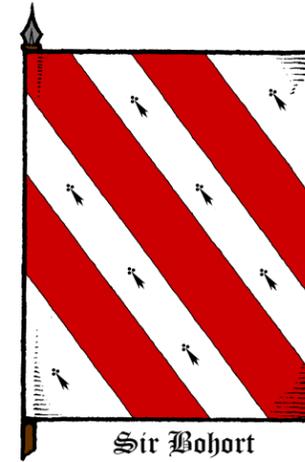


King Arthur

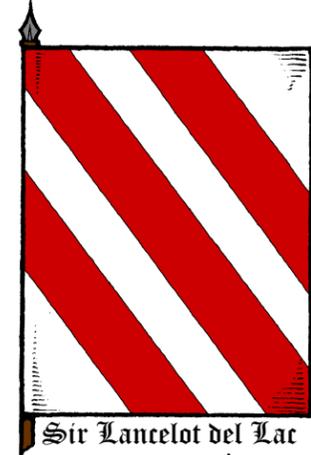


Sir Bedevere the Constable

in the trappings of a tale ...



Sir Bohort



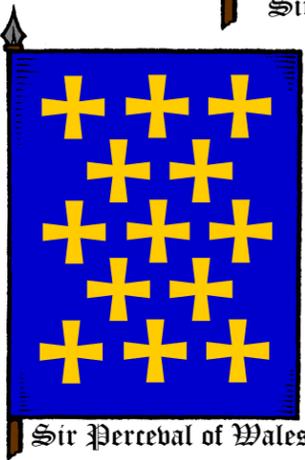
Sir Lancelot del Lac



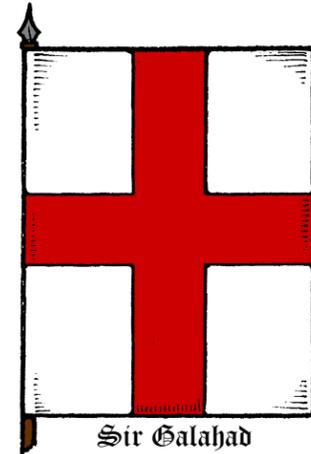
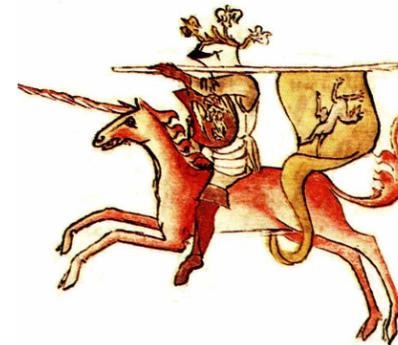
King Arthur

and the Knights

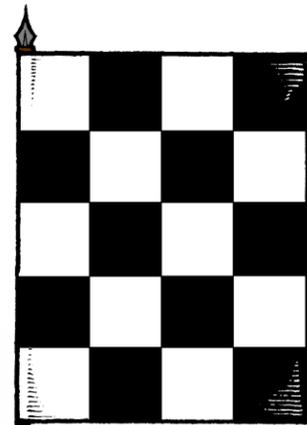
of the Round Table



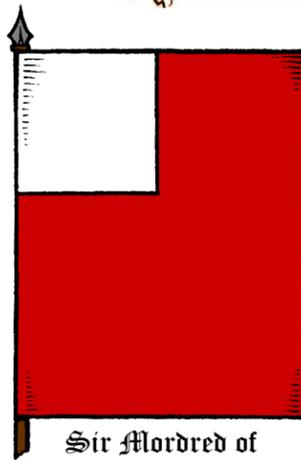
Sir Perceval of Wales



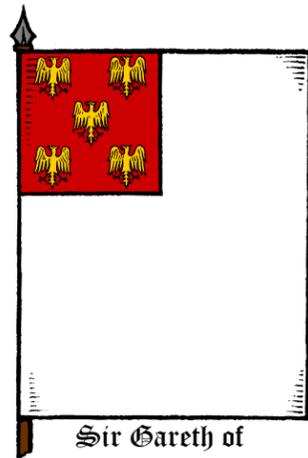
Sir Galahad



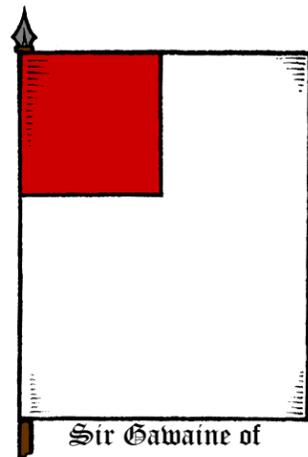
Sir Palomides the Saracen



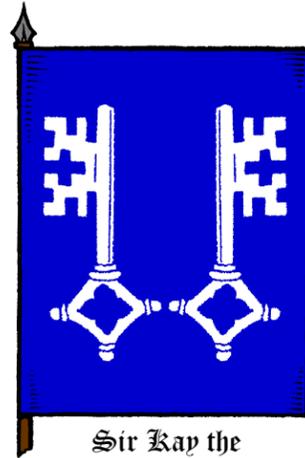
Sir Mordred of Orkney



Sir Gareth of Orkney



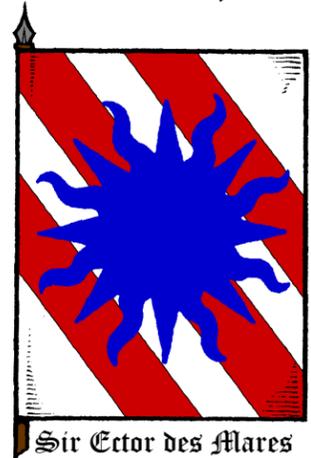
Sir Gawaine of Orkney



Sir Kay the Seneschal



Sir Brunor le Noir



Sir Ector des Mares



Arthur Continued from page 7

located in Glastonbury.

3. BOHORT

An ermine field with three red diagonal stripes from upper hoist to lower fly.

Ermine represents the fur of an ermine, with a white field with black arrowhead-like shapes with three dots—1, 2—at the upper end of the arrowheads.

Bohort was the son of King Bohort de Gaunes, the elder brother of Lionel, and a cousin to Lancelot. Some accounts make Bohort the go-between Lancelot and Queen Guinevere.

4. LANCELOT DEL LAC

A white field with three red diagonal stripes from upper hoist to lower fly.

Lancelot was the son of Ban de Benoic, from whom he took his arms without differencing or cadency. Alternatively, the three bends signify Lancelot's strength as triple that of a common man.

Lancelot, the chief knight of the Round Table, was the favored lover of Arthur's Queen Guinevere. He is also the central hero of three medieval romances, beginning with Chrétien de Troyes's *Knight of the Cart*, composed around 1170. According to that narrative, he obtained these arms after capturing the enchanted castle known as Dolorous Gard, where he found three silver shields with red bends.

The "del Lac" appended to Lancelot's name refers to how he (together with Arthur, according to other accounts) had been given as a baby to the Lady of the Lake (Merlin's love, and the cause of his downfall) to be raised until the age of 15 to keep secret his noble origins.

Lancelot was among the knights questing for the Holy Grail, but his infatuation with Guinevere and with other ladies (among others Dame Elaine, Galahad's mother) caused him to fail in the quest, having lost the required spiritual purity. Lancelot was also to blame for the end of the brotherhood of the Knights of the Round Table and indirectly for the death of King Arthur.

5. GALAHAD

A white (silver) field with a red

cross.

Galahad was the son of Lancelot and Dame Elaine. The cross recalls Galahad's central role in the quest for the Holy Grail. "Galahad" was originally Lancelot's first name.

Galahad was introduced to Arthur's court at Camelot in red armor, but without a shield with heraldic devices. However, during the quest for the Holy Grail he found his shield behind the altar of an abbey—a silver shield with a red cross, which had been "waiting for him for centuries". Galahad adopted the shield as his own and refused to bear another. His surcoat was also white with a red cross.



An excerpt from the Bayeux Tapestry showing the dragon standard of King Harold Godwinson.

Galahad's fictitious symbols are the most intricately connected to real medieval history and religious symbolism. The Crusades, themselves a quest to the Holy Land and for the Holy Sepulcher, were fought at the time that people began reading romantic poems about King Arthur and his knights. Many English crusaders' surcoats and flags bore a single red cross on white, or a white cross on red.

English and French troops both used such flags during the crusades, and the white flag with the red cross became known as the cross of St. George (today the flag of England) and the Banner of Victory. The crusaders' flags are considered the genesis of European national flags.

In many medieval paintings of the Resurrection and of the Ascension,

Jesus Christ is represented with a white pennant bearing a red cross. In these the cross is the sign of victory over death, as Jesus achieved victory over the cross. The white stood for purity and the red for blood. Other saints, many of them martyrs, are also depicted with the Banner of Victory.

In the Arthurian narratives the Holy Grail, or sacred chalice, is the cup used at the Last Supper and later filled with the blood of Christ during the crucifixion. The fictional Arthurian quest for the Grail paralleled and helped inspire the real-life Crusades to liberate the Holy Land.

6. HECTOR DES MARES

A white field with three red diagonals of red from upper hoist to lower fly with a blue sun, or maunch, at the center.

Hector was Lancelot's half-brother, also the son of Ban de Benoic.

Arthur was raised in the household of Hector, sometimes spelled "Ector", under the tutelage of Merlin. He learned the military arts from Hector, and intellectual pursuits from Merlin.

7. BRUNOR LE NOIR

A white field with a rampant lion checkered in red and black.

Brunor le Noir (the Black) was the son of Brunor le Chevalier sans Peur (Knight without Fear), whose banner was a plain white field. His younger brother, Dinadan, used a rampant lion in black.

8. KAY THE SENESCHAL

A dark blue field with two vertical white keys parallel to each other (per pale addorsed) at the center.

Kay served as Arthur's seneschal, the keeper of the lord's estates in feudal times, often symbolized by keys.

Arthur began his service as a lowly squire to Kay. In the "Sword in the Stone" story, Uther (Arthur's father) had placed a sword in a stone, to be removed only by the next king of England. Kay was among the knights who attempted to pull out the sword. The then-anonymous Arthur, seeking a sword for Kay during a tournament, found and removed the sword.

Some narratives have confused that sword with Excalibur, the sword

given to Arthur by the Lady of the Lake, and returned to her by Bedevere after Arthur's death. The sword's name derives from Caliburnus (from "chalybs", Latin for "steel" or "Calad-Bolg", Welsh for "hard lightning").

9. GAUVAIN

(GAWAINE OF ORKNEY)

A white field with a red canton (also known as a "lot").

Gauvain was the eldest son of King of Lothian (Lot), and used his father's undifferenced arms.

Gauvain was associated with Pope Gregory the Great (served 590-604); the white shield and red canton is said to have belonged to Judas Maccabaeus (died 161 BC). Some texts attribute ownership of Excalibur to Gauvain rather than Arthur. A famous 14th-century poem pits him against a mighty foe in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*.

He and his brothers, Gareth and Mordred, were known collectively as the Princes of Orkney. Gareth's arms placed five golden eagles on the red canton; Mordred's reversed the colors of Gauvain's arms.

Later, a double-headed gold eagle on purple was attributed to Gawain, while Gareth was assigned the same arms differenced with a red diagonal (bend) and Mordred the same with a white horizontal stripe above the eagle (a chief argent).

10. PALAMEDE

(PALOMYDES THE SARACEN)

A checkered field in white and black (chequy argent and sable).

Palamede was the son of Esclabor le Méconnu (King of Babylon), whose arms were a checkered field in yellow and red (chequy or and gules). His brother, Saphar, used arms divided vertically with a blue and white pattern on the left and checkered yellow and green on the right (per pale vair and chequy or and vert). Esclabor's brother (Palamede's uncle) Arphasar used a white diagonal cross on black (sable a saltire argent).

This knight is only mentioned once, in an anonymous 13-century French prose narrative.

11. PERCEVAL (PARSIFAL, or PERCEVAL OF WALES)

A purple field with golden crosses

arranged in rows (semé). Number of crosses not specified.

The heraldic term for such a distribution of items is "semy" (from the French *semé*, "sown"). Perceval's father, Pellinor, used a yellow field with blue or purple crosses semy. Perceval reversed the colors keeping the same devices. Lamorant de Galles, Pellinor's other son, also reversed his father's colors and added a white rampant lion in the center.

Chrétien de Troyes described Perceval as the "Conte del Graal" (Count of the Grail). Wolfram von Eschenbach, writing in early 13th century, placed Perceval in a castle where the Grail is preserved, but



Another version of the Arms for Uther Pendragon

does not give the castle a location. Perceval lives there with his wife and children very happily, although this description does not conform to the medieval monastic ideal of the guardian of such a holy relic.

12. SAGREMOR LE DESREEZ

A blue field with a white canton, bearing three eight-pointed stars placed two over one, such that one black star is in the canton and two white stars are in the field.

Some narratives describe Sagremor's arms on a red field instead of blue and others a gyronny (spiral of triangles around the center) of black and yellow.

Sagremor is the nephew of the Emperor Constantine and has an illness that attacks him without warning. "Le Desreez" means desperate.

13. TRISTAN

A green field with a yellow lion rampant with red claws and tongue.

13-century English and French sources attributed to Tristan a lion for his main heraldic achievement, hence the name "Tristan the Lyonesse"; Germanic and Scandinavian texts give him a boar instead.

Tristan is the son of Rivalin, King of Lyonesse, and of Blanche, sister of Mark, King of Cornwall. He is most famous for his relationship with Isolde; his connection with Arthurian narratives is tenuous.

In a brief German romance, written around 1210 by Gottfried von Strassburg, Arthur invites Tristan and Isolde to a festival in Camelot. The story, which included many Arthurian figures, became one of the most brilliant literary achievements of German medieval literature and was read all over medieval Europe. Alfonso X (The Wise), the king of Castile from 1252 to 1284, was very fond of this tale and helped spread the romance across the Iberian Peninsula. Miguel Cervantes de Saavedra's *Don Quixote* may well reflect the influence of Arthurian romances in Spain.

14. UTHUR PENDRAGON

A yellow field with two back-to-back (addorsed) crowned red dragons.

Some sources depict the dragons in "ruddy gold", a copper-like shade.

Uther Pendragon ("Dragonhead") was Arthur's father, in most narratives. However the relationship may have been arisen from a story identifying Arthur as "Arthur the Terrible" (*uthr* in Gaelic), misconstruing the phrase as "Arthur son of Uther".

Uther was the younger brother and successor to Aurelius, King of the Galles (Welsh). According to Merlin, Uther's surname derives from the "luminous" dragon that appeared in the sky overhead during Uther's coronation after Aurelius was poisoned. Merlin interpreted it as foretelling the glories of Uther and of his unborn offspring, "Once upon a time there was a future King..."

Arthur is sometimes described using a dragon banner inherited from the dragon helmet crest used by his father. In fact, the dragon is not originally a Celtic symbol but Roman, likely derived from vexilloids or battle standards of auxiliary cav-

ally carried by Romans in Britain until the 5th century.

The Anglo-Saxons used the dragon as a prevailing and important symbol on banners and as vexilloids. The Bayeux Tapestry, the pictorial history in fabric of the battle of Hastings in 1066, by tradition sewn by Queen Matilda (wife of William, Duke of Normandy) and her maids, twice depicts a dragon vexilloid attached to a pole held by King Harold's standard-bearer. On the ground is the legend, "Here King Harold was slain, and the English fled".

Henry VII used the dragon as a predominant symbol. The arms of his descendants Henry VIII and Elizabeth I, as well as the arms of the Commonwealth under Oliver Cromwell, used a dragon as a supporter. A painting depicting Henry VIII arriving for his meeting near Calais with the French King Francis

I in 1520 shows a dragon in the sky above Henry's head in the same manner Merlin described during Uther Pendragon's coronation.

Showing the continuing strong influence of Arthurian symbols, dragons appear as supporters in the 1957 arms of the City of London, which according to 13th-century narratives was the city where Uther Pendragon held court.

EPILOGUE

To the roster of medieval writers must be added the work of modern authors and composers such as Alfred Lord Tennyson's *The Idylls of the King*, Mark Twain's *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, and Richard Wagner's three operas based on Arthurian legends: *Parsifal*, *Lohengrin*, and *Tristan und Isolde*. T. H. White's 1953 *The Once and Future King* inspired *Camelot*, a 1960 musical by Richard Rodgers and

Lorenz Hart. Many films have been based on the Arthurian legends, from *Camelot* and *First Knight* to *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* and Disney's *The Sword and the Stone*. The long-running comic strip *Prince Valiant*, by Hal Foster and now John Cullen Murphy, has retold old and new versions for over 65 years. More recently, Marion Zimmer Bradley retold the Arthurian story from the point of view of the women in *The Mists of Avalon*. King Arthur seems to have new meaning for each generation.

The debate continues whether Arthur was a historical figure or only a legend. Perhaps his deeds and actions were actually those of various real but unknown men that, as time went by, oral chronicles attributed to one person alone now called King Arthur. No matter—vexillologists, vexillophiles, and flag enthusiasts pursue understanding by studying flags of all kinds and periods. Real or imaginary, Arthur has inspired significant creativity in heraldry and vexillology, worthy of our study as a window into the times when it was invented.

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- Additional information was obtained from the Camelot Project at the University of Rochester, the archives of the Robert Lehman Collection Library at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, as well as *Excalibur: An Arthurian Drama* by Ralph Adams Cram, *The Sword of Kingship*, by Thomas Westwood, and *Excalibur*, by John Grosvenor Wilson.

This lecture, delivered at NAVA 35 in Norfolk, Virginia in October 2001, won NAVA's annual Captain William Driver Award for the best contribution to vexillological scholarship.

VIEW FROM CHINA

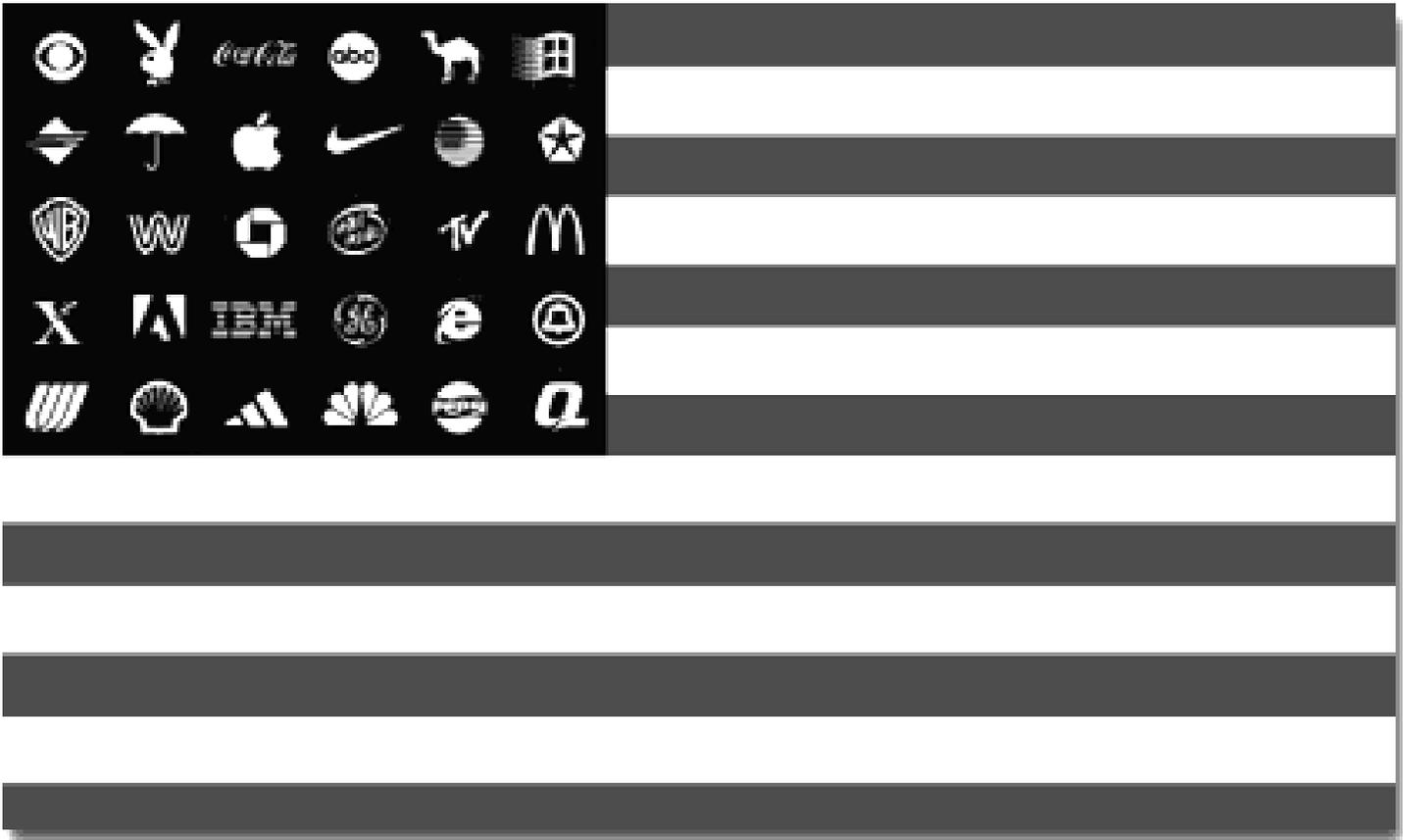
by Dave Martucci

Recently, a neighbor and friend, Elizabeth Vickerman, who is in the Peace Corps serving in Thailand, had a chance to visit China. She knows how much I love flags and so had this photo taken on the Great Wall. Notice the flags.



The one next to her is blue with red flammules and the others lining the wall are either red, yellow, or blue, all with red flammules.

On a recent visit, she showed me her coffee mug that has the Peace Corps symbol on it. It shows part of a U.S. flag with two stars and a dove in white on blue and some red and white stripes. Over the top is the name in blue.



CORPORATE AMERICA FLAG PROTEST

Flags are the central feature of a protest sponsored by the web site Adbusters.org. This site is urging people to participate through public flag usage and they are distributing these flags for the purpose of rebelling against the perceived take-over by multi-national corporations.

Their complete statement from the web site follows.

A shrinking number of the planet's biggest businesses—AOL Time Warner, Shell, Nike, Microsoft, McDonald's — are the money behind presidents, the power that drives global trade rules, the voice of authority on how we live and the way we think. Corporations have all the rights of we, the people, but thousands of times more money to make the system work for them.

We call this system "democracy." But today it looks a lot like corporate rule.

A rebellion is building. Thousands of protesters shake up every global trade conference with calls for less corporate clout and more grassroots power. And on July 4, America's Independence Day, culture jammers delivered another blast of symbolic disobedience. Across the US and around the world, proud citizens traded the Stars-and-Stripes for today's Brands-and-Bands—the symbol of all that's wrong with America. Five hundred Corporate America flags waved over parades and over highways, in front of Wal-Mart and the White House.

The flag campaign is far from over. More and more Corporate America flags are being sent across America and around the world to support a year-round Corporate Crackdown. From street protests to teach-ins, the flag is fast becoming a public ral-

lying point for the movement against corporate power.

The flags snapping in the wind are raising sparks. You just don't mess with America's Old Glory. But many would say it's been a corporate doormat for years. And today, the question is global. What counts as "independence"? And when will we win it back?

<http://adbusters.org/campaigns/flag/>

And a comment from an Adbusters reader:

Has anyone bothered pointing out that this US Corporate Flag ironically, includes the symbols for Royal Dutch Shell—an Anglo-Dutch firm; Daimler-Chrysler—a German firm; and Adidas—another German firm. By the way, when will adbusters create an European analogue for the EU flag? The USA doesn't possess a monopoly of voracious MNCs....

sgabig, Newville, Pennsylvania

NAVA News 36/2 - #178

To the Editor,

re: When is a Flag Official? (NAVA News, January - March 2003, p7)

The question to which you have solicited opinions is a good one, particularly when applied to the US Flag. The original Flag Act of 14 June 1777, approved by the Congress, belies the fact that there was no actual country called the United States of America in operation at that time. Although it came nearly a year before the flag act, the Declaration of Independence did not establish a nation; in fact, the wording of that document, with its use of plural nouns, shows clearly that our founding fathers were more interested in effecting separation than creating an incorporated nation, as may be seen in this portion of the Declaration:

We, therefore, the Representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by the authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States; that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do.

I have no doubt that it was in the minds of these men (at least some of them) to form a new country out of the 13 free republics that the Declaration in essence created, but they did not say so specifically in the document. It is the Articles of Confederation that created the first actual central government, weak though it may have been, with the name "United States of America." In fact, the first article in the Articles of Confederation addresses the question of by what name the country shall be called: "The Stile of this Confederacy shall be 'The United States of America'." The Articles

were agreed to by Congress on 15 November 1777 (five months after the first Flag Act), but not signed until 9 July 1778 (over one year after the first Flag Act); and they didn't go into force until 1 March 1781, when they were ratified by Maryland.

Perhaps one may protest that this is nothing but semantics, but remember that law is all words, and justice is all action. The fact is that what we celebrate on Flag Day as the adoption of the first US Flag is actually the adoption of a flag, recommended by the Marine Committee in the middle of a "sandwich" of resolutions, for a set of States united for the common purpose of breaking the political bands that bound them to the British Crown. Was it the official flag of the United States? Yes, as the term "United States" would have been understood by an 18th century mind in His Majesty's former Colonies. Was it the official flag of THE United States of America? No, because "The United States of America" didn't exist at the time. Yes, there was a Continental Army and Navy, and there was a Congress, but on 14 July 1777 there was no country, either Confederate or Federal. The first US Flag would have become "official" on 1 March 1781, when a real country existed. Prior to that time the Stars and Stripes would have been a military signal of sorts, or the symbol of a commonly held belligerence.

Respectfully Yours,

Richard R. Gideon, Editor
AMERICAN VEXILLUM Magazine

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editor@americanvexillum.com

To the Editor,

Thank you for "NAVA News" issue 177, January-March 2003. As always, your publication contains plenty of very accurate information. Congratulations.

With best regards,

Wladyslaw Serwatowski
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NAVA 37 FLAG SYMBOLISM

The proportions are indeed 1:2. While the flag of Québec is 2:3, I wanted my design to take on the proportions of the national flag (as well as many other provinces) to symbolize Montréal as part of Canada (not just Québec).

The white cross on (Québec) blue background symbolizes the province of Québec.

The NAVA flag is placed in the canton to symbolize the purpose of the conference (the study of flags in the U.S. and Canada) Like the Montréal civic flag, a *fleur-de-lis* is in the canton. This is to symbolize the strong French influence on Montréal.

All the best,

Morgan Milner

850 North Randolph St #1508
Arlington, VA 22203
703.248.8396

To the Editor,

Here are my comments (for what they are worth) on the subject of Official Flags as requested in the last Edition of *Nava News*.

In the first place I must admit that I do not like the phrase "shadow" flags, to me a flag is either officially acceptable or it is not. When a flag is only loosely defined by law or executive decree, any design which falls within the terms so defined may be described as 'a variant interpretation', but remains a legal entity. A flag which does not is an unofficial variant.

If, at some stage, a government find these variant interpretations unacceptable, they may then issue precise construction details, and any flag which does not conform to these thereafter becomes an unofficial variant. But, while they are officially acceptable they remain 'official flags'.

Regards,

Christopher Southworth

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Preston,

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A "lost panel" from the Bayeux Tapestry?



Chumley, the Vexi-Gorilla © Michael Faul, 2002. All rights reserved.

Chumley the Vexi-Gorilla™

... Is the creation of Michael Faul, Editor of *Flagmaster*, the distinguished journal of The Flag Institute in the United Kingdom. To a field not

often blessed by humor's grace, Mr Faul brings a delightfully light touch, deep vexillological roots, and sparkling whimsy.



Badge of the Saguenay Herald.

The badge represents, in a stylized form, a blueberry, with its heart composed of four small crowns. Blueberries are a famous feature of the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean region, the inhabitants of which are affectionately known as "Bleuets." The four crowns in cross make reference to the "Kingdom" myth of the Saguenay region from the time of Jacques Cartier and Roberval.

CLASSIFIEDS

NAVA Membership entitles you to one free classified ad per year. Additional ads are US\$2.00 plus 10¢ per word above 21 words. Address, email, etc. doesn't count. Send ad information to NAVA NEWS ADS, 240 Calderwood Rd, Washington ME 04574-3440 or email them to navanews@nava.org. Checks/money orders should be made payable to NAVA. Sorry, no cash, please.

Support historic flag conservation. Donate to NAVA's Flag Conservation program and preserve a piece of history!

SAGUENAY AT NAVA 37

Mr. Bruce Patterson, Canada's Saguenay Herald, will be the guest speaker at the Saturday night banquet and will speak on the topic of Canadian symbology, with an emphasis on flags. This talk will complement the meeting's theme of *A Celebration of Canadian Vexillology*.

HELP PUT US OVER THE TOP!

NAVA members have responded, already pledging some \$2,000 of the remaining \$3,000 needed to publish the 350-page American City Flags with its accompanying full-color poster. Please consider a gift in support of the largest publishing effort by NAVA ever. Donors may receive additional books and posters for every \$25 contributed. Mail your gift or pledge to NAVA's Trenton mailbox, and watch for publication in November 2003.

NAVA News

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