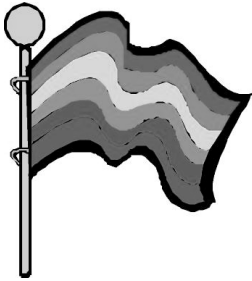


History of the Flag



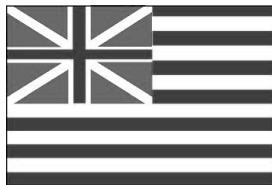
Ancient History



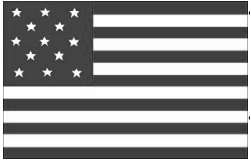
- Flags are almost as old as civilization itself.
- Imperial Egypt as well as the armies of Babylon, Chaldea, and Assyria followed the colors of their kings.
- The Old Testament frequently mentions banners and standards.

The American Revolution

- The Grand Union flag represented the new united colonies in their fight against England.
- It was raised over the Continental Army at Cambridge, Massachusetts on 2 January 1776.
- It had thirteen stripes of red and white and a blue square with the crosses of St. George and St. Andrew from the British Flag.



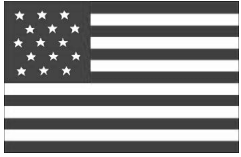
The Stars and Stripes



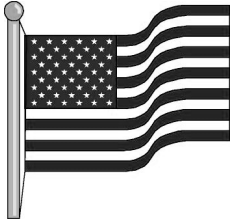
- Born on 14 June 1777, two years to the day after the birth of the United States Army.
- On that day, Congress resolved that the flag should be 13 stripes of red and white and that the union be 13 stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation.
- The flag was first raised over Fort Stanwix, New York on 3 August 1777. The Army version of the flag had the stars in a circle. The Navy version had the stars in the shape of crosses similar to the British Flag.

New States

- When Vermont and Kentucky joined the union, they added stripes to the flag but eventually realized that would make the flag look bad as many more states were added, so Congress passed a law in 1818 to add a star for each new state.
- Francis Scott Key composed the lyrics to The Star Spangled Banner on 13 and 14 September 1814 when he was looking at the flag with 15 stripes flying over Fort McHenry, Maryland.



Becoming The National Color



- Before the Civil War (1861-1865), American soldiers carried a blue flag with an eagle with a shield on its breast and carrying an olive branch (symbolizing peace) and arrows (symbolizing war).
- Shortly before the Civil War, the Stars and Stripes became the National Color.
- The practice of carrying the Color into battle was ended because those who carried the Color were more likely to die in battle.

Betsy Ross

- Legend has it that Betsy Ross sewed the first flag. Though this is not something that can actually be proven, it is definitely true that she helped sew some of the early flags at the time of the American Revolution.