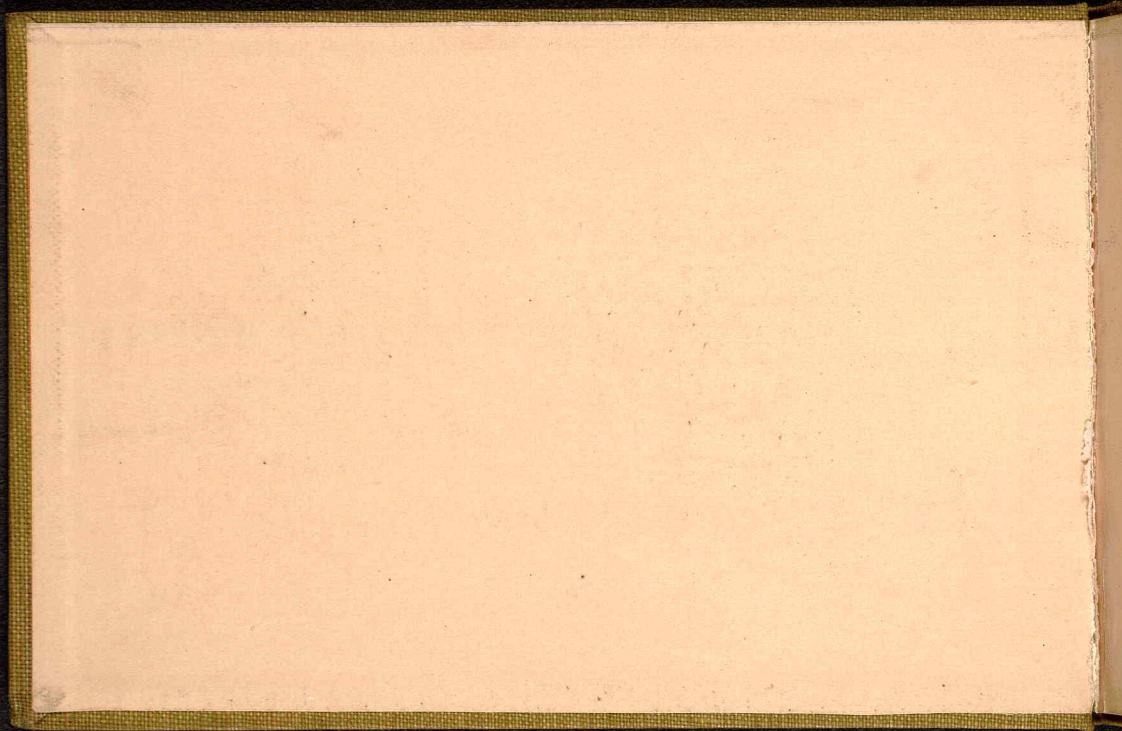
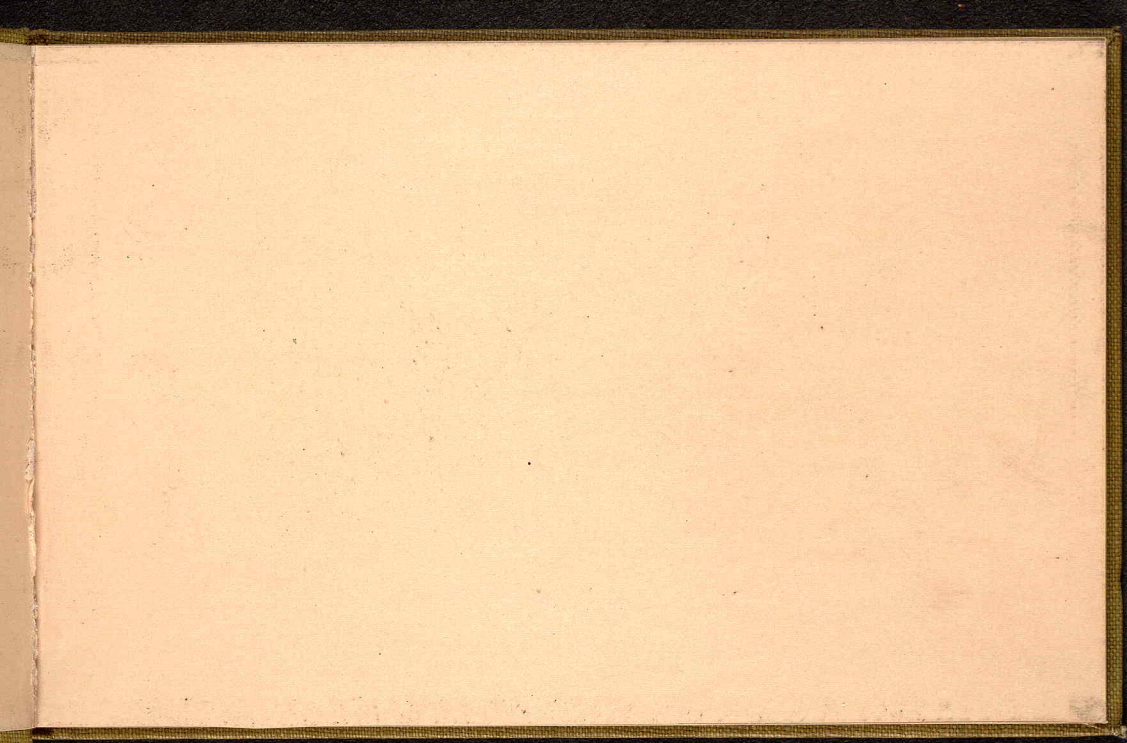
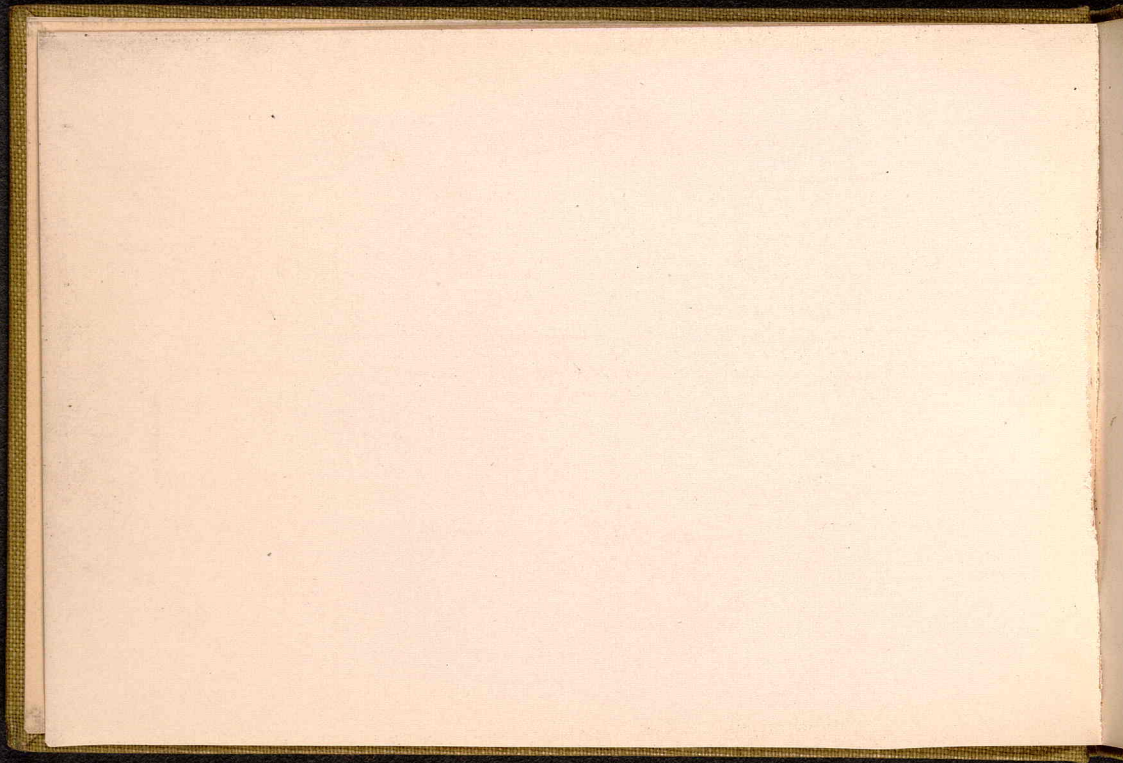
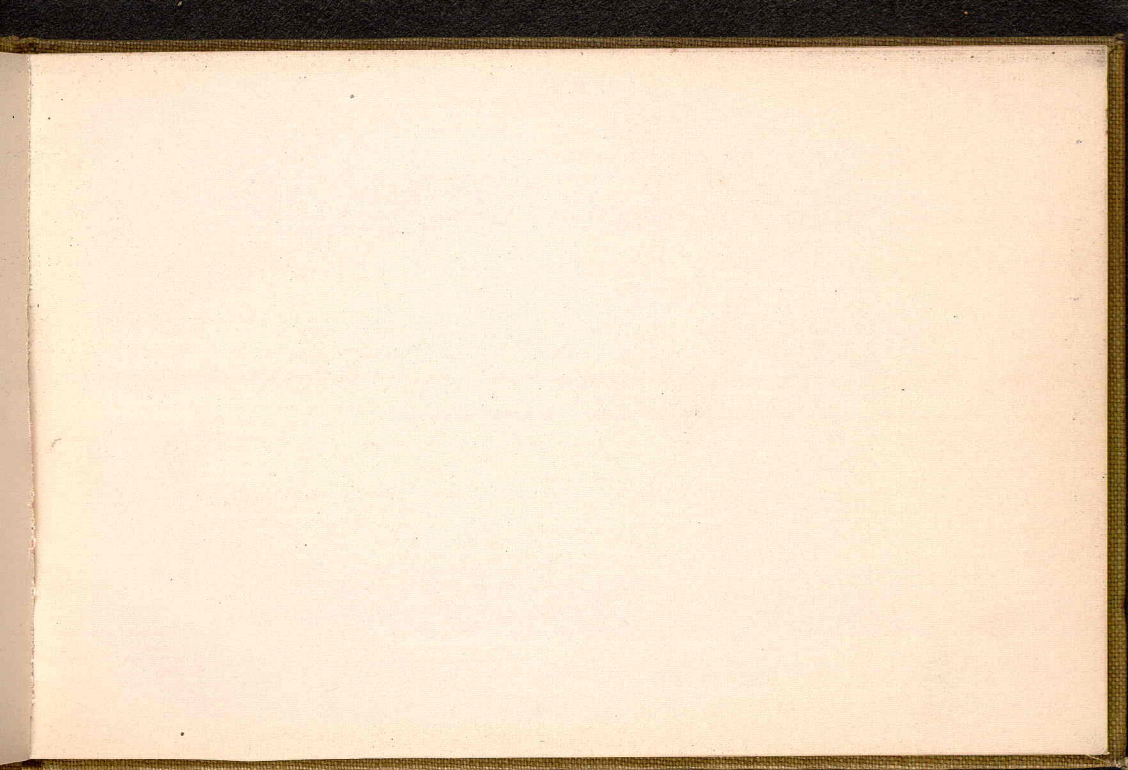


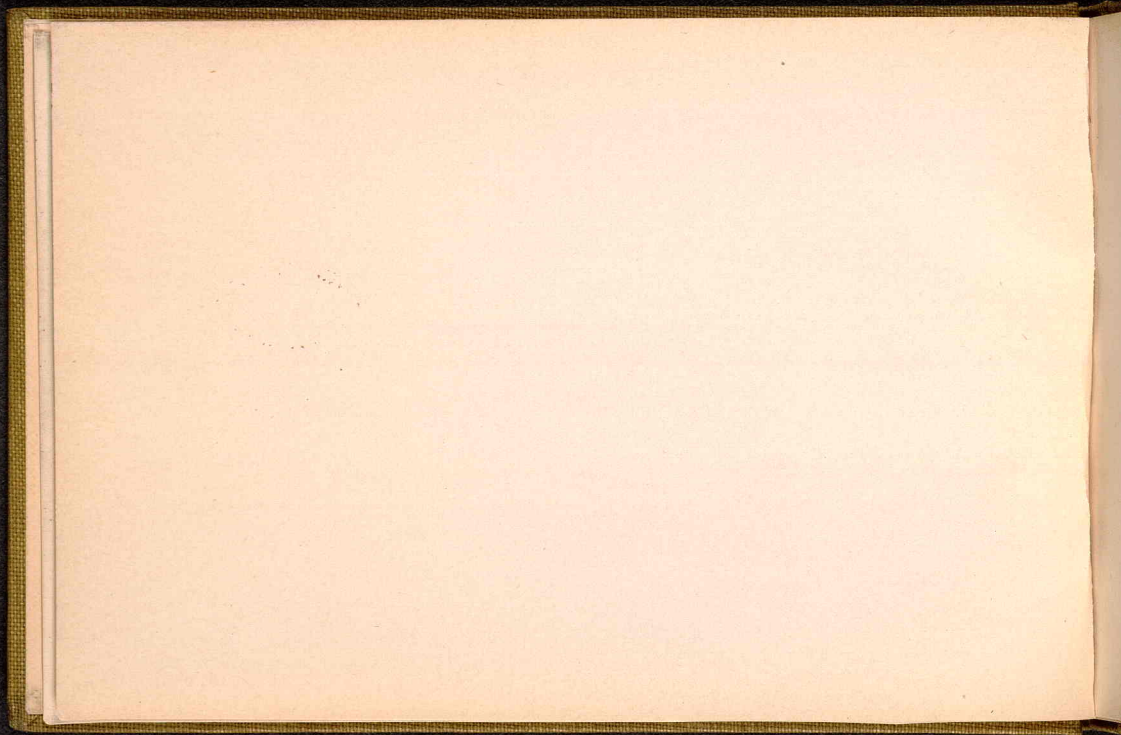
Our Flag











OUR FLAG

ITS HISTORY AND CHANGES FROM

1620 TO 1896



WITH COLORED ILLUSTRATIONS



SECOND EDITION

NEW HAVEN, CONN. :

TUTTLE, MOREHOUSE & TAYLOR, PUBLISHERS

1896



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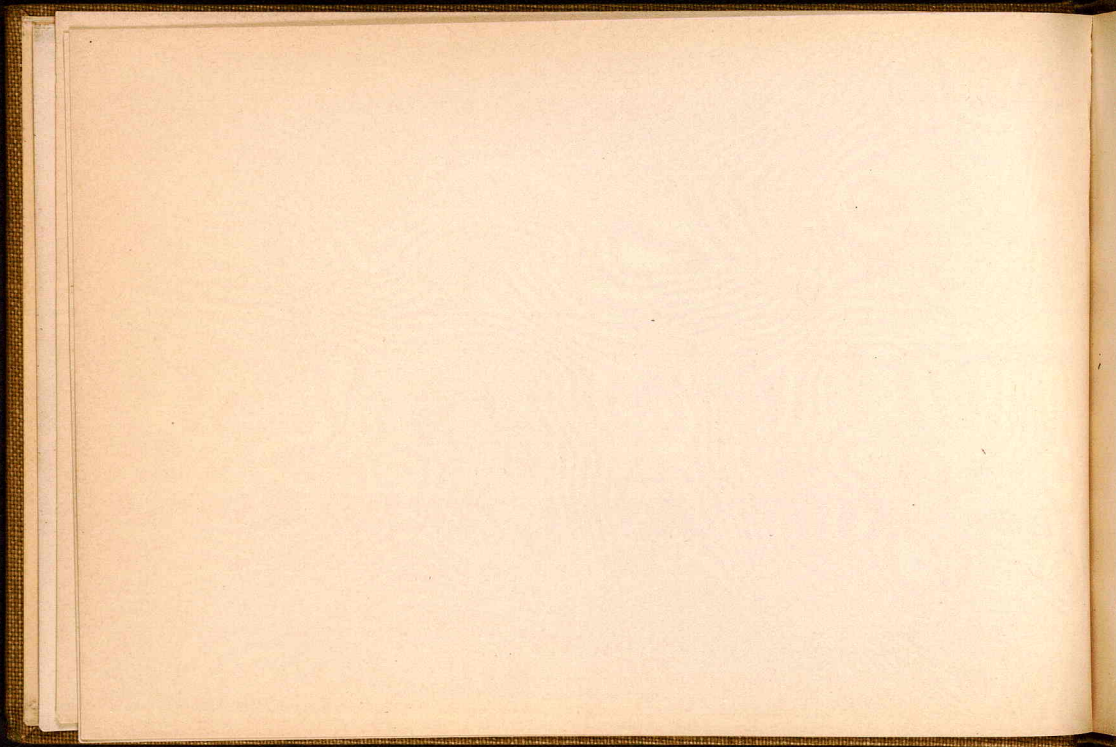
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THE TUTTLE, MOREHOUSE & TAYLOR PRESS
NEW HAVEN, CONN.

TO THE
MARY CLAP WOOSTER CHAPTER
D. A. R.
OF
NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT

At whose request this paper was written and to whom it was read with
illustrations, June 14, 1895.

MRS. HENRY CHAMPION
D. A. R.



OUR FLAG,

Whose one hundred and eighteenth birthday we celebrate this June 14, 1895, was, like everything in nature or history, a *growth*, and to trace that growth takes us back to the National flag of the Mother Country.

One naturally asks, What flag floated over the early settlements of our country? What over its battle fields previous to that June day in 1777, when by an act of Congress it was resolved "that the flag of the nation be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white, and thirteen stars, white on a blue field?"

Answering our question in order of time, we take first the early settlements of the country.

Tradition tells us that the Norsemen, or Northmen, and the Danes landed between the years 986 and 1300 at several points at the extreme northeast of the continent, and even as far down the coast as the New England shore.

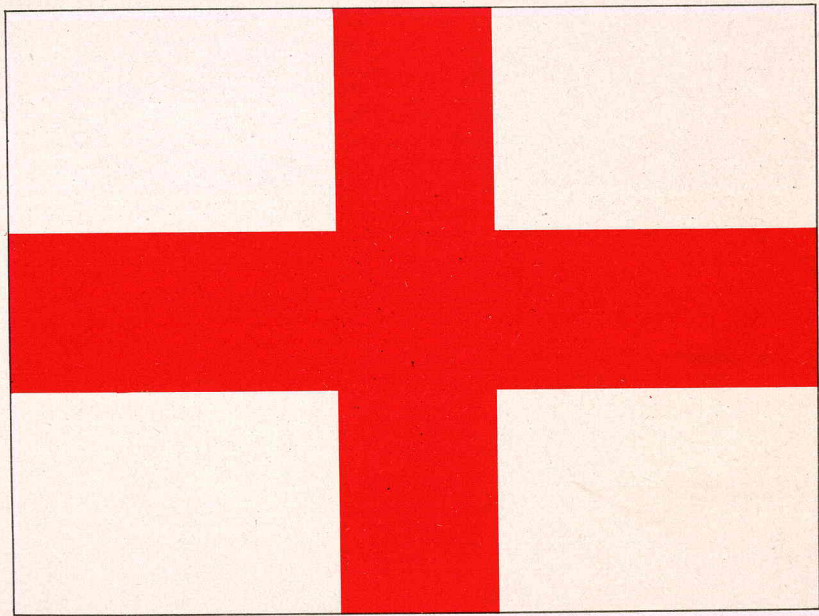
That an expedition from Iceland in 1347 landed at Newport, Rhode Island; at which time the "Round Tower" there was built. These expeditions no doubt

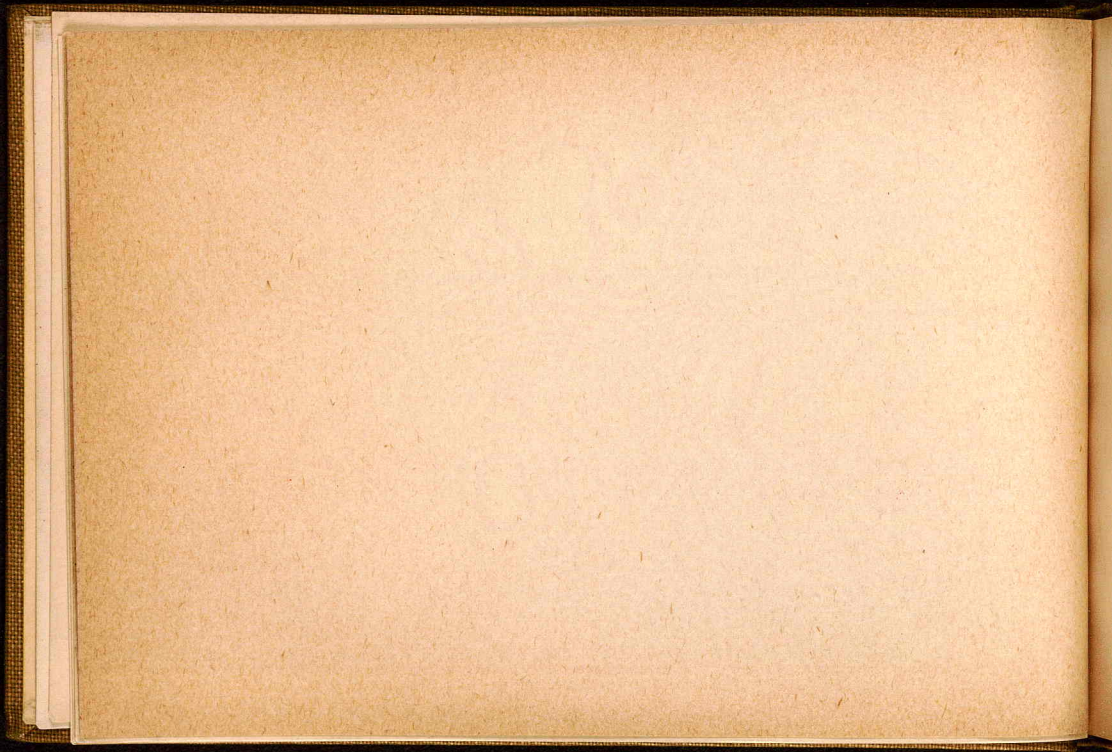
planted some ensign or standard, as they took temporary possession, but no record of its design is left us.

In 1492 Columbus planted the Spanish flag on the Island of San Salvador, one of the Bahama group, and again in 1498 at the mouth of the Orinoco, S. A. He supposed he had then reached the coast of Asia. According to Humboldt, Sebastian Cabot landed at Labrador in 1497, and planted the red cross of St. George, the royal ensign of Henry the Seventh. If so, the English flag then for the first time floated over North American soil. But we narrow down our field of inquiry to what is now the United States, and as we remember that for one hundred and fifty-seven years, from the wintry day when the Mayflower landed at Plymouth Rock, to the June day in 1777 when the stars and stripes were adopted—for this more than a century and a half the flag of England was our flag, we ask with interest, What was the flag of the Mother Country in those years?

About the year 1192 Richard Coeur de Lion had asked the aid of St. George, Bishop of Cappadocia. He gave the king as a banner what is now called the "Red Cross of St. George," and Edward III, about 1345, made St. George the patron saint of the kingdom. (1)

Under this flag Sir Humphrey Gilbert, Bartholomew Gosnold and others sailed with grants of land from Queen Elizabeth to found colonies in the new world, 1578-1587.





The generous, even reckless way, in which land was disposed of by these charters is shown by the boundaries given.

All the land between the latitude of Cape Fear, North Carolina, and Canada was given by the Queen and to be called "Virginia." It was to be divided into two districts; the southern part, from the latitude of Cape Fear to the mouth of the Potomac, and running back indefinitely into the wilderness, was given to the "London Company," and to be called Southern Virginia; the land from about the latitude of New York to Canada was given to the "Plymouth Company," and to be called Northern Virginia.

The strip of country between these two grants, about one hundred miles of coast, was to be a dividing line to avoid disputes as to territory, and neither Company might make settlements more than fifty miles from its boundary.

All these efforts to plant colonies proved failures. Lack of supplies and cold winters led the settlers to give up the project and return to England.

This red cross of St. George was England's flag until the year 1606.

In that year Scotland was added to England, and King James I, in honor of the union, placed the white cross of St. Andrew on the national flag, changing the field from white to blue. (2) This diagonal white cross of St. Andrew had been the badge of the Scots since the Crusades.

The union of the two crosses was called the "King's colors," or "Union

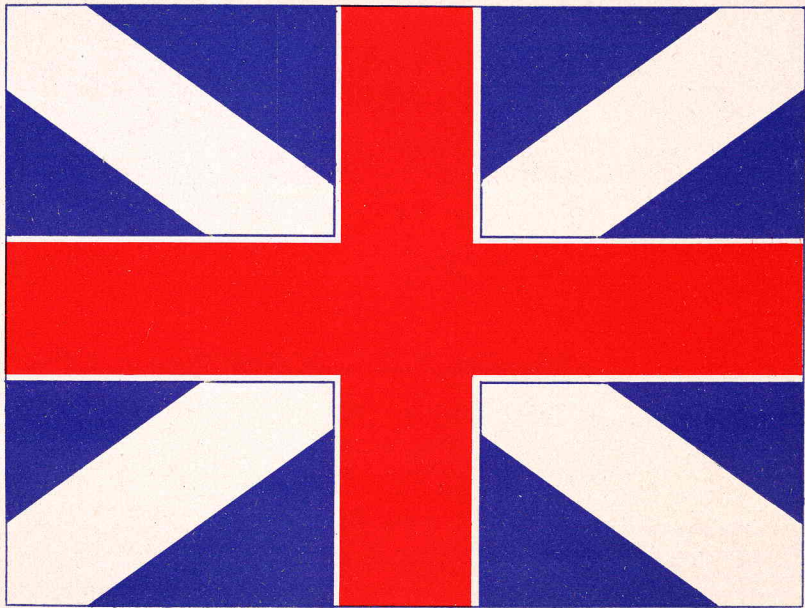
colors," and the first permanent settlements in this country were made under its protection. It was the flag of the Mayflower in 1620.

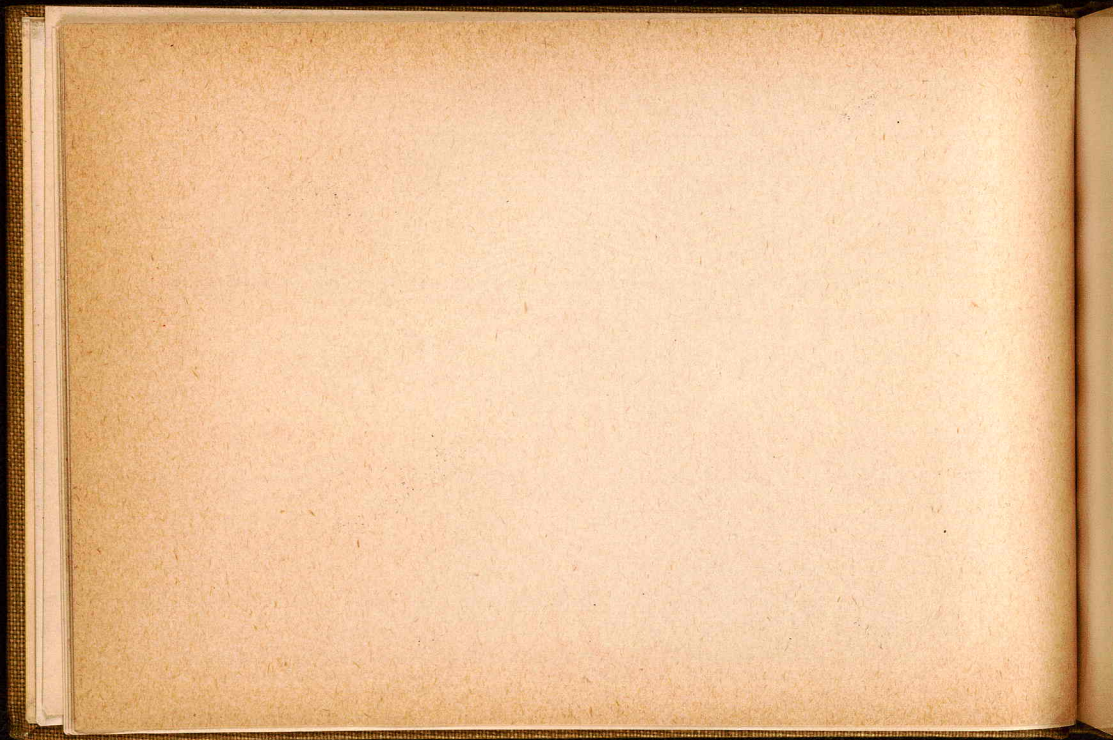
Massachusetts records speak of it as in use in that colony in 1634.

In November of that year a Mr. Endicott of Salem defaced the King's colors. Much excitement followed, a trial was held, when it was proven that it was not done with ill intent, but the red cross was a relic of Anti-Christ, having been given to England by a Pope, and so was a cause of offense. After referring the matter to an assembly of ministers, and then to one court after another, it was proposed that the Colony show no flag.

Then arose a question. If captains of vessels returning to Europe were asked what colors they saw here, the truth might cause trouble. The matter was referred to Rev. John Cotton, who wisely suggested a way by which the growing spirit of independence might be satisfied and yet no offense be given. He said, "As the fort at the entrance of Boston harbor without doubt belongs to the King, the 'King's colors' should be used *there*." This was done, to the extent of showing them on the staff at the fort when a vessel was passing, but *only* then, and they were not used elsewhere in the Colony. This was in 1636.

In 1643 the three colonies of Plymouth, Massachusetts and Connecticut united, under the name of "The United Colonies of New England," but no flag was adopted.





In 1651, fifteen years after the Salem episode, the Court of Massachusetts *ordered* that the Cross of St. George be used in the Colony.

Under Cromwell and Charles II, various minor changes were made in the flag of the Mother Country, but in 1707 the color was changed to crimson and the two crosses, which had covered the entire flag, were placed in the upper corner. (3)

This was called the "Cromwell flag," and in that form was not accepted by the colonies; we continued to use the "King's colors" (2) till 1707, when we adopted the red flag, but added to it a device of our own in place of the crosses. (4)

All the pictures of New England flags from 1707 to 1776 show a red or blue ensign, field white, with a pine tree or globe in the upper corner, sometimes covering the entire field. The pine tree was oftener used.

Massachusetts had used the pine tree as her symbol for some time. It is on the silver coins of that Colony, the die for which was cast in 1652, and used without change of date for thirty years. Trumbull, in his celebrated picture of the "Battle of Bunker Hill," in the rotunda of the Capitol at Washington, represents the red flag, white corner, green pine tree.

The Connecticut troops who took part in the exciting times that followed Lexington and Bunker Hill had a State banner with the State arms and the motto, "Qui transtulit sustinet."

The troops of Massachusetts adopted the words, "An appeal to Heaven."

Early New York records speak of different standards ; indeed, the regiments from various States, hastening to the aid of Washington or his generals, carried flags of various devices ; many having only a local interest and only used on the occasion that originated them.

The men at Lexington had neither uniform nor flags, but at Bunker Hill, two months later, the Colonial troops had more the appearance of an army.

Among the flags described the pine tree is most frequently mentioned (5), also a serpent coiled, ready to spring, with the motto, "Beware!" (6) "Don't tread on me," or "Come if you dare!" The snake flag was used by the Southern States from 1776 to June, 1777. A chain of thirteen links, a ring, a tiger, and a field of wheat were also used as devices.

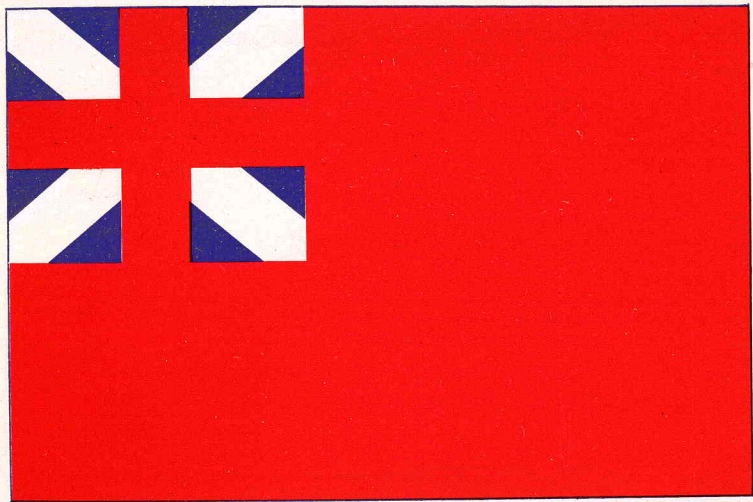
In October, 1775, Washington writes to two officers who were about to take command of cruisers: "Please fix on some flag, by which our vessels may know each other."

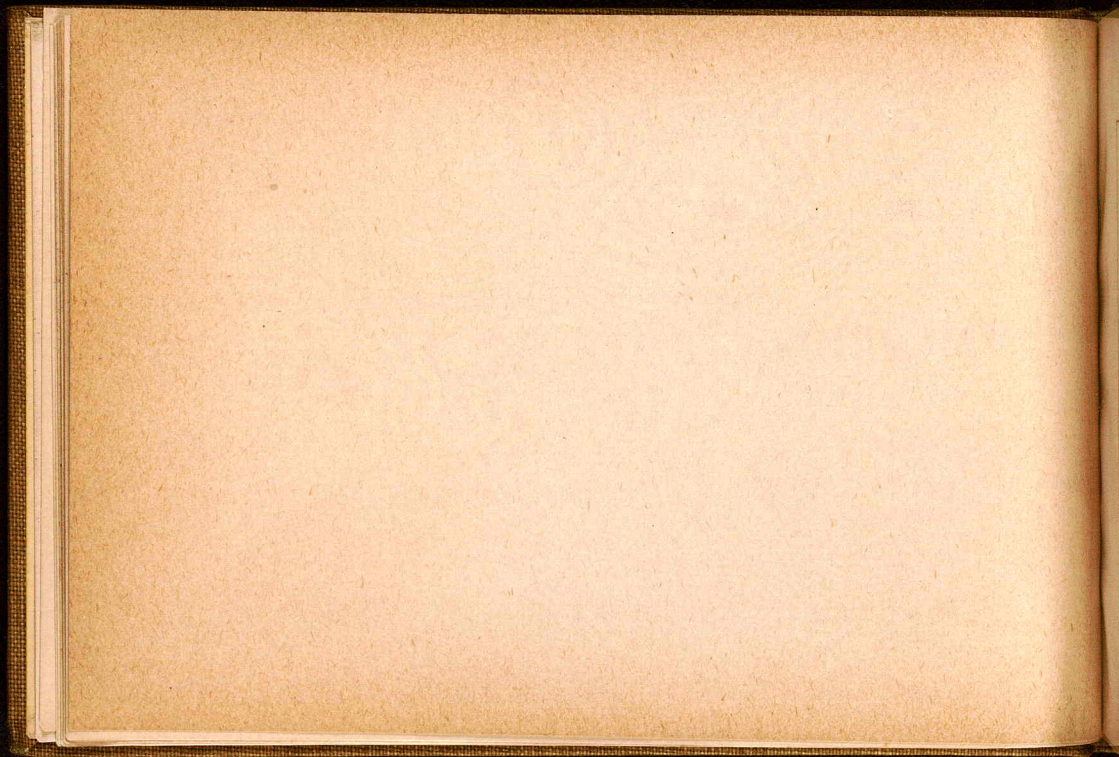
They decided on the "pine-tree flag," as it was called.

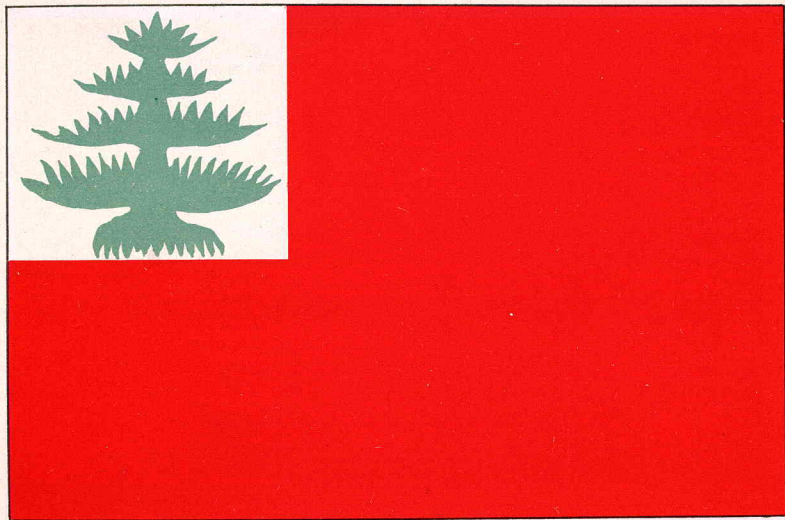
This is frequently mentioned in the records of 1775 and 1776 as used by vessels.

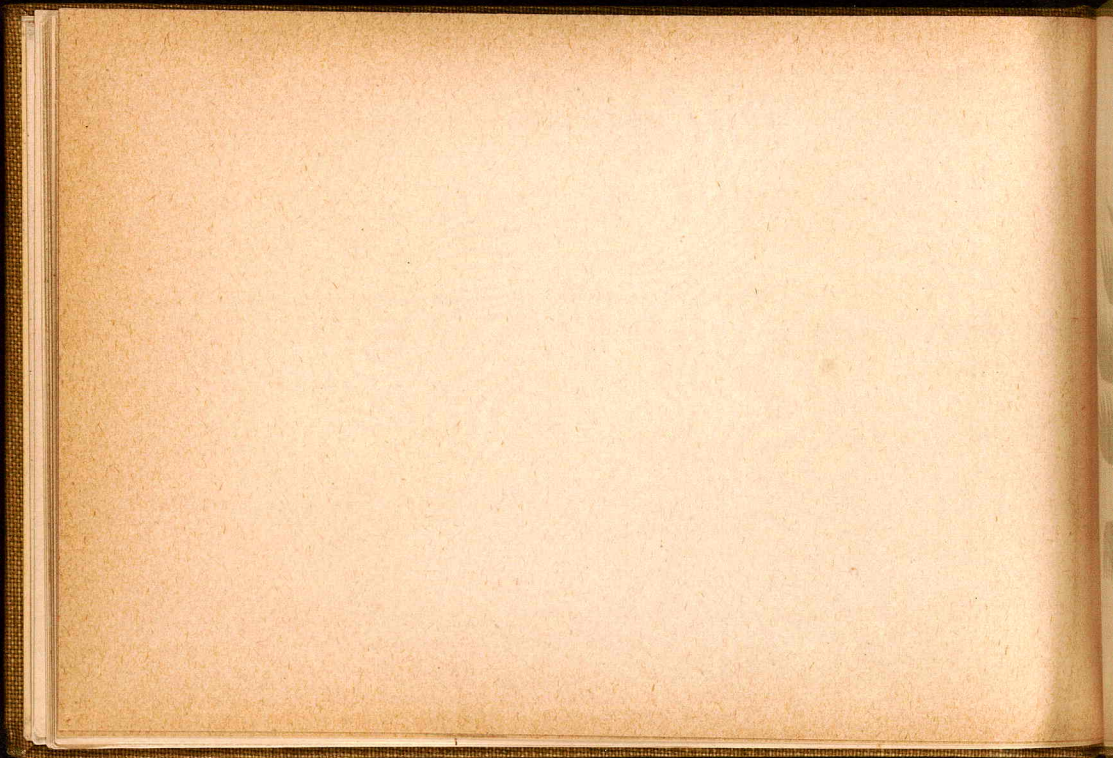
The first *striped* flag was flung to the breeze and "kissed by the free air of Heaven," at Cambridge, Mass., Washington's Headquarters, January 2, 1776.

Washington says: "We hoisted the Union flag in compliment to the United Colonies, and saluted it with thirteen guns."



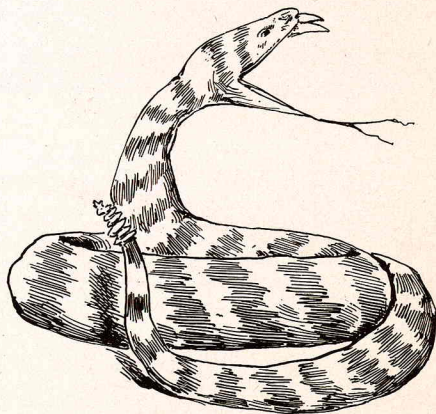






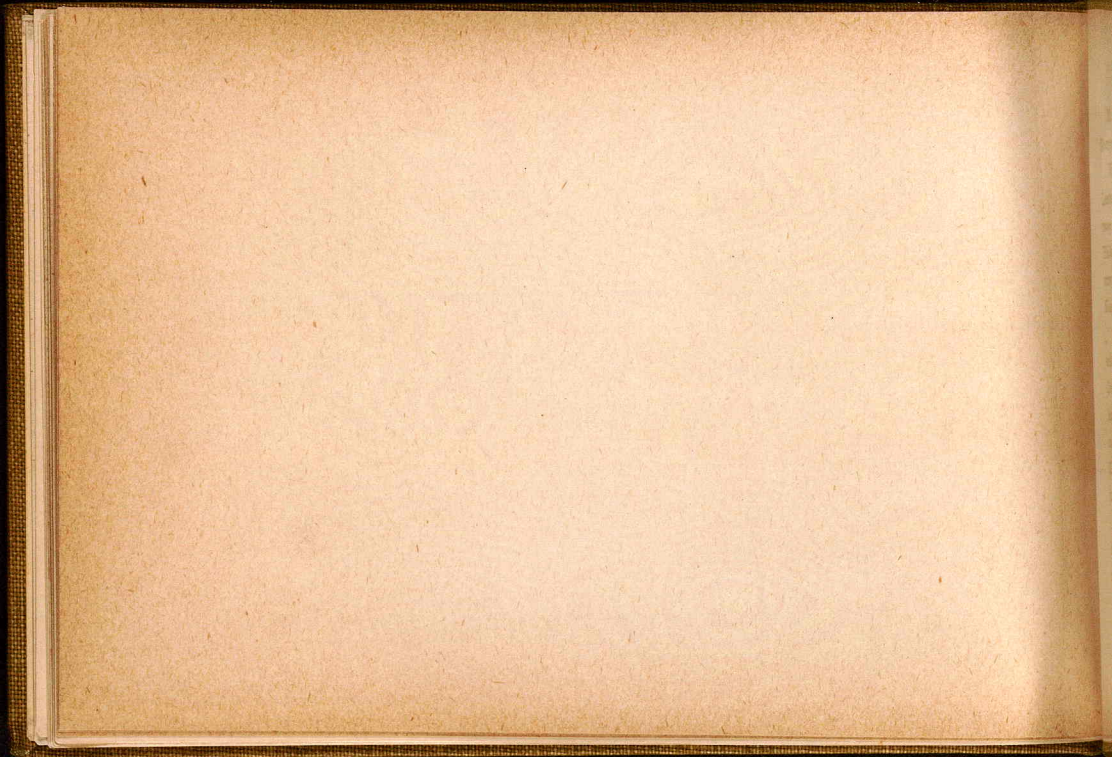


5



DONT TREAD ON ME

6



It had thirteen stripes, alternate red and white, and the united crosses of St. George and St. Andrew on a blue field. (7) Similar flags were used later in the year.

When reported in England, it was alluded to as "the thirteen rebellious stripes." Lieutenant Preble says: "A standard of this design was presented to a Philadelphia troop of Light Horse, about the time that the troop escorted Washington from Philadelphia to New York, as he went on to Cambridge to take command of the army." This was six months before the historic flag raising at Cambridge, and Washington may have copied the design.

In 1775 a navy of seventeen vessels, varying from ten to thirty-two guns, was ordered. Says Lieut. Preble: "The senior of the five 1st Lieutenants of the new Continental navy was John Paul Jones. He has left it on record that the 'Flag of America' was hoisted by his own hand on his vessel, the Alfred, the first time it was ever displayed by a man-of-war." This was probably the same design as the Cambridge flag, used January 2, 1776, and was raised on the Alfred about the same time. No exact date is given.

We come now to the time when the crosses of St. George and St. Andrew were taken from the striped Union flag, and a blue field with white stars was substituted for the symbol of English authority.

Thirteen states had bound themselves together as the "United States of America." They were:

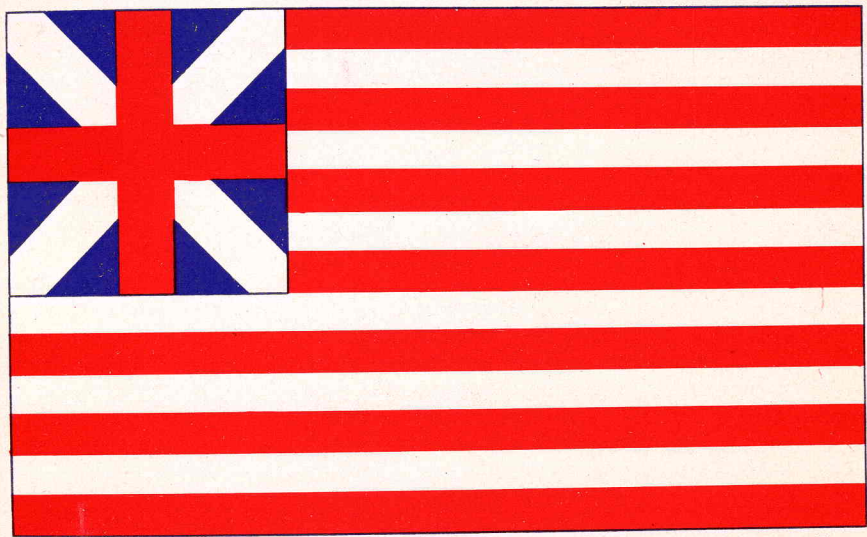
New Hampshire,	Pennsylvania,
Massachusetts,	Delaware,
Rhode Island,	Maryland,
Connecticut,	Virginia,
New York,	North Carolina,
New Jersey,	South Carolina,
and Georgia.	

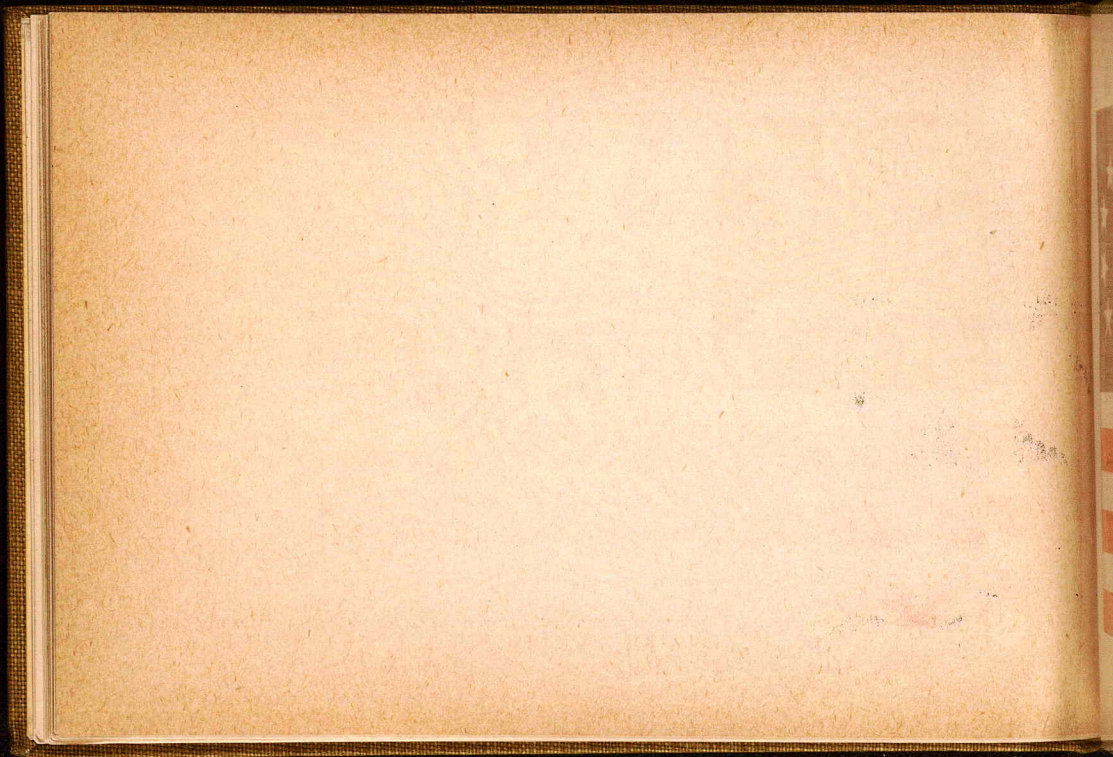
One hundred and eighteen years ago this June 14th (1895) the American Congress in session at Philadelphia resolved, "that the flag of the thirteen United States be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; the union to be thirteen stars, white on a blue field, representing a new constellation, the stars to be arranged in a circle." (8)

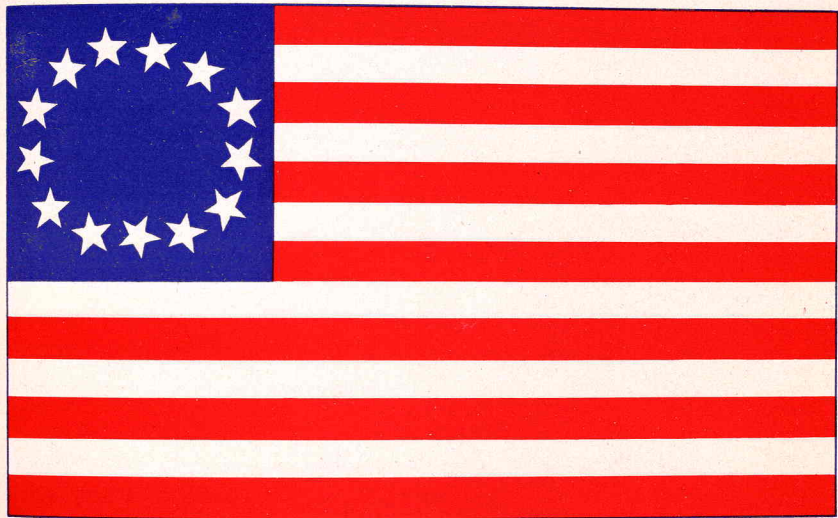
Here we may ask, What suggested stars and stripes?

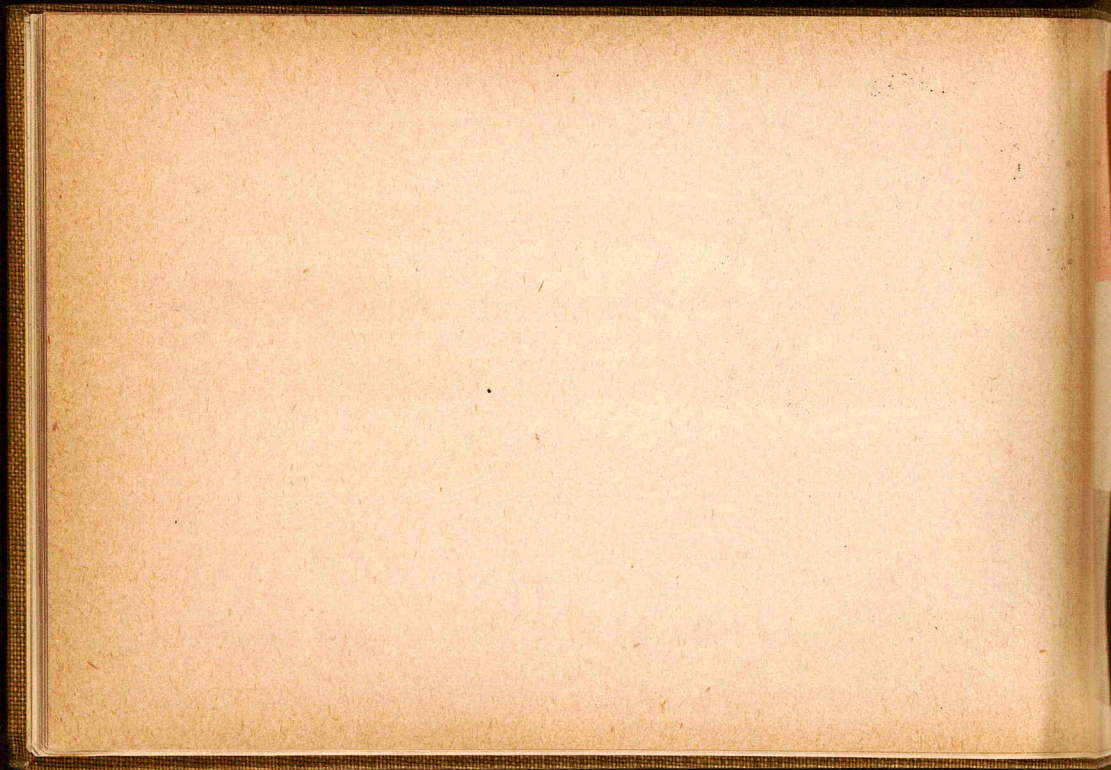
It has been said in answer, that the words "representing a new constellation" refer to the constellation Lyra, symbol of harmony; that this suggested the *stars*. As to the stripes, some writers refer us to the stripe which, in the absence of uniform, marked the rank of the Continental soldier, by orders from headquarters at Cambridge, July 24, 1775.

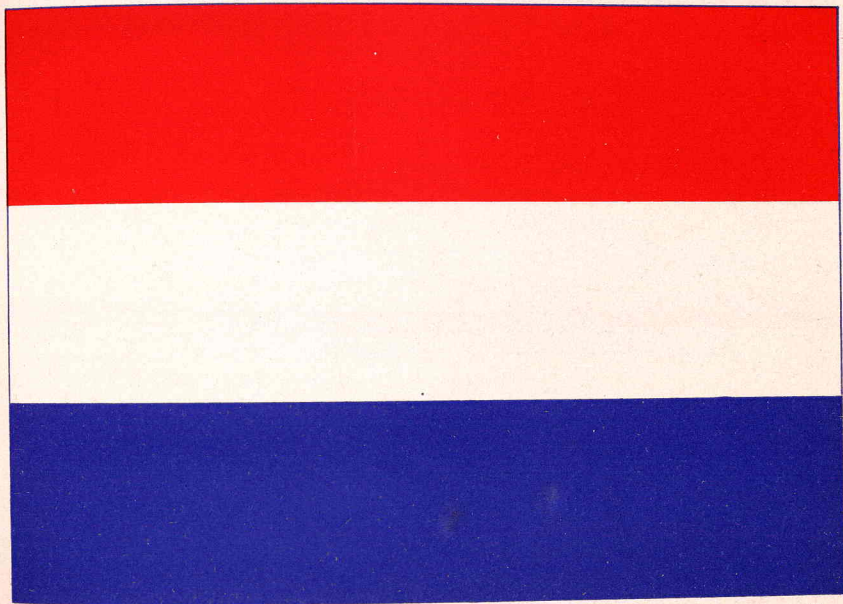
Says another writer, in answer: "The flag of the Netherlands." (9) It had become familiar to the Pilgrim fathers during their sojourn in Holland, and its triple stripe, red, white and blue, suggested the stripes and the three colors.













Another answer has been, that Washington found in the coat of arms of his own family a hint from which he drew the design for the flag.

The coat of arms of the Washington family has two red bars on a white ground, and three gilt stars above the top bar. A careful search among the records of that family fails to discover any connection. Says one of their genealogists: "There are several points of resemblance between our coat of arms and the flag of the country." The stars are explained as meaning in heraldry that the estate passed to the third son.

In an English genealogy of the family, the author refers to the matter as entirely without foundation, and adds: "At this time Washington was only Commander-in-Chief of the army, and Congress arranged the flag; besides, he was not at all popular then, there being a strong movement to supplant him with Sir Horatio Gates, fresh from the victory of Saratoga."

Certainly, Washington himself never referred to any connection between his coat of arms and the flag, and his pride of family might have led him to do so, had any connection existed.

It has seemed to me, from a careful study of the subject, that to no one thing, but to a blending of several, especially of several flags, are we indebted for the design of our own.

It is said that a committee had been appointed, a few days before the June 14th when the stars and stripes were adopted, who were to consider the subject and report

on a general standard for all the troops of the Colonies; that the committee, consisting of General Washington, Robert Morris and Colonel Ross, called on Betsey Ross, widow of John Ross, who kept an upholsterer's shop on Arch street, Philadelphia, and showing her a design they had prepared, asked her to make a flag like it.

Another account is that a committee of Congress, accompanied by Washington, Commander-in-Chief of the army, called at Mrs. Ross' and that as they talked in her back parlor, Washington drew with a pencil a design for her to follow.

There is no doubt but that she made the first flag, and that she made them for the government for several years.

It is said that Washington drew his stars with six points, the English form, but that Mrs. Ross changed it to the five-pointed shape, the French rule. Our flags always have the five-pointed stars, our coins the six-pointed.

It is claimed that the first *using* of the stars and stripes in actual military service was at Fort Stanwix, re-named Fort Schuyler, now Rome, N. Y., in 1777. August 2d, of that year, the fort was besieged by the English and Indians; the brave garrison were without a flag, but one was made in the fort. The red was strips of a petticoat furnished by a woman, the white was from shirts torn up for the purpose, and the blue was a piece of Colonel Peter Gansevoort's military cloak. The siege was raised August 22, 1777. This flag is now in the possession of Mrs. Abraham Lansing, of Albany, a granddaughter of Col. Gansevoort.

The first anniversary of American independence was celebrated July 4, 1777, at Philadelphia, at Charleston, S. C., and other places.

Records of the exercises are preserved, and the flag adopted a few weeks earlier is mentioned as used.

Thirteen stripes and thirteen stars are mentioned as used at Brandywine, September 11, 1777, at Germantown October 4, 1777, and to have floated over the surrender of Burgoyne.

This flag cheered the patriots at Valley Forge the next winter, it waved at Yorktown, and shared in the rejoicings at the close of the war.

“The shipping of the country seems to have been slow to adopt any particular form of flag,” says Lieut. Preble.

I find a bit of local history that will interest us. Tradition tells us that Madame Wooster and Mrs. Roger Sherman made the first National flag for Connecticut troops used in the army and that they made it from their own dresses, but Mrs. Ellet says in her “Women of the American Revolution,” that they made a flag, but not the first or from their own dresses.

President Stiles perhaps refers to one of these flags when he writes in his diary, under date of April 24, 1783: “Public rejoicing for the Peace here in New Haven. Thirteen guns discharged at sunrise on the green, and the continental flag displayed, presented by the ladies, cost \$120. The stripes red and white with azure field in

upper part, charged with thirteen stars. Among the stars, the arms of the United States, a ship, a plough, and three sheaves of wheat. It took — yards. The arms were put in with paint, it appeared well.”

In 1789, when Washington took the presidential chair for his first term, there were thirteen states in the Union, none having been added in the twelve years since 1776, nor were any added till Vermont came into the Union two years later in 1791, and Kentucky in 1792. In consequence of these additions the Senate in Congress passed a bill in 1794, increasing the number of stars and of stripes to fifteen, to take effect the next year, 1795. When the bill came to the House it caused considerable debate. Said one wise prophet, “The flag ought to be permanent; we may go on altering it for one hundred years. Very likely in fifteen years we may number twenty states.” This was almost literally fulfilled.

One representative suggested that “it might give offense to incoming states, if a new star and a new stripe were *not* added.” The bill finally passed, making fifteen the number of stars and of stripes after July 4, 1795. (10) But one after another the states came knocking for admission.

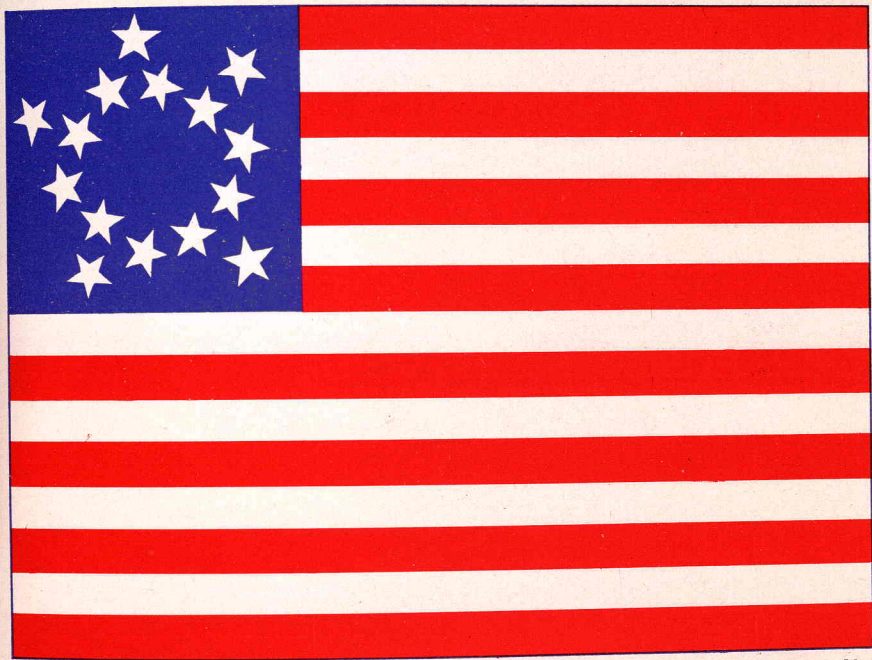
Tennessee, 1796,

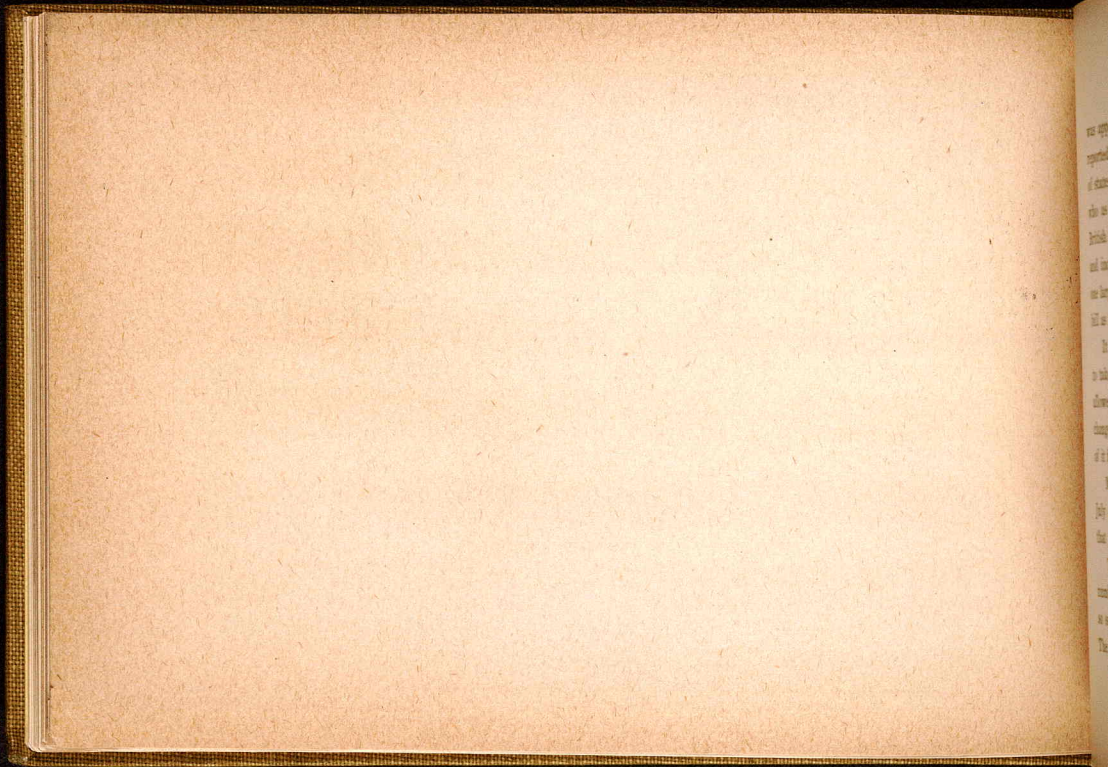
Louisiana, 1812,

Ohio, 1802,

and Indiana, 1816,

had joined the Union, and in 1816 the subject of the Flag came up again in Congress, now assembled at Washington; since 1800 the capital of the country. A committee





was appointed to inquire into the expediency of altering the flag. This committee reported in favor of increasing the number of stars and of stripes to twenty, the number of states then (1816) in the Union. The matter was referred to Captain S. C. Reid, who as captain of a privateer had made himself famous by the capture of several British ships. He advised reducing the number of stripes to the original thirteen and increasing the number of stars, one for each incoming state, making them form one large star. The motto to be, "E pluribus unum." The committee reported the bill as recommended by Capt. Reid.

It was "laid over," came up again two years later, and was passed April 4, 1818, to take effect July 4th of that year. A newspaper of the day says: "The time allowed for the change, three months, is too short. It will take a month before the change can be reported in New Orleans and vessels all over the world cannot hear of it for a year or more."

Mrs. Reid made the first flag after the new design, proposed by her husband. July 4, 1818, the number of stars in the flag was twenty, Illinois being admitted that year.

The rule of arranging the stars to form one large star was abandoned. As the number of states increased, it was necessary to make the individual stars on the field so small as to be almost indistinguishable as stars, or their points must interlace. The plan of arranging them in rows was adopted in 1818 and has been continued.

Alabama was admitted in 1819,
Maine in 1820,
Missouri, 1821,
Arkansas, 1836,
Michigan, 1837,
Florida, 1845,
Texas, 1845,
Iowa, 1846,
Wisconsin, 1848,
California, 1850,
Minnesota, 1858,

Oregon, 1859,
Kansas, 1861,
West Virginia, 1863,
Nevada, 1864,
Nebraska, 1867,
Colorado, 1876,
North and South Dakota, 1889,
Montana, 1889,
Washington, 1889,
Idaho, 1890,
Wyoming, 1890,

making forty-four states in the Union July 4, 1895, and that number of stars in our Flag.

Utah was admitted by vote of Congress at its last session, and its star takes its place in the flag July 4, 1896.

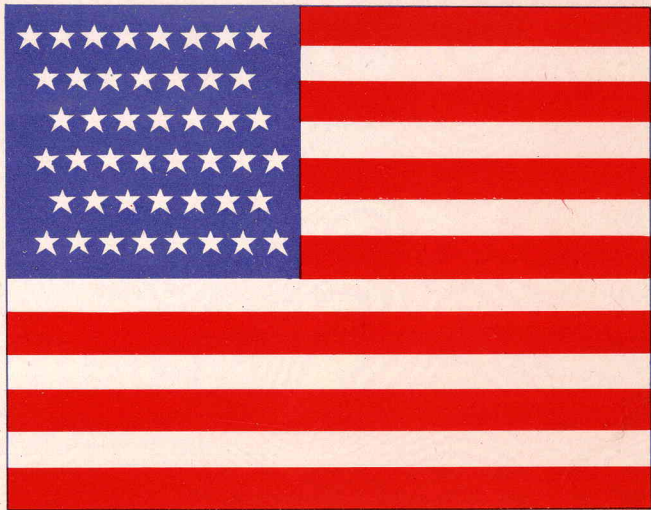
Bills for the admission of New Mexico and Arizona passed the House, 53d Congress, 1895, but not the Senate.

This leaves only Oklahoma, Indian Territory and Alaska, with District of Columbia, as territory owned by the United States and outside of statehood and starship.

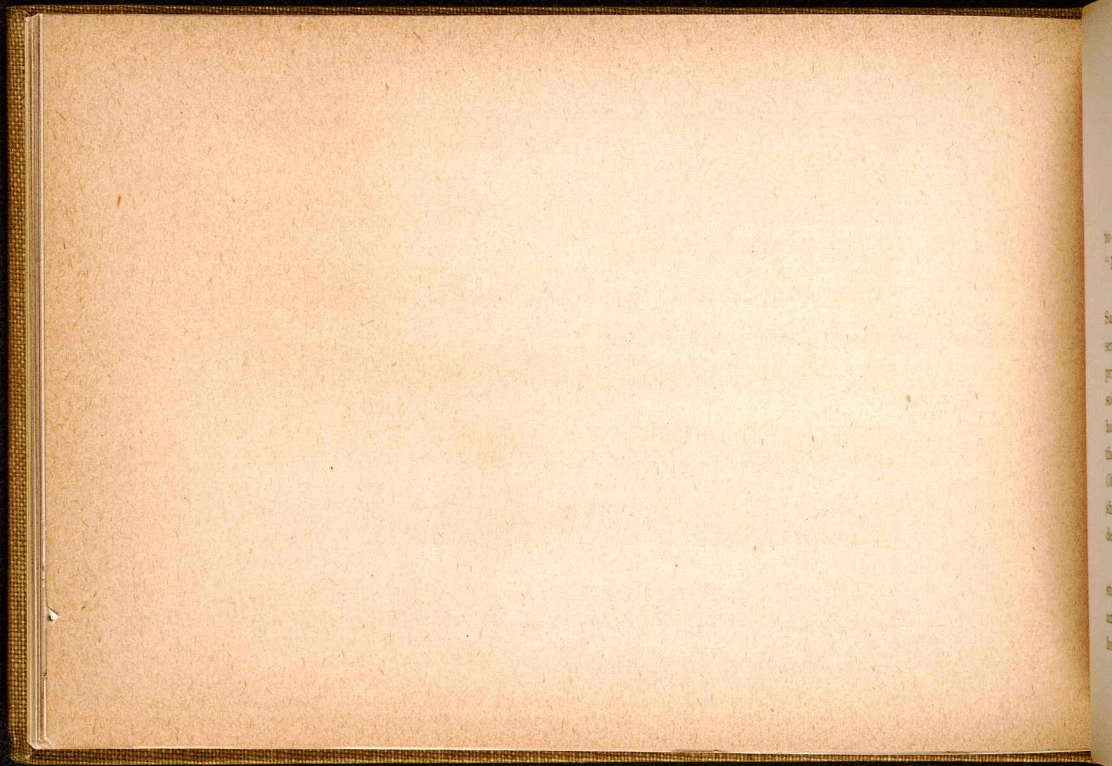
June, 1895.

S. E. C.

D. A. R.



This Flag to be used after admission of Utah, by order of Secretary of War.



“OLD GLORY.”

The question as to when and where the term “Old Glory” was first applied to our flag has been answered in several ways, but this answer, taken from Coffin’s “Drumbeat of the Nation,” is considered the most authentic.

“Stephen Driver had been a sea-captain before the civil war and sailed from Salem, Mass., to foreign lands. Once when in a foreign port, for some important service rendered the people, he received from them a beautiful American flag. A priest blessed it as it rose to the masthead of his ship, and Capt. Driver made a solemn promise to defend it with his life if need be. Giving up the sea, he made his home in Nashville, Tenn. He opposed secession. When the war began, to secrete the flag he sewed it in a quilt, and every night slept beneath it. *He named it Old Glory.* Many times the confederate soldiers searched the house to find it. ‘I shall yet raise it above the State House,’ was his reply. They threatened him with death; he bade them do their worst.

When the troops under Buell entered Nashville, Feb. 1862, he told them the story of ‘Old Glory,’ brought it out, went with them to the roof of the State House and flung it to the breeze, the men in blue swinging their caps and shouting their hurrahs.”

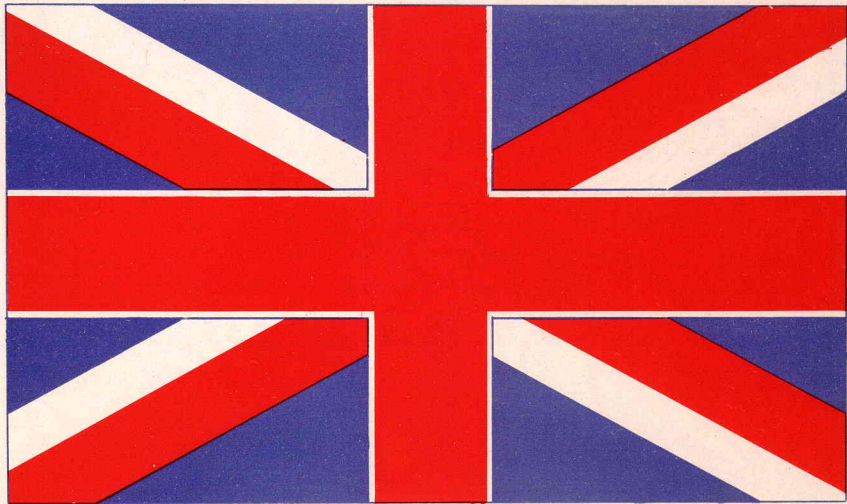
APPENDIX.

It may be of interest to refer to one more change made in the flag of England in 1801. In that year Ireland became a part of the kingdom, and to commemorate that event, the cross of St. Patrick, a red diagonal, was by order of King George III fimbriated (to use a heraldry phrase) on the cross of St. Andrew. (*a*) By a heraldry law the flag of Ireland shows uppermost in the first and third quarter of the field and that of Scotland in the second and fourth.

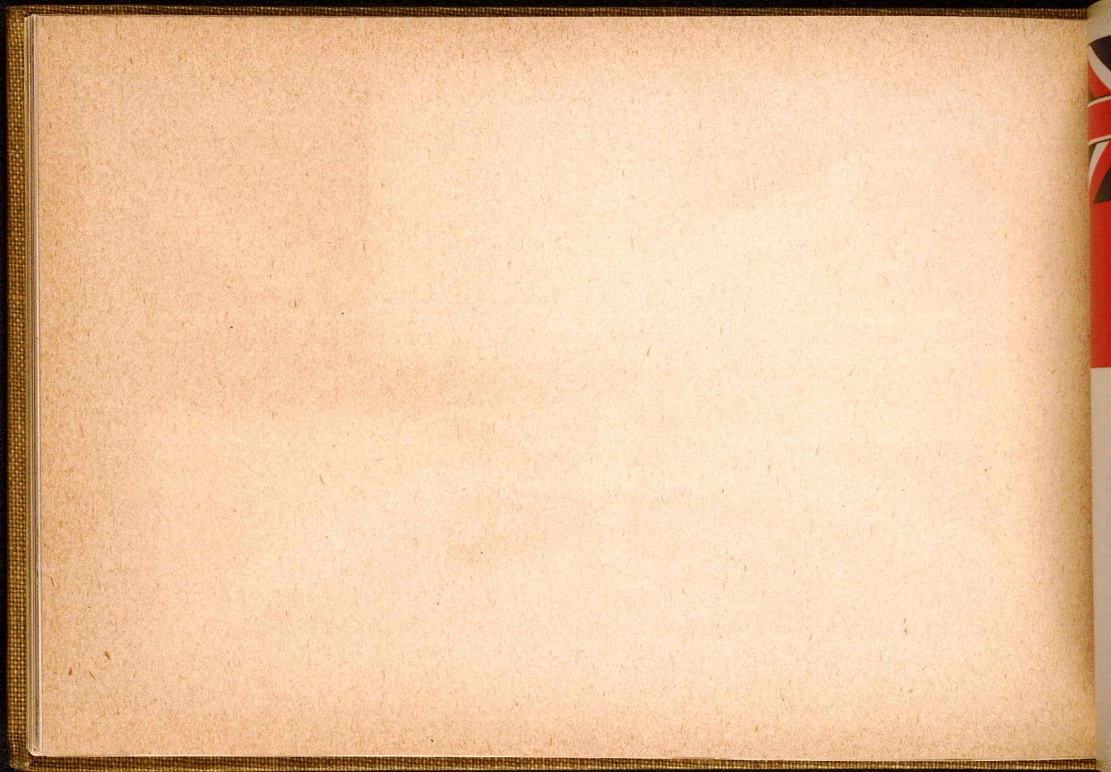
As this third cross was added in 1801, England's flag in its present form was never used by an American colony.

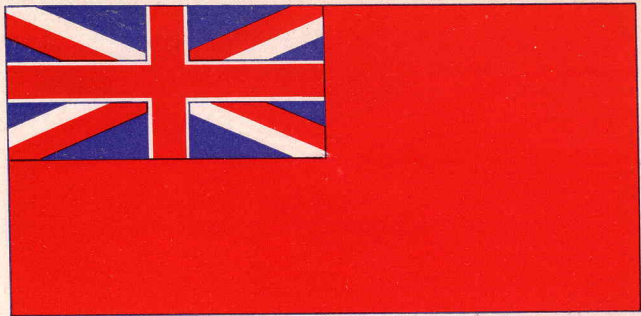
The "royal jack," perhaps so called in honor of James I, the blue field with the three crosses covering the entire field, is the national flag of England, and is used in that form by the representatives of royalty in this country. The merchant vessels use a longer red flag with the royal jack in the upper left hand corner. (*b*)

Vessels officered by a member of the "naval reserve" carry a blue flag with the jack in the corner. The Cunarders carry this flag. (*c*) Steamers carrying it can be called off from other work in which they are engaged, if the Queen and her cabinet call on them to transport troops or for the purposes of war.

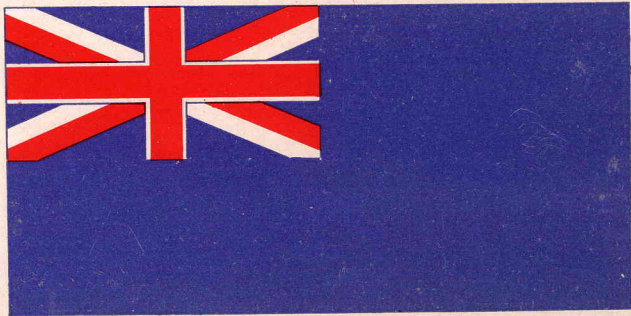


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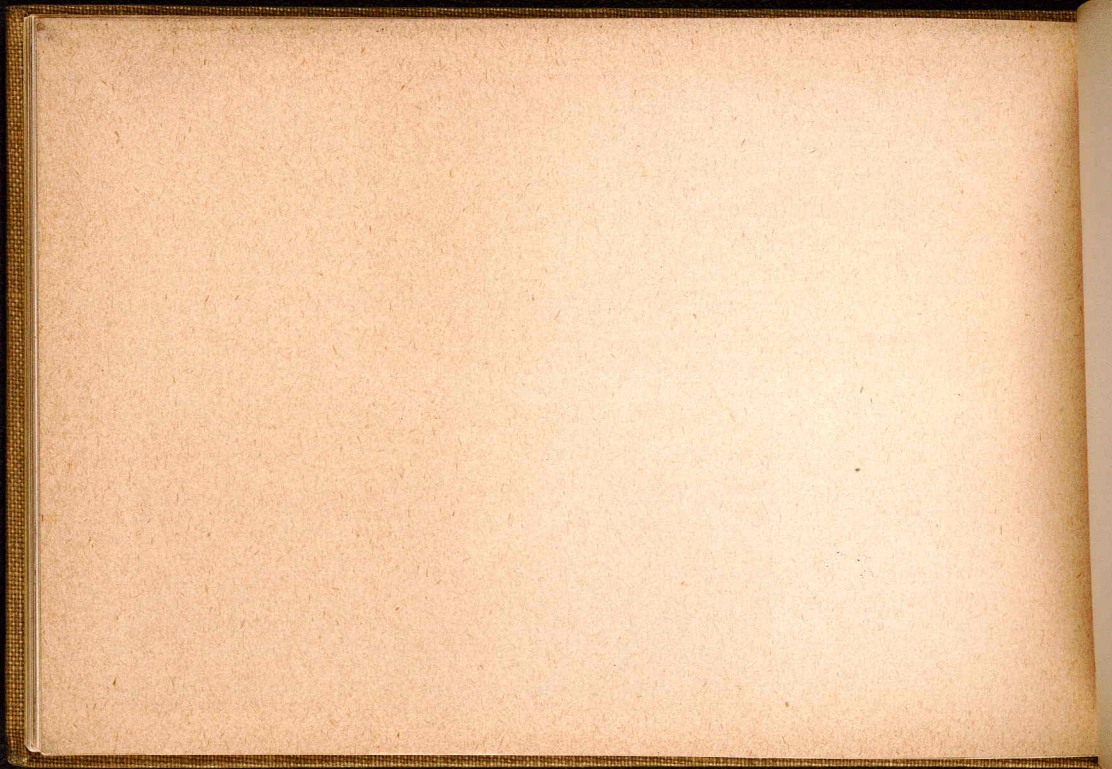


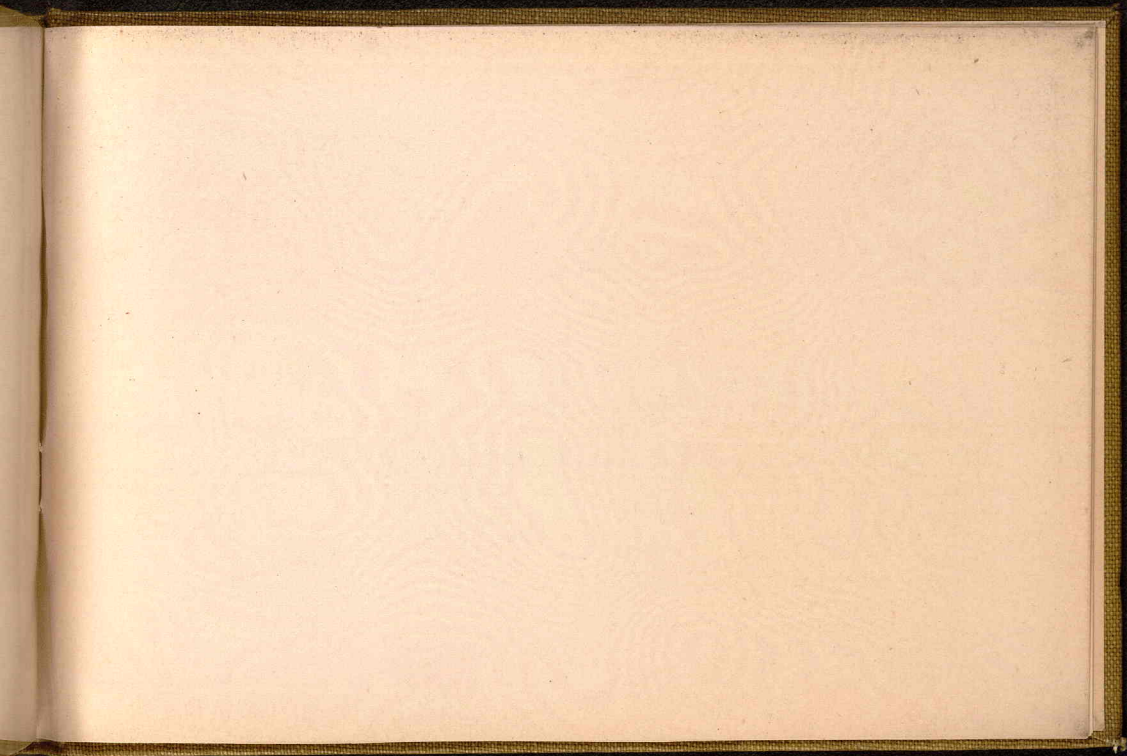


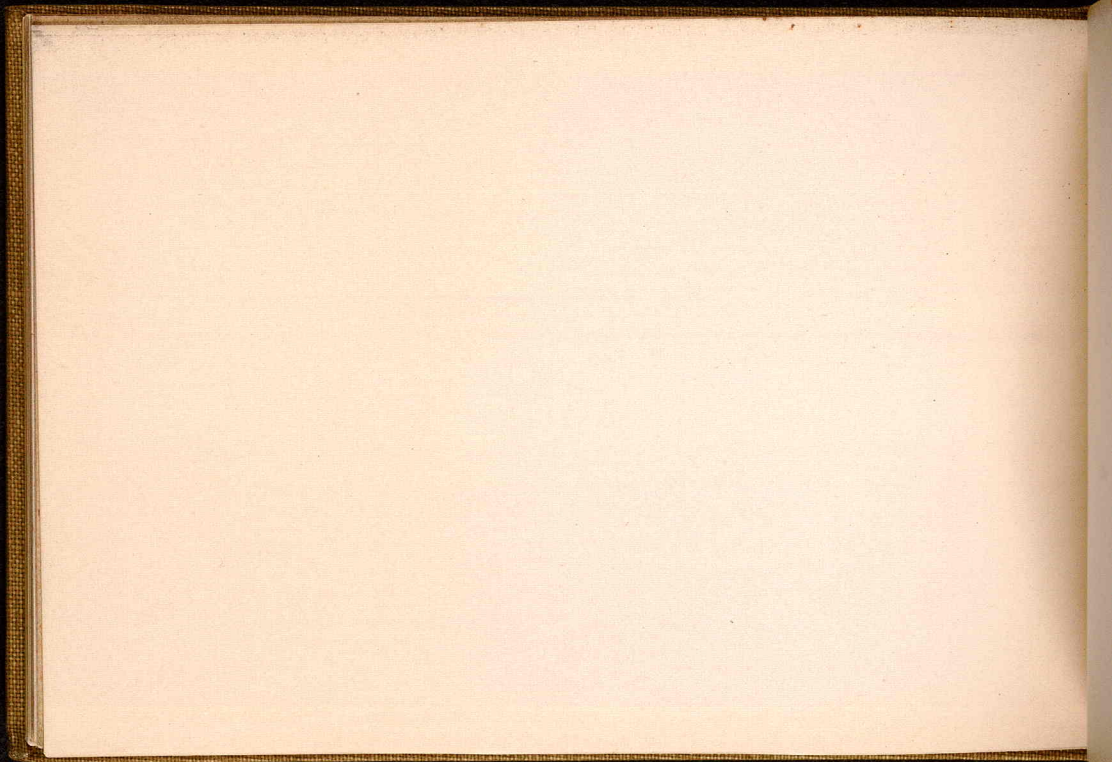
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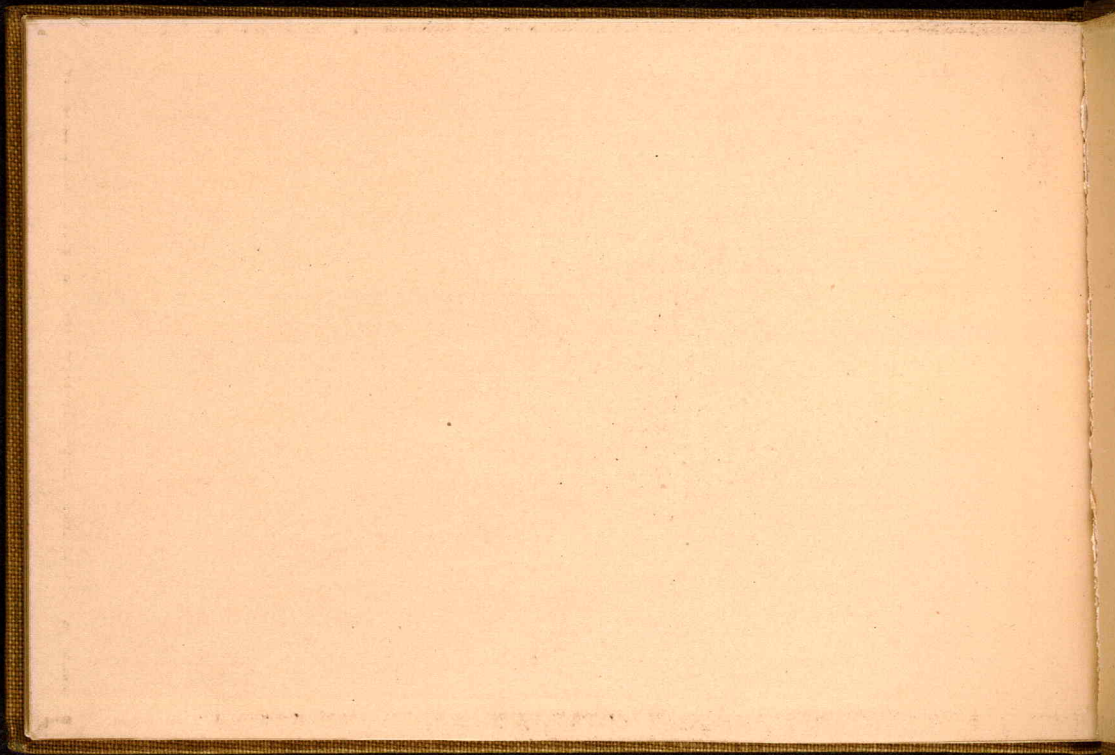
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