



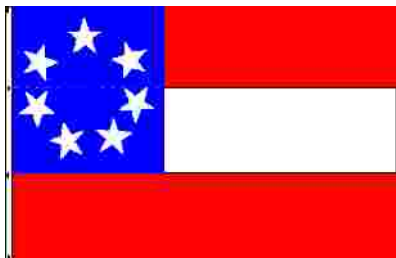
Bonnie Blue Flag

The Bonnie Blue Flag or Lone Star Flag was first raised during the War for Southern Independence as the unofficial flag of the new Republic of Mississippi in 1861.

An Irish borne actor by the name of Harry Macarthy was so inspired by the sight of this flag waving over the state capitol that he wrote a song titled “The Bonnie Blue Flag” which became the second most popular song in the Confederacy after “Dixie”.

This flag was not new to Floridians as the first use of a lone star flag dates back to 1810 when this flag flew over the Republic of West Florida.

During the War for Southern Independence, it is said the single white star represented the taking of the state’s star from the constellation contained in the canton of the U.S. flag and hurling it into the heavens to stand alone and independent. To this day, the Bonnie Blue Flag still represents the desire of many Southern people for the independence of their states from Washington, DC.



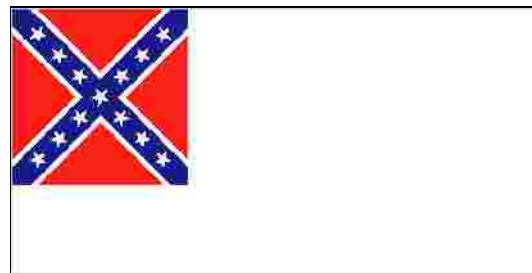
1st National Flag of the Confederate States Government

Also known as the “Stars and Bars” the first flag of the Confederate States of America was adopted by the Provisional Congress, March 4, 1861. Evidence suggests that the designer of this flag was Nicola Marschall, a Prussian artist who lived and taught in the small town of Marion, Alabama.

The above version contains 7 stars representing the first 7 Southern states to secede from the Union. This version lasted until the 3rd week in May 1861 when Virginia and Arkansas were admitted to the Confederacy. The flag eventually contained a constellation of thirteen stars.

During the first battle of Manassas, Virginia, this flag was confused in the smoke and confusion as a US flag. This led to the adoption of the more familiar Battle Flag with its characteristic St. Andrews Cross.

The 1st national flag remained in official service until May 1, 1863



2nd National Flag of the Confederate States Government or “The Stainless Banner”

The second national flag of the Confederate States was adopted May 1, 1863 and sought to eliminate any similarity with the old US flag. By this time, Southerners had lost all sentimental attachment to the old US flag and viewed it as a symbol of oppression and imperialistic aggression.

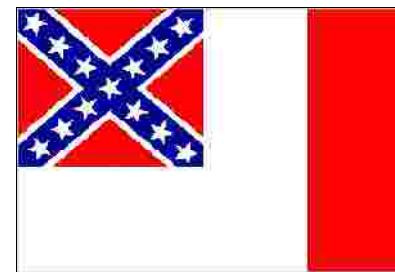
The Flag Act of 1863 called for a flag of unusual proportions that would be twice as long as its width whereas most flags were manufactured with a width two-thirds its

length. However, these specifications were not always followed and some surviving examples have dimensions that are more conventional.

The white field was proclaimed to be emblematic of the purity of the Cause, which it represented. The canton now consisted of the new square Battle Flag with its St. Andrew’s Cross..

Unfortunately, the first use of the Stainless Banner was to drape the coffin of General Thomas J. “Stonewall” Jackson who was killed by friendly fire on May 2, 1863.

The Stainless Banner could at times appear to be a flag of truce with its large white field. This would later be corrected.

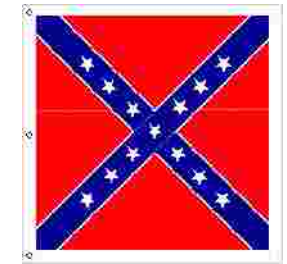


3rd and Current National Flag of the Confederate States Government

The Flag Act of 1865 sought to eliminate the problem of the 2nd national flag being mistaken for a flag of truce. Detailed changes were made to include shortening the fly length, adding a red bar on the fly end and changing the square canton to a rectangular shape. This flag was officially adopted on March 4, 1865 when Confederate President Jefferson Davis signed Senate Bill No. 137 into law.

Since the Confederate government never surrendered in 1865, only its armies in the field, the 3rd national flag remains the final official flag of the occupied Confederate States of America. It is often

referred to by modern Southern patriots in a salute as “The Unsundered Banner of the Southern People”.



Battle Flag

The above “Southern Cross” battle flag design was first issued to Confederate troops in November, 1861 to help identify Confederate units in combat and eliminate the problems encountered on the battlefield of Manassas in July of that year.

This example was issued to the Army of Northern Virginia in 1863 and was made of English wool bunting. There were many variations throughout the war in size, color of border, material construction, arrangement and number of stars, etc.



Battle Flag of the Army of Tennessee (1864)

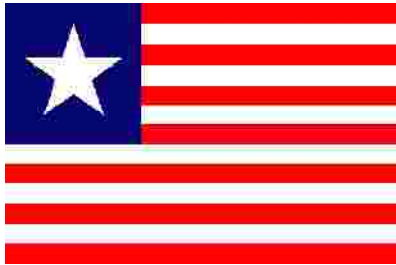
Upon taking command of the Army of Tennessee, General Joseph E. Johnston issued the above rectangular battle flag to his units during the months of March and April 1864.

Unlike the square battle flag of the Virginians, this flag was rectangular with no border and always contained 13 stars.

This flag was also used as a Naval Jack by the Confederate States Navy after May 26, 1863.

This flag is the most well known of all the Confederate banners and has become an emblem of resistance to tyranny, oppression and unjust government edicts, not only here in the U.S but in many other parts of the world. During the breakup of the former Soviet Union, this Southern Cross flag was filmed being waved by anticommunist demonstrators.

The rectangular battle flag has become a powerful symbol, often evoking either love or hatred in those who look upon it.



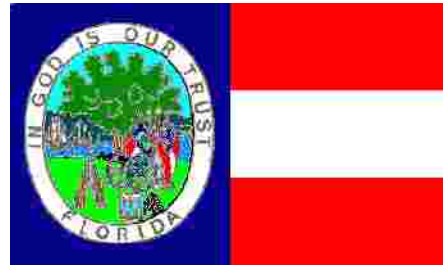
Provisional Flag of Florida, January 13, 1861 to September 13, 1861

After Florida's secession from the United States on January 10, 1861, Florida state troops under Colonel William H. Chase seized control of all federal properties at the Pensacola Naval Yard. Shortly thereafter, the above lone star flag sometimes referred to as the Chase Flag was hoisted above the naval yard.

It has been said that Chase's troops cut the canton from a U.S. flag and replaced it with the center of the Bonnie Blue Flag. Thus, the single star represented the state of Florida's separation and independence from the United States.

By an order dated January 13, 1861, Florida's military department adopted this provisional flag until the governor of the state provided an official state flag.

This design had also been used earlier by the Republic of Texas Navy between 1836 and 1845.



Flag of Florida Adopted September 13, 1861

In September 1861 Florida Governor, Madison Starke Perry issued an executive order establishing a new state flag. Until this time Florida had no official state flag since it had joined the Union in 1845.

This flag was similar in appearance to the Confederate national flag adopted 6 months earlier. However, the blue canton was extended to form a vertical bar the entire width of the flag. The new seal of the state was centered on this canton in a white ellipse. The seal was rather complex as the official description notes: "In the center of the ellipse is a single strong Live Oak Tree. Beyond is seen the Gulf of Mexico, with vessels in the distance. In front of and near the foot of the Oak is a piece of Field Artillery. Beyond the gun, and resting against the boll of the Oak, is seen a stand of six colors – the Confederate and State Flags to the front. To the left of the Field Piece are Four Muskets stacked. To the right and near, balls piled and a drum."

Around the seal, our state proudly proclaimed "In God is our Trust" above and "Florida" below.

Interestingly, Tallahassee was the only Confederate state capitol east of the Mississippi river to not be captured by the U.S. military during the war. Puppet governments installed in Tallahassee during Reconstruction eventually changed Florida's flag and Constitution making the 1861 flag the only flag with a pure pedigree of freedom to be chosen by Floridians to represent them.

Space naturally limits our ability to tell you about the many different flags used by the Confederate States during their War for Southern Independence. We hope that the information you have received here will motivate you to learn more not only about the flags of our Southern forefathers but the Cause for which they fought. Recommended reading on this subject includes: "The Flags of the Confederacy by Devereaux D. Cannon, Jr.

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A Floridian's Guide To 8 Flags of the Confederacy 1861 – 1865 - Today

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