Figure 1. Page from Camerarius' Emblem Book of 1597. The book was later reprinted. The 1707 edition may have served as an inspiration for the American eagle seal. (From Patterson & Dougall: *The Eagle and the Shield.*)

Figure 2. 1618 drawing of an eagle rising, holding attributes of authority. (From Patterson & Dougall: *The Eagle and the Shield.*)

THE GALLIC COCK PLUCKED.

Figure 3. Mid 18th century drawing showing Britannia and the British lion chasing a French chicken. Note the liberty cap on pole borrowed by the Americans. (From Thomas Wright: *Caricature History of the Georges.*)

The New Constellation: Creating the American National Iconography

Bruce S. Bazelon

William Barton, in explaining his 1782 design for the Great Seal of the United States, described the canton of the U.S. flag as an element of his seal drawing. Barton described ". . . Stars upon a blue Canton, disposed in a Circle, represent a new Constellation, which alludes to the new Empire, formed in the World by the Confederation of those States— . . ."[1]

During the American Revolution, the new United States was in something of a quandary about its symbols. Obviously, English patriotic heraldry would no longer do. There had been no republic on the model adopted by the Continental Congress since that of ancient Rome. At the same time, the founding fathers were interested in heraldry and had sources available that they could consult about heraldic design. So began a debate as to what to preserve from European tradition and how to make that which was preserved distinctly American.

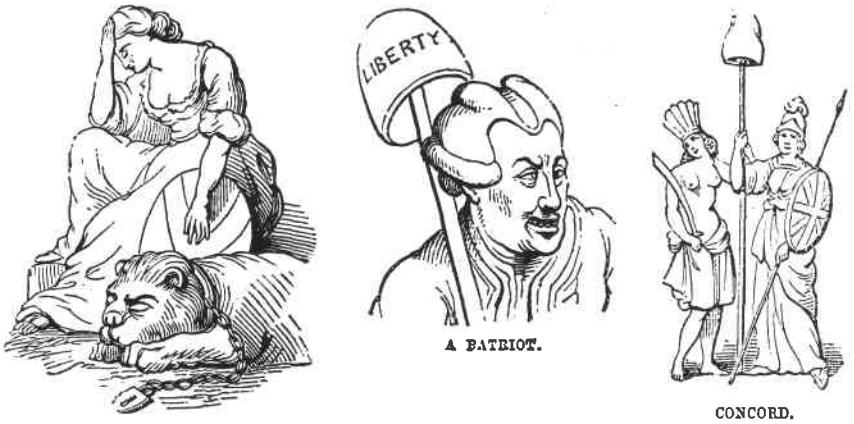
Colonial America, while still a loyal part of the British Empire, nonetheless had developed a hierarchy of symbols that gave the colonies a distinct recognition. In particular, the New England colonies used the tree as a symbol from an early date. The Massachusetts Bay coinage, all bearing the date 1652 regardless of the actual mintage in order to evade British regulations, used the oak, willow, and pine trees to symbolize the colony. These tree depictions often occur on surviving descriptions of Massachusetts flags from the 18th century, including those of the early part of the Revolution. There is also a surviving color depicting a tree used in the 1747 expedition to Louisbourg, Canada, which is preserved in the New-York Historical Society. The tree was seen in some mystical, almost Druidic, sense as the embodiment of liberty, a tendency greatly reinforced by the Connecticut Charter Oak legend. Here, the "Charter," which granted rights to the citizens of the colony, was secreted in an oak tree during the attempt by James II's royal governor, Sir Edmund Andros, to impose direct royal authority. Variations of this story relate to other New England colonies during this period and find their ultimate expression in the "Liberty Tree" of the Revolutionary War.

Colonial devices were often drawn from nature in order to distinguish the New World from the Old. The rattlesnake was symbolized for its lethal striking capacity as well as its identification as an American creature. It was used as a

representation of the colonies about the time of Franklin's Albany Plan of Union in the mid-1750s. This serpent with its "Join or Die" motto showed another characteristic: its ability to continue to live for a short while when cut in pieces was followed by its ultimate demise, also symbolic of the colonies that could exist temporarily as individual states but who would ultimately die if left in that condition. In the early part of the Revolution, the rattlesnake was often used to symbolize America.[2]

Pennsylvania's symbolic tradition was a bit different. The military symbols developed by Benjamin Franklin for his newly formed "Associator" battalions in 1747 were cartoon-like and were his own creations. The device used by the First (Philadelphia) Battalion featured a lion holding a shield with the Arms of the Penn family upon it. This tradition survived long enough to be used in the colors of the First Continental Regiment. This color was described by Gen. Edward Hand during the siege of Boston in March, 1776, as ". . . a deep green ground, a tiger partly enclosed by toils, attempting the pass, defended by a hunter armed with a spear (in white) on crimson field the motto *Domari nolo.*"[3] The color still exists in the collections of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.

These home-grown symbols coexisted before the Revolution with the English iconographic pantheon. Another Louisbourg expedition flag now in the collections of the New-York Historical Society shows Britannia seated.[4] The seated Britannia depiction, which dates to the days of Charles II, was quickly utilized from its inception. In fact, the legend remains that it was Charles' mistress, Nell Gwyn, who posed



Figures 4-6. Political drawings of the Revolutionary War age. Figure 4: Britannia in sorrow. Figure 5: John Wilkes, a controversial British political figure of the 1760s, whose agitation for liberty touched off a national debate. Note the use of the liberty cap. Figure 6: The Indian princess "America" in harmony with "Britannia," both holding the liberty cap on pole. (From Thomas Wright: *Caricature History of the Georges,* 1867.)

for the portrait. Be this as it may, using a seated female portrait to symbolize a country is a classical tradition dating back at least to Roman times. As an example, the emperor Hadrian issued a series of coins depicting his provinces as reclining women with their names above. The conquered province, Judea, was depicted as a weeping woman by the emperor Vespasian on several issues of his coinage. The era from the 16th to the 19th centuries drew heavily on classical precedents and, as we will see, revived many of the classical traditions, including the use of the woman as a symbol for England and America. However, to denote a distinct American presence, the seated Britannia sometimes became an Indian princess. This is notable in the case of the color of the First Troop Philadelphia City Cavalry dating from 1775, where one of the retainers to the central sunburst device is the Indian princess. After the Revolution, this symbol seems to effortlessly transmute into "Columbia" holding the shield of the United States.

Another classical symbol in use during the colonial and Revolutionary War era was the "Phrygian" or "Liberty" cap. This cap was in use as far back as the first Persian empire, destroyed by Alexander in the third century BC. Given its Eastern origins, it is not surprising to find this cap associated with the cult of the god Mithras during Roman days. Legendarily it survived as a symbol through the Middle Ages and may have been worn by Charlemagne. This cap became the "Liberty Cap" of our Revolution and fell out of repute about the time it became identified with the excesses of Republican France. In particular, this mark was quite pointedly dropped as an inspection stamp on U.S. arms about 1799. It also disappears from the obverse of the U.S. cent, where it was located behind the "liberty head" from 1793 to 1796.[5]

Hence, the new United States entered into the Revolutionary era with a rich heritage of symbolism drawn in part from classical tradition but also from the desire to find distinctive devices in keeping with its American heritage. One note of caution is appropriate when dealing with these symbolic themes or the origin of American patriotic devices. For years the complex symbolism that appears on Continental currency remained a mystery. Then Eric Newman, a noted numismatist, located a 1707 German design book that depicted many of these devices. This book was in the holdings of the Library Company of Philadelphia. Congress, in approving the Continental Currency, seems to have simply drawn on the heavily classicised designs popular in European fashion but which contained no intentional symbolic messages.[6] In a similar vein, the popular mottoes and devices used by Benjamin Franklin as practical wisdom also found them occasionally used as American devices. These include the sundial used with the saying "Mind Your Business," which appeared on the "Fugio cent," and the linked states chain evocative of the "Join or Die" theme.

The lexicon of national iconography, the eagle, the Stars and Stripes, our national mottoes, all derive from the Revolutionary War period, although today they are somewhat altered from their original forms. The story of how they came into being forms part of our national heritage. In fact, both the eagle and the flag originated from committees of the Continental Congress. Unfortunately, the deliberations of those committees were not a required part of the record, so we have only their reports to evaluate their work. The evolution of the eagle as our national symbol took 6 years, from 1776 to 1782, and three committees.

The works of Philip Isaacson, Admiral Furlong, and particularly Patterson & Dougall all have clear and well-presented descriptions of the process by which the eagle was

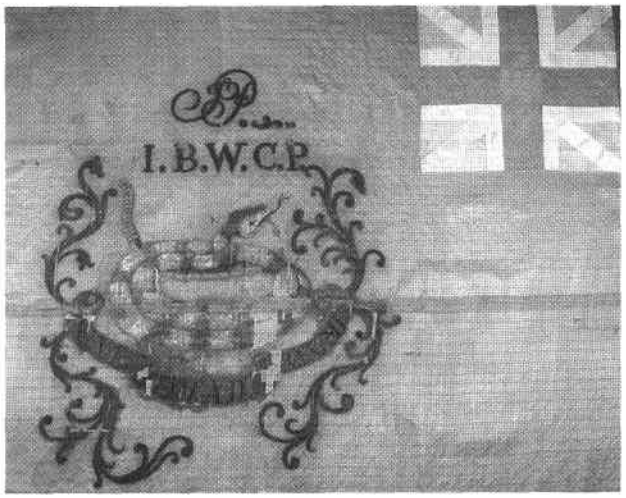


Figure 7. Color of John Proctor's Battalion, Westmoreland County (Pennsylvania), June 1775–March 1776. The color features the only complete drawing of the serpent from Revolutionary days used on a flag. (Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission.)

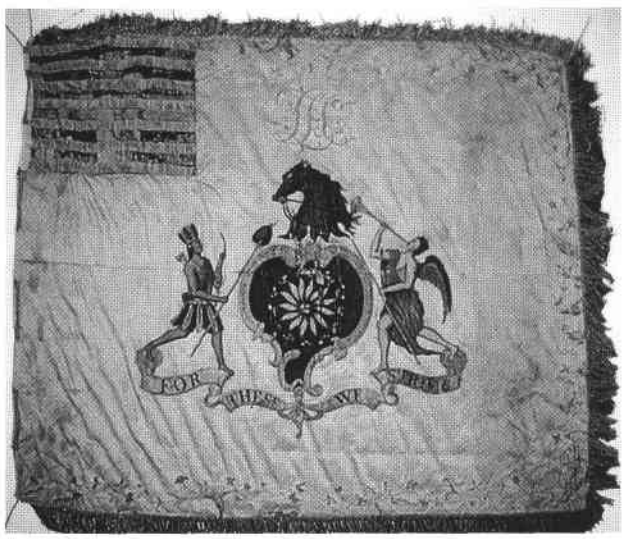


Figure 8. Color of the First Troop Philadelphia City Cavalry, 1775. Note the Indian princess denoting America and the use of striped canton. (Museum of the FTPCC.)

Figure 9. Button showing a serpent, liberty cap, and pole. Excavated near Williamsburg, Va. (Author's collection.)

Figure 10. The die for the 1782 Seal of the United States. (National Archives.)

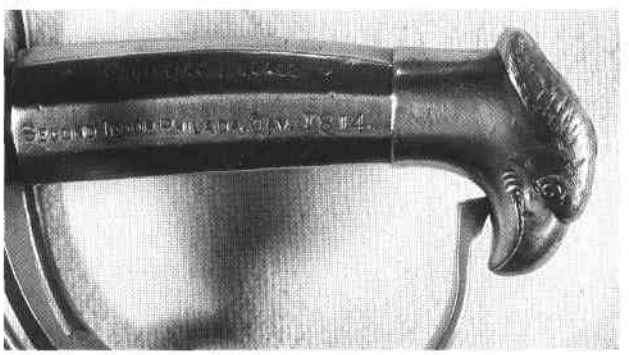


Figure 11. Philadelphia brass-hilted sword of Christian Kneass, Second Troop Philadelphia City Cavalry, 1810. Note the crest on the eagle's head. (PHMC.)

Figure 12. U.S. 1806 $5 gold piece and British-made American army button made by Jennens, which copied the coin. (PHMC.)

Figure 13. American militia hat plate, ca. 1810. (Author's collection.)

Figure 15. Militia adaptation of 1814 infantry cap plate featuring an eagle in flight with lightning bolts. (Author's collection.)

Figure 14. New York hatplate by Charles James Joullain, ca. 1816, depicting an eagle on a half globe. (Duncan Campbell.)

Figure 16. U.S. Light Dragoon cap plate used ca. 1798–1816. The die continued to be struck until 1859. (Campbell collection.)

Figure 17. British-made U.S. militia plate. The eagle appears within a number of American patriotic devices. (Author's collection.)

Figure 19. U.S. dragoon insignia 1833–1851. The eagle was a Roman legionary device adopted by the French. This particular bird was copied from the British, who had captured the French standard and adopted it as their own. (Campbell collection.)

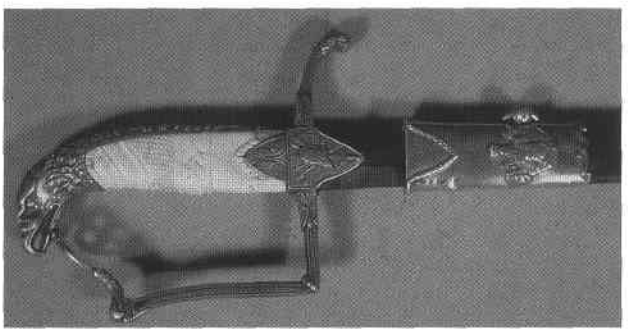


Figure 20. Sword presented to Jonathan Goddard Watmough by M. G. Edmund P. Gaines in 1830. The blade was by Rose with Meer etching. The eagle was by J. Hub and designed by Harvey Lewis, a famed Philadelphia silversmith. (PHMC.)

Figure 18. Die: Savannah Volunteer Guards, ca. 1835, made by Casper Reinhold of New York. (Author's collection.)

Figure 21. U.S. cavalry color, ca. 1850, reputedly by Edward Hicks. (PHMC.)

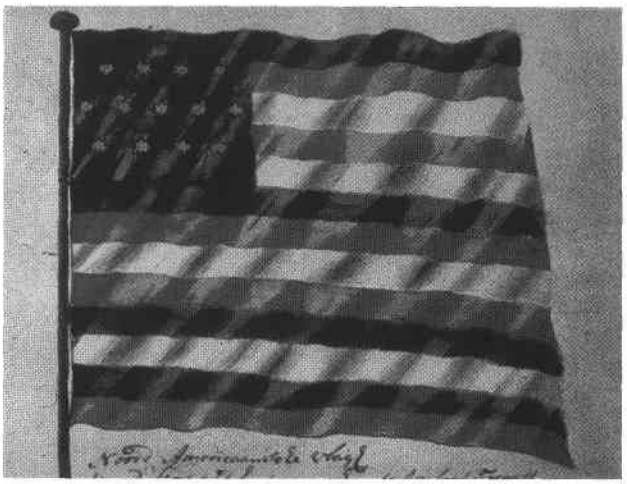


Figure 23. The Texel flag. Drawing from a Dutch naval recognition book showing the American flag during the Revolution. (From William Furlong: *So Proudly We Hail.*)

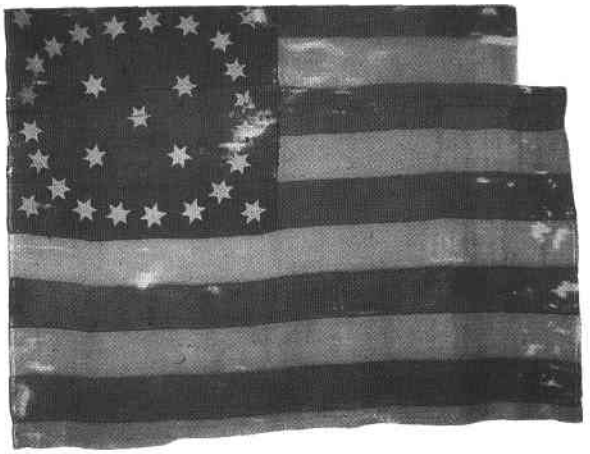


Figure 25. Color of the 1st Pennsylvania Regiment, 1846–1847. This unit occupied Vera Cruz in the Mexican War. Note the arrangement of stars into a circle with a central "X" pattern. (PHMC.)

Figure 24. Political flag, ca. 1845. Native American party. Note the arrangement of stars in the "Great Star" pattern, a standard flag design of the second quarter of the 19th century. (PHMC.)

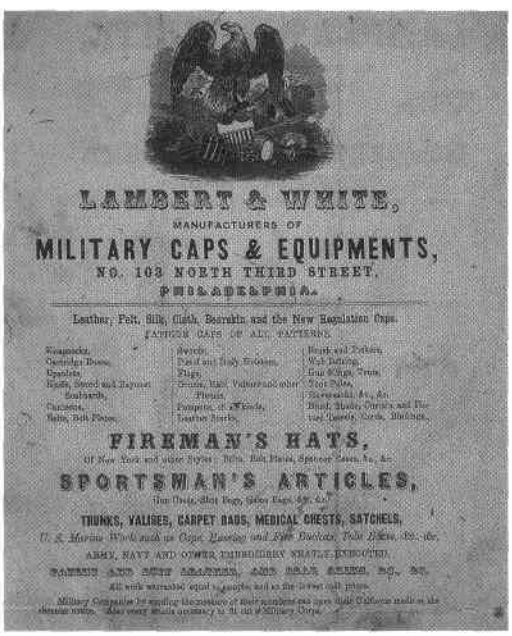


Figure 22. Advertisement for Lambert and White, ca. 1855, showing the mature and confident American eagle of the time. (Author's collection.)

Figure 26. George Washington himself became an American patriotic figure. These buttons were probably made at the time of his first inaugural in 1789. (Author's collection.)

adopted as our national symbol, from which the following account of the eagle's adoption is summarized.[7] The adoption of both the eagle and the Stars and Stripes all took place within congressional committees, which simply submitted reports containing their recommendations but did not keep minutes of their deliberations.

The first committee acting upon the adoption of a seal consisted of Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, and Thomas Jefferson. With these eminent individuals involved, it would be pleasant to announce that they solved the problem of adopting a national seal in 1776. In fact, even with the help of noted engraver Eugene DuSimitiere, they came up with a design that showed Moses and the drowning Egyptians at the Red Sea.[8] However much this symbolized the state of affairs found in America in 1776, only the motto "E Pluribus Unum" was adopted from this first design. Even this seems to have originated with the London *Gentleman's Magazine* design for its yearly bound edition from 1731 and the *Gentleman's Journal* from the 1690s.[9]

Over the course of three Congressional committees, the Great Seal gradually emerged. The eagle appeared as part of a more complicated device in the Lovell Committee seal of 1780 and was refined as the principal device by William Barton and Charles Thompson in 1781-1782 and was issued in its recognizable form of a heraldic eagle with wings and feet spread, the shield of the United States on its breast, arrows and a branch in its talons, and a "gloria" of stars above. All of these devices were taken from various committee reports by Thompson as Secretary of Congress and refined by Barton, who had headed the so-called Third Committee. This version was adopted on June 20, 1782.

What emerges from Patterson and Dougall's exhaustive study is an understanding that in fact there were a good many heraldry books available to Congress in Philadelphia and that some clearly were used as models. One emblem book, already cited, originally published by Joachim Camerarius in 1597 and reissued 100 years later, shows a heradic eagle holding the symbols of peace and war, the arrows and branch. Benjamin Franklin owned a copy of this book, and Thompson knew it as well.[10]

The 18th century was very interested in classical precedent, which then meant Roman history, the role of the Greeks not yet having been clearly understood. During the American Revolution, Edward Gibbon was busily writing his epic *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.* Hence, it should not be surprising if many of the symbols of the Revolution looked to classical antiquity for models, justifying the course taken by the American revolutionaries, because such justification was not easily found in more recent history. Among the classical forebears were men like Cincinnatus, a Roman farmer who in time of emergency put down his plow and took up his sword as general of the Republican army. This was a very congenial story for Americans in 1776. The Order of the Cincinnati, as near as we have ever been after the Revolution to founding an American nobility, was taken from Cincinnatus and his plow.

The influence of Roman antiquity had already been prevalent in European art for several hundred years. With the Greek revolution of the early 1820s, the artistic and literary styles of that civilization would also become highly influential. But at the time of both the American and French revolutions, Roman art and symbol furnished the available model. The veneration of Roman antiquity had been current since the Renaissance, with classical precedent commonly cited in such diverse fields as architecture, medicine, and law. Finding a classical precedent for their actions gave the American Revolution legitimacy in the eyes of the founding fathers.

The eagle does have its place in the pantheon of Roman iconography as the messenger of Jupiter. The eagle is often depicted with the thunderbolt, also associated with the king of the gods. Jupiter and his eagle were especially dear to the Romans, who used it on their legionary standards and as the symbol of the Senate and the people of Rome, along with a triumphal wreath of laurel symbolizing victory.

The Roman classical eagle also had an American cousin, the bald eagle. In their desire to find symbols unique to America that could be classicized, the bald eagle was high on the list. In fact, the final decision of Congress seems to have been to use the bald eagle, but when the die was cut the resulting bird was the heradic "crested eagle." This bird has a ridge on the back of its head which does not exist in nature, but which does appear on some heraldic versions of the eagle. The U.S. eagle also carried the shield of the United States with its vertical bars and stars above on its breast. In its talons were the arrows and olive branch, symbols of war and peace.

Adopting the eagle as our national symbol did have his downside. He had also served as the incarnation of imperial as well as republican Rome, with all the tyrannical persecutions of that state, and had then been used to stand for about every empire that followed Rome, including those of Byzantium, Russia, Austria, and the Holy Roman Empire. Our new Republic was now in bad company, as noted by Franklin, writing in 1784, after the adoption of the eagle: ". . . For my own part I wish the Bald Eagle has not been chosen as the Representative of our Country. He is a bird of bad moral Character. He does not get his Living Honestly . . . he is generally poor and often lousy. Besides he is a rank Coward: The Little King Bird not bigger than a sparrow attacks him

boldly & drives him out of the District. He is therefore by no means a proper Emblem for the brave and honest Cincinnati of America who have driven all the King Birds from our Country. . . . I am on this account not displeased that the Figure is not known as a Bald Eagle, but looks more like a Turky. For in Truth the Turky is in Comparison a much more respectable Bird, and withal a true Native of America. Eagles have been found in all Countries, but the Turky was peculiar to ours. . . ."[11] However, like it or not, the majesty of the eagle in flight together with its classical history and American associations seems to have carried the day.

The adoption of the U.S. flag is also a fairly well-documented story. Because flags figure prominently in naval recognition and maritime trade, the adoption of a national standard could not wait for 6 years, as had the seal. America already had a flag—the British colonial "red fly," which in fact was the British merchant marine flag. Many British colonies have used a flag with a red or sometimes blue field with a canton "Union Jack" composed first of two crosses symbolizing the Union of Britain and Scotland in 1606 and a third cross, that of St. Patrick, added with the Irish union in 1707. Hence, the idea of utilizing a "field" of one color and a "canton" having a different heraldic meaning was already a set precedent in the American colonies by the early 18th century.[12]

Francis Hopkinson was a delegate to Congress from New Jersey. He was appointed to the Marine Committee in July 1776 and also functioned as chairman of the Continental Navy Board, which conducted the business aspect of the newly formed American navy. Part of his duties included the design of the American flag. Where Hopkinson's ideas for a flag design came from remains something of a mystery because, once again, only the finished reports of congressional committees were submitted, not the minutes of discussions. However, Furlong does note that Hopkinson's personal seal featured three six-pointed stars, as opposed to five in Washington's personal seal, another candidate for the honor. In a letter to the Board of Admiralty in 1780, Hopkinson claims to have designed the flag and many other official devices, including the Great Seal. For this effort he asked for a ". . . Quarter Cask of the public wine. . ." for his labors.[13] Such was the infighting within Congress that Hopkinson never received any additional recompense for his work. However, his claim to have designed the flag was never refuted or denied. The "Stars and Stripes" flag was adopted on June 14, 1777.[14]

Unlike the official heraldic eagle of the seal, which has changed relatively little over the years (although the bird has lost its crest and appears more formalized), the devices of the flag were not set until the 20th century. All through the 19th century flags were carried as "official" that featured the placement of stars in all sorts of odd patterns such as an "X" of stars intersecting an "O" of additional stars, and a "Great Star" made up of smaller stars all arranged in a star pattern. There were five-pointed stars, as used today, and six-pointed stars called "mullets" used in early flags. Sometimes an eagle appeared in the canton with the stars. In spite of the actual resolution wording ". . . that the flag of the thirteen united States be 13 stripes alternate red and white, that the union be 13 stars, white in a blue field representing a new constellation. . . ," a drawing of the so-called "Texel flag" shows the flag as saluted in Holland having red, white, and blue *stripes.* Even officially commissioned flags had stars in concentric circles, used a "great star" made up of many smaller stars, had the stars in an "X" fashion bisecting an outer circle of stars, or used a variety of eagles, flowers, inscriptions, horse heads, state crests, and other devices. Political campaign flags might feature the candidate's profile on the stripes. Some early flags used the heraldic eagle as a very beautiful canton ornament. Even the design of the stars as five pointed or the easier-to-draw six-pointed mullets was not totally settled until the late 18th century.[15] Our present flag was not really set until 1912 with the adoption of the 48-star flag, when the format of the flag was also specified. However, laws preventing the flag to be used as part of a trademark had already been passed in 1905, with a "flag code" enacted in December 1942.

Leaving aside the official seal of the United States, extreme of artistic license was mirrored in the development of the eagle as a national symbol. The "first bird" of the seal was a heraldic displayed specimen shown in a pose not to be found in nature. His successors, as depicted upon coins, insignia, and a host of patriotic devices, became ever more realistic and appeared in a great variety of poses that reflected contemporary fashion. By 1795, the stiff heraldic design of the seal gave way in popular design to eagles about to fly or actually depicted in flight, while the official seal remained the same. These were mature birds, well-feathered, looking proud and aggressive, with nothing of the ascetic heraldic bird remaining. These eagles appear on our coinage during the first decades of the nineteenth century. Some of these eagles are derived from classical models or of interpretation of classicism by noted sculptors such as the Italian artist Albernouli, who depicted an eagle within a full wreath to symbolize Republican France but which suited America well.

The French Revolution brought us competition for our national devices, as the French also used classical renditions of the eagle to symbolize first the Republic and then the Empire. As Americans looked on slightly horrified at the excesses of the French Revolution, one major casualty was the venerable Phrygian cap, which became a favorite French

symbol of the peoples' uprising and the bloody events of their early Revolution. This device disappears from both the U.S. one-cent coin and from weapons proof inspection marks by 1798. It is only rarely seen as an American national device thereafter, and when used it was normally incorporated with other devices such as within a panoply of arms. The Napoleonic eagle, although actually a Roman legionary eagle, was not adopted in America in its Napoleonic form until Napoleon had been safely deposed. It was then used as a venerable Roman eagle as captured by the British in Spain and appeared on the U.S. dragoon cap insignia in 1833.

Americans were fully capable of designing their own birds. Eagles in flight holding wreaths were reflective of the classical allusion of crowning the victorious American soldiers with a laurel wreath but were American in conception. Studies as to the workmen engaged in these designs show a combination of European immigrants such as George Armitage, William Crumpton, Frederick Widmann, and especially Moritz Furst working with American silversmiths such as Fletcher & Gardiner, Harvey Lewis, and William Ball.

Furst, who clearly designed American military insignia and Congressional presentation medals, was an Austrian who arrived about the time of the War of 1812 thinking he was to take over the design function of the U.S. Mint. This did not happen, but Furst spent the next 20 years designing medals, buttons cap plates, and other devices on a contractual basis. One U.S. Infantry button exists signed "F," reflecting his design, while medals such as that given to many of the victorious commanders of U.S. Navy warships by Congress were designed by Furst.[16]

It was a time of comparative artistic license with our national symbols. Our iconography was young enough to have built up no confining absolute traditions. This left a good deal of artistic license to the products of our first 50 years of independence. Often the eagles that were depicted were the work of the state or federal printers who made of them what looked to be pleasing to the eye and might become the standard type in use for a few years. Europeans and the Chinese, wanting to get in on the act, copied ships' documents or coins onto decorative ceramics, insignia, or any place else they might incorporate into their wares. In viewing a piece of patriotic Liverpool ware, one can almost hear a British potter saying, "Why stop with an eagle. The Yankees will buy more of our products if we heap on many of their symbols as we can fit." Hence, Liverpool ware, Chinese export porcelain, military buckles, buttons, hat tapes, sword mountings, and lock stampings often feature prominent poses of eagles together with "glorias" of stars, 1776 dates, patriotic mottoes, wreaths, and other hagiographic devices.

In Medieval times, the eagle was the messenger of St. John. This eagle is often shown standing upon a ball on church lecterns. This familiar religious messenger was soon adorning roofs in Salem as carved by the noted sculptor John McIntire and was thus secularized into another prominent eagle form. The eagle on a half globe was in fashion during the few years when Congress met in New York in the late 1780s. From this fashion emerged the New York State rendition of the "eagle on half globe," which became used ever more restrictively as a New York symbol and was extensively used on state flags and military insignia.[17] By 1827, A. W. Spies could send samples of buttons made in Birmingham, England, back home to New York showing the round bordered eagle on half globe symbolizing New York City militia and his cousin with an oval background, the New York State Militia.

During the War of 1812, the U.S. Infantry cap plate features an eagle holding lightning bolts; these are very different from the stylized Jovian thunderbolt of classical derivation but actually depict the lightning of a good American thunderstorm. This depiction died away after the war years. Another convention, this time of the period 1830-1840, shows the arrows held by the eagle facing inward rather than outward, a trend not derived from earlier circumstance or copied later. Eagles themselves are depicted in flight sometimes in profile, holding a laurel wreath, waiting to crown a dragoon as appears in the dragoon insignia of 1797-1816. Other eagles have their head under one wing, as in the light artillery version on buttons and cap plates of the 1812 era. Some infantry eagles have one wing out, while others are preparing to fly. Some birds are displayed with the shield of the United States on their breast, others simply posed without the formality of the shield. The artillery bird simply joined the cannon shown in profile since the Revolution and perched on the cannon barrel in the most common version of the insignia. The new Corps of Engineers adopted an eagle flying over a castle in its 1802 device. The Navy officers' buttons depict the eagle in many poses, complete with a fouled anchor.

The symbol of Britannia transmuted into Indian princess in colonial days continued to evolve into Columbia. This seated female figure, dressed in red, white, and blue, held the shield of the United States, wore the "Liberty cap," and often was accompanied by an eagle in flight.

In the meantime, each state adopted its own symbol in addition to the national iconography. Massachusetts early on adopted a standing Indian with bow and arrow; Connecticut, grapevines; and New Jersey, the plow. Pennsylvania adopted the popular late 18th century symbol that depicted the Atlantic seaboard as forming what looked like an arch of states on the East Coast. Since Pennsylvania was in the middle

of this "Democratic Arch," she took on the insignia and title "Keystone State." Maryland continued to use the Calvert symbols; Virginia, however, adopted a female figure in armor dispatching a fallen tyrant. South Carolina used its Palmetto, and Georgia a classical temple. This range of device often continued colonial traditions of combining American natural symbols with classical allusions.

Among the pantheon of American devices, we must also number George Washington himself. Washington's profile and initials were often used as patriotic symbols, along with the hundreds of militia and fraternal organizations, fire companies, monuments, etc. dedicated to Washington. To a lesser extent other heroes of the American Republic such as Lafayette, Andrew Jackson, Abraham Lincoln, and Winfield Scott were accorded similar honors.

The late 19th century was a time of myth making. In the process, our national iconography was partially reinvented. The stories of Plymouth Rock, Betsy Ross, Molly Pitcher, and a host of other legends were retold and embellished during this time. Each of these stories may contain a grain of truth, but they were elevated to the highest status of our heroic history. In the process, the real story of the adoption of the eagle and the creation of the flag were temporarily forgotten, only to be rediscovered as the 20th century imposed an examination of American Revolutionary War history. Among the 19th century legends that grew up, several concern the eagle and the flag. One interesting artistic fabrication has the eagle changing the direction of his beak in time of war. This type of rule was foreign to the persons who devised the eagle types of the early 19th century but was made into to the popular understanding of military heraldry in this century. The Navy hat device was in fact changed in the 1920s to conform to this legend of the eagle looking towards peace or war. The Great Seal eagle became more and more of a formal symbol over the years, with fewer changes possible.

The Revolutionary period U.S. flag as depicted in the late 19th century show a circle of stars in the canton. This was taken from the Trumbull historical paintings of the second quarter of the 19th century, which show the flag in this configuration. In fact, while there may have been flags such as this, the surviving colors, including the Washington's Headquarters standard now at Valley Forge, which was probably the canton of a Revolutionary color, shows the stars placed in rows. Even the few surviving flags of the period show the great variety of designs that must have been prevalent.

The so-called Bennington flag, with its arc of stars over the numerals 76, has long been in question. Very likely the flag dates to the 50th anniversary of the Revolution in 1825, but even this is unproven. Because of its "76" date, the flag was adopted as a model to be used to symbolize various anniversaries, including the bicentennial celebration.

Such changes are no longer acceptable to us. The form of the flag is so well known to us that any freedom of expression with its design or even its incorporation into artistic composition is seen as a matter for serious concern. Changes made to our national symbols as a matter of course during their youth were no longer regarded as legitimate artistic expression by the 20th century. Hence, the beautiful designs created both by formal artists and by "folk" designers from 1785 to 1850 have given us a rich heritage that we often rediscover and adopt, their legitimacy now being conferred by their age. Through our interest in these creations and the persons who made or used them, their true history continues to emerge.

In the above I have tried to convey a sense of the variety of our national symbols and how these came to be adopted. The prevailing fascination with classical Roman history and art left the greatest mark on the way Europe interpreted its national heraldry. This concern was transmitted to America. The worship of ancient Rome struck a responsive cord among Americans who looked back to the Roman Republic as our direct ancestor and the form of government to be taken as a model. The search for unique American characteristics altered the classical symbols with which we were familiar from European tradition. These complementary traditions resulted in a blending of our symbols, which has kept them unique and vital. They remain with us, slightly changed over 200 years, their relevancy clearly having stood the test of time quite well.

NOTES

1. Patterson, Richard S., and Dougall, Richardson: *The Eagle and the Shield.* Washington, D.C.: Department of State, 1976, p. 61.

2. Zieber, Eugene: *Heraldry in America.* Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1894, pp. 88-89.

3. *Pennsylvania Archives.* Fifth Series. Vol. II. pp. 13-14.

4. Furlong, William Rea: *So Proudly We Hail.* Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1981, p. 49.

5. Yeoman, R. S.: *A Guidebook of United States Coinage.* Racine, WI: Western Publishing Company, 1982, p. 67.

6. Newman, Eric: *The Early Paper Money of America.* Racine, Wis.: Whitman Publishing Company, 1967, pp. 30, 46. Newman noted here that the devices on Continental Currency were mostly taken from the late sixteenth century work of Joachim Camerarius: *Symbolorum ac Emblematum Ethico-Politicorum.* The 1702 Mainz edition and that this work was in Franklin's library. Newman also states that the $8 note was taken from Diego Saavedra: *Christiano-Politici Symbolis* (1660 edition) and that the $55 note uses iconography from J. C. Weigels: *Emblematum Repositorium.* Patterson & Dougall also note a possible connection of American device to Philipp Jakob Spener's *Historia Insignium Illustrium* of 1680, which contained devices that seem to have figured in American iconography and had been

given to the Philadelphia Library Company by Gustavus Hessalius in 1755. See also Patterson & Dougall, p. 94.

7. Isaacson, Philip M.: *The American Eagle.* Boston: New York Graphic Society, 1975, pp. 19-28. Furlong, William Rea: *So Proudly We Hail.* Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1981, pp. 138-139. Patterson, Richard S, and Dougall, Richardson: *The Eagle and the Shield* (Washington, D.C.: Department of State, 1976), pp. 6-110.

8. Isaacson, p. 22.

9. See Patterson and Dougall, Chapter II.

10. Ibid, pp. 98-99. Also, see note 5.

11. Ibid, pp. 30-31. Franklin to his daughter Sarah Bache, January 26, 1784.

12. Furlong, William Rea, McCandless, Byron, and Langley, Harold D.: *So Proudly We Hail: The History of the United States Flag.* Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1981, pp. 30-34.

13. Ibid, pp. 99-101.

14. Ibid, pp. 98-100.

15. Ibid, p. 98.

16. Julian, R. W.: *Medals of the United States Mint: The First Century.* El Cajon, Calif.: Token and Medal Society, 1977. This work as well as other catalogs of U.S. Mint medals contain numerous examples of medals whose dies were cut by Furst.

17. Isaacson, pp. 14-18.

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