

# THE FLAG BULLETIN

September-October 2002

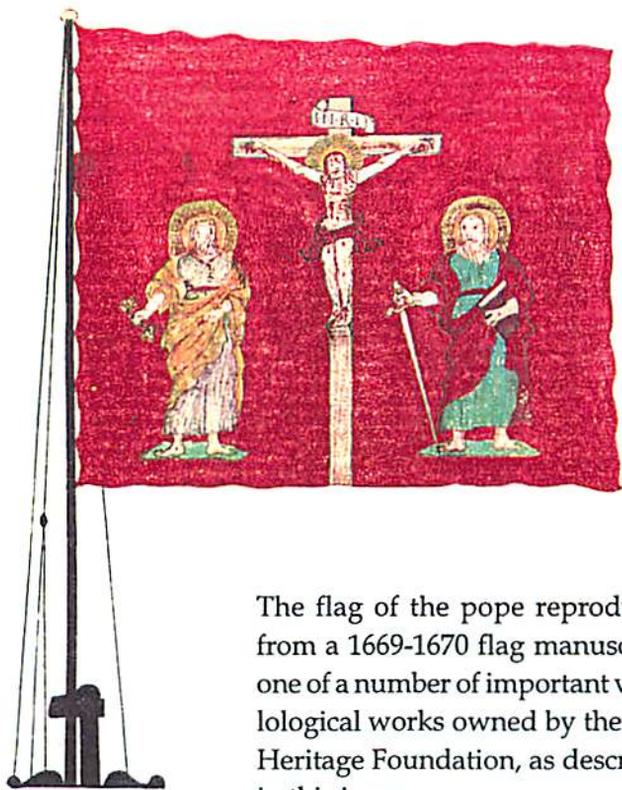
No. 207

Volume XLI, No. 5

## AN INTRODUCTION TO THE FLAG HERITAGE FOUNDATION

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*by Whitney Smith, PhD*



The flag of the pope reproduced from a 1669-1670 flag manuscript, one of a number of important vexillological works owned by the Flag Heritage Foundation, as described in this issue.

The Flag Bulletin is officially recognized  
by the International Federation of Vexillological Associations  
for the publication of scholarly articles relating to vexillology

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*Color artwork for this issue, courtesy Terri Malgieri*

# AN INTRODUCTION TO THE FLAG HERITAGE FOUNDATION

by Whitney Smith, PhD

Although individuals had been interested for several hundred years in all aspects of flags — their design, usage, history, symbolism, etc. — it was not until the 1960s that collective efforts were made to professionalize vexillology. It was a decade of remarkable achievements — universal recognition of the term *vexillology* and its cognates, the first international gathering of vexillologists, the first meetings of vexillologists in specific countries, the creation of formal associations and institutions dedicated to furthering the nascent science, publication of the first journals on the subject, and attempts to define the essence and objectives of vexillology.

The published record for much of this work is available in journals and newsletters and in the *Reports of the International Congresses of Vexillology*, but one institution with roots in the 1960s is not widely recognized despite an ambitious program and a record of achievement. This article serves as an introduction to the work of the Flag Heritage Foundation since its establishment in 1971.

In 1966, after the First International Congress of Vexillology, the author began to investigate possibilities for the incorporation of a non-profit educational institution devoted to vexillology. Drawing on professional resources available in the greater Boston area, particularly at Boston University where he was teaching and working on his PhD dissertation, he reached the conclusion that actually two organizations were needed. While cooperating when appropriate, each should possess a separate legal personality as well as programs and personnel of its own.

In the spring of 1967 notice was sent out to vexillologists of

the United States and Canada, inviting them to a meeting at Boston University on the weekend of 3-4 June 1967. This resulted in the establishment of the North American Vexillological Association (NAVA), a membership group which eventually received recognition as a non-profit from the Internal Revenue Service of the United States.

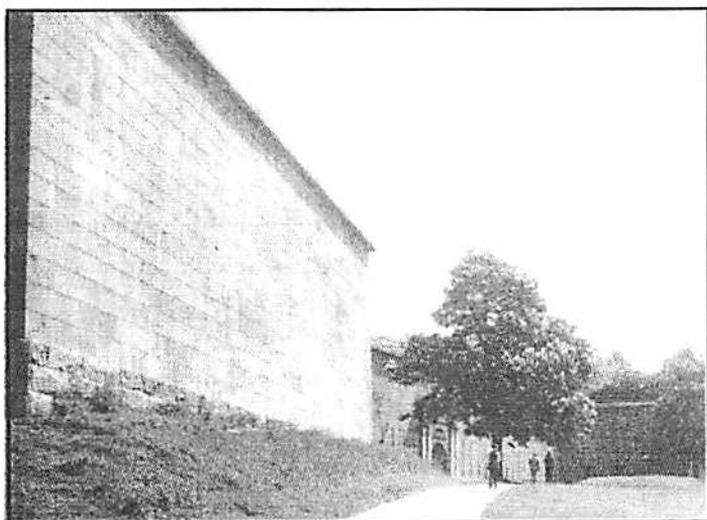
Development of what came to be called the Flag Heritage Foundation moved more slowly. Many individuals and institutions were consulted and numerous issues probed. Five years after the original concept for a Foundation was aired, it came into legal existence with the signing of a trust declaration and the receipt of a donation from vexillologist Harry Manogg.<sup>1</sup> The trustees of the new Foundation included Andrew Nichols of the law firm Choate, Hall, and Stuart; Professor Richard A. Newman of Boston University; and Thomas M. Hill, Jr., CEO of Hill Publishing Company and NAVA treasurer 1967-1969.

The Foundation was recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as an scientific, educational, and charitable institution. Unlike NAVA it was not intended to be a membership-based organization with regular meetings, lectures, exhibits, a journal, etc. In the words of the trust declaration

The principal and income of all property received and accepted by the trustees to be administered under this Declaration of Trust shall be held in trust by them and used... to collect, organize, and disseminate information concerning all aspects of flags and related symbols... to cooperate actively with individuals and institutions having similar concerns... The trustees may create and maintain a library, museum, laboratory, or exhibition; prepare, publish, and distribute books... and similar materials; conduct directly and support the conducting by

others of research... make grants for any of the foregoing purposes; and take any other action designed to further the purposes of this Trust. The Trust shall avoid any commercial, political, or religious activities or involvements in order to preserve the charitable, educational, and scientific status necessary for success in achieving its goals.

Beyond the formal legal language, the organizers of the Foundation had in mind two concrete objectives. They recognized that many vexillologists had accumulated substantial libraries of books, pamphlets, research notes, color plates, etc. as well as collections of actual flags and that in most cases they had made no provision for preserving these invaluable materials for the benefit of future generations.



**Fig. 1: PARTIAL VIEW OF FORT INDEPENDENCE, CASTLE ISLAND  
(FOR SCALE, NOTE SIZE OF PEOPLE UNDER TREE)**

Moreover, there was no existing institution with a specific commitment to focus on collecting and preserving such flag-oriented information. Vexillological collections given to regular libraries and historical societies frequently were unknown to vexillologists, unused, and were sometimes not maintained, expanded, or even indexed.

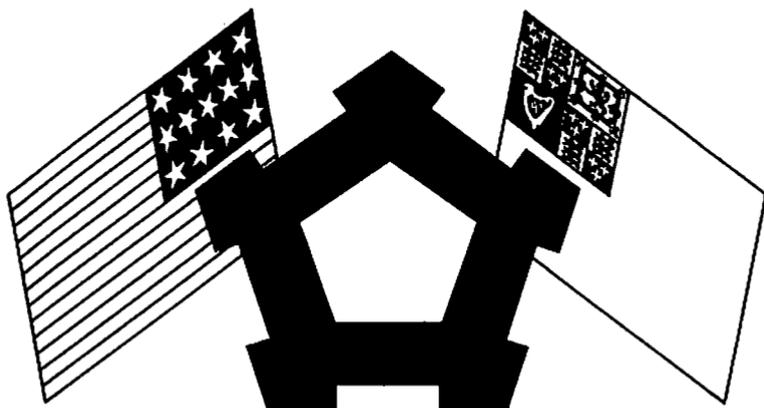
The Foundation proposed to remedy those problems by collaborating with individuals, corporations, and institutions that might be able to provide the substantial resources necessary for achieving a permanent library and museum for vexillology. In those days, before the "virtual library" had been invented, the only libraries and museums were of the "bricks and mortar" type. Even in the 21st century, there are strong reasons supporting a commitment to preservation of original books, papers, and flags — while encouraging full utilization of information technology to organize and disseminate virtual material widely.

The trustees of the Foundation had a specific program in mind when they signed the trust document. The 1976 bicentennial of the Declaration of Independence of the United States was only five years away and many government agencies and private institutions were considering how they might most appropriately celebrate that anniversary.

Americans have a deep affection for their national flag as well as other American flags — those of ethnic communities, states, the Revolution and the Civil War, historical events, etc. The Foundation's premise was that it might be possible to utilize Bicentennial-oriented flag interest to develop a museum whose perspectives, over the long-term, would grow to encompass flags of all types, eras, and nations.

Only a small percentage of those who visited its exhibits might be interested in more serious involvement, but both they and vexillologists alike would have available a unique library. Its professional facilities and staffing would make the "Internation-

**Fig. 2: LOGO FOR THE PROJECTED MUSEUM OF VEXILLOLOGY WITH A SILHOUETTE OF FORT INDEPENDENCE FRAMED BY ITS 1781 AND 1635 FLAGS**



tional Institute of Vexillology” (the Foundation’s code name for the long-term program it envisages) the premier center in the world for vexillology.

## **FORT INDEPENDENCE**

A unique conjunction of opportunities arose just at the time the Foundation came into existence. The Veteran Association of the Independent Corps of Cadets (the “First Corps”), having lost the building which served as its headquarters, was reviewing its entire program and collections. Craig Brown, curator of the First Corps collection, worked with the author to develop plans for a museum at Fort Independence on Castle Island<sup>2</sup> in South Boston. The federal government had recently retroceded to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts what had been a US military installation for over a century and a half.

In 1971 the author had been successful in getting legislation approved by the Massachusetts legislature standardizing the state flag and other symbols<sup>3</sup> and he had made a number of useful contacts. For example, Dr. Richard Hale, the state archivist, was enthusiastic about the possibility of giving greater public awareness to the rich collections of documentation and actual flags held by the Commonwealth.

The original "Castle" had been built in 1634 and its site is still the oldest continuously fortified point on the North American coast. Named Castle William and Mary following the Glorious Revolution of 1688-1689, it became Fort Independence in 1799. The actual fortifications subsequently underwent many changes and the present structure dates from 1850. It is characterized today by the enormous granite walls (Fig. 1, p. 179) typical of the 19th century.

Although the fort was never attacked, it has been associated with many historic events. The British colonial governor fled there at the beginning of the American Revolution; Prince Hall Masonry, the first organization of black Freemasons in the United States, was founded there; Edgar Allen Poe served time there as a soldier, learning of an event he would later fictionalize in "The Cask of Amontillado."

Work would have been required to repair and update the structure, but it clearly offered unique opportunities for a historical museum. In addition to large and impressive interior chambers, there were areas suitable for the general public — adequate parking, walking paths, a parade ground, views of the Atlantic Ocean, and the constant passage of boats in and out of Boston Harbor.

Castle Island was under the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC), a state agency which was also responsible for parks, roadways, skating rinks, and other facilities in the Greater Boston area. The connection of the MDC with the state legislature augured well for possible funding of

**Fig. 3: MASSACHUSETTS GOVERNOR FRANCIS W. SARGENT RECEIVES HIS STANDARD ON FLAG HERITAGE DAY**



this historic site, particularly with the impetus of the upcoming Bicentennial. As in many similar projects, the grand concept and concrete program for Fort Independence came from civic minded non-profit institutions.

Working with MDC Commissioner John Sears, state archivist Hale, and many others, the Flag Heritage Foundation and First Corps were able to get agreement in principle for their plans for a museum at Fort Independence (Fig. 2, p. 181). The Foundation and the First Corps would provide the collections and program<sup>4</sup> for professional museum exhibits and activities relating to flags of all kinds as well as the military history of Massachusetts. The physical plant would be underwritten by the Commonwealth and managed by the MDC. In anticipation of this work, the Foundation began publicity for its concepts and the fund-raising efforts that would be necessary to realize appropriate museum staffing and facilities.

**FLAGS FROM THE WANAMAKER COLLECTION  
OF THE FLAG HERITAGE FOUNDATION**



**DETAIL FROM THE REVERSE OF AN ORIGINAL AUSTRIAN  
MILITARY COLOR SHOWING THE VIRGIN MARY**



**ORIGINAL BANNER OF THE ORDER OF ST. PATRICK (DETAIL)  
WITH THE ROYAL CIPHER AND THE COLLAR OF THE ORDER**

On 19 October 1971 Flag Heritage Day was celebrated in Boston. A color guard provided by the First Corps assembled on the front steps of the State House, in Revolutionary War uniforms and accompanied by fife and drum. Governor Francis W. Sargent was presented by the author with the first official personal standard of the governor (Fig. 3, p. 183, and Fig. 4), as recognized by the new state flag law. In turn Governor Sargent presented to the color guard an exact replica of the flag the First Corps had originally received from Governor James Bowdoin 185 years previously on 19 October 1786.

That afternoon MDC Commissioner Sears welcomed the general public to the inside of Fort Independence – the first time it had been accessible to the public. The First Corps color guard performed their drill and a replica of the original Stars and Stripes hoisted over the fort in 1781 was raised (Fig. 5). The joint program for a museum was explained to the media and the general public.

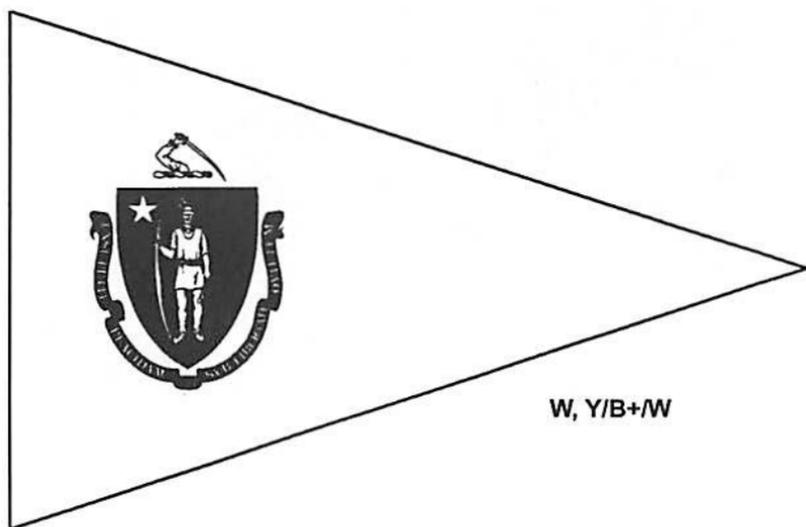


Fig. 4: STANDARD OF THE GOVERNOR OF MASSACHUSETTS

**Fig. 5: A 1781 FLAG (REPLICA) IS HOISTED ON THE WEED-COVERED RAMPARTS OF FORT INDEPENDENCE ON FLAG HERITAGE DAY, 19 OCTOBER 1971**



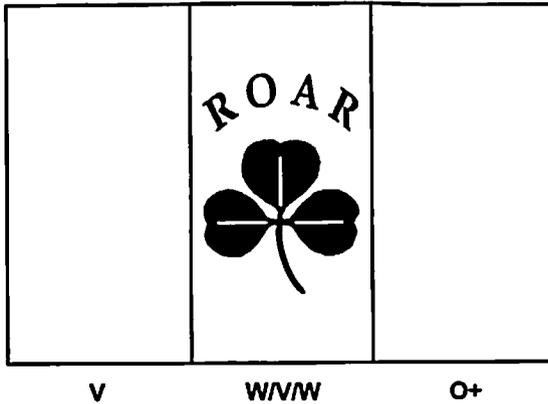
Between those two events, the Veteran Association and the Foundation hosted a luncheon at the Association's museum. The guests were important community figures, including Mrs. Anne S. K. Brown, leading collector of material relating to uniforms and colors and founder of the Company of Military Historians. Presentations were made in anticipation of a capital fund campaign for the joint museum project. Later the MDC obtained a million-dollar appropriation from the legislature for landscaping and building repairs at Fort Independence.

In the following four years a number of political problems arose which first hampered and eventually prevented realization of the ambitious program drafted for Fort Independence. The most significant obstacle to success became evident when public hearings were held in South Boston to give local residents an opportunity to learn about the program and to voice concerns about its impact.

At one such meeting Sears, Brown, and the author spent an hour explaining the proposed museum and then opened the floor to discussion. The hostility of the local residents of "Southie" (as they called it) was clearly evident. One after the other, individuals spoke against any development of the Fort because "it would encourage outsiders to come to South Boston." Castle Island had long been a place for locals to stroll or have a picnic — and it was not, in their view, an appropriate site for a world-class museum.

The xenophobia they expressed should perhaps have been anticipated. At that time South Boston was resisting a court-ordered racial integration of local schools. The battle flag of Southie (Fig. 6), the Irish tricolor with a green central shamrock and the acronym for their organization (Restore Our Alienated Rights), defeated the combined flags of the Foundation and Veteran Association. The MDC certainly wanted no controversy. Consonant with its other programs, it was content to operate the area as a park, even though that meant that there would not

**Fig. 6: 1974 FLAG OF THE SOUTH BOSTON ORGANIZATION  
"RESTORE OUR ALIENATED RIGHTS"**



be any public access to the interior of the fort. The most extreme expression of local sentiment, reflected in a spray-painted slogan found on the Fort – “If you open it, we’ll burn it down” – ended any possibilities for a museum there.

### **OUTREACH PROGRAMS**

From its inception the Foundation has paid careful attention to public service programs. While investigating possibilities for a long-term museum/library, the Foundation has always recognized the importance of providing information to the public, utilizing its resources through carefully defined goals, and attracting support from individuals and corporations.

Contributions to the spread of vexillology have been made through lectures, answers to thousands of flag etiquette questions received from the general public, and a series of specialized bibliographies provided to public libraries on such topics as the Pledge of Allegiance, civic flags, the Peace Symbol, and flags of the American Revolution. The Foundation served as a consultant to the Boy Scouts of America for their book *Your Flag*, of

which a half million copies have been sold, and to the Continuing Education Institute for its book, *The Story of Old Glory*.

Recognizing its own limitations — including lack of a building and staff — the Foundation has also made direct grants to related institutions for special flag-related programs of significance. For example, the Foundation has subsidized the cataloging of the Tumbling Waters Museum of Flags collection and has made a gift to the conservation work being carried on by the Museum of the Confederacy (Richmond, Virginia).

A number of flag exhibits, many drawing on the collections of the Foundation, have been organized. These include ones appearing at Boston City Hall, the gallery of the *Chicago Sun-Times* building, Bunker Hill National Monument, the Freedom Train (which carried patriotic displays across the country during the Bicentennial year), Tumbling Waters Museum of Flags (Montgomery, Alabama), and the exhibit "The Flag Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow" at the John Hancock Building.

By far the most important exhibit produced by the Foundation is the one in the Hall of Flags, located in the center of the second floor of the State House in Boston. Originally the exhibit had been conceived of as a temporary substitute for the state's Civil War flags, under conservation after a century-long display. Various circumstances resulted in its becoming a permanent feature in the hall, which over a hundred thousand people visit or walk through every year. While there are many other displays throughout the State House, including flags of Massachusetts cities and towns in the Hall of Flags, the Foundation's contribution occupies the largest space.

State authorities determined that the original battle flags carried by Massachusetts forces were deteriorating because of their display conditions. The Great Hall, built in the mid-19th century specifically for those flags, did not protect them from moving air nor from the heat generated by the illumination in the eight niches built into the circular walls of the hall. More-

over, since there were hundreds of flags, it was impossible for descendants of the men who had carried them, veterans, school children, and the general public to appreciate their designs. They resembled shrouds mounted on poles — an unfortunate but appropriate analogy.

Massachusetts authorities decided to remove all the flags, catalog them properly, and have conservators give them professional attention. Having examined those flags, the conservators insisted that they be maintained under archival conditions, stored flat in specially built shelving, rather than being returned to the Great Hall.

That created a new problem. Veterans of more recent wars, considering themselves as inheritors of these Civil War relics, hold numerous public ceremonies in the Great Hall. As a volunteer member of the Advisory Committee working with the Department of Public Buildings on flag-related issues, the author suggested that a flag exhibit replace the old flags until such time as they could be returned to the hall. This would meet the expectations of the veterans, while providing a meaningful presentation for tourists and others.

Once the concept was approved, the Foundation offered to fund the cost of the exhibit and provide its expertise in designing the graphics and accompanying text. State officials welcomed the offer, but insisted it would be necessary to give similar opportunities to the State Archives, Massachusetts National Guard, and other institutions. Consequently only one of the eight niches was reserved for the Foundation with the others to be assigned as the program developed.

Each niche forms a semi-circular alcove inset in the walls of the circular chamber. Each niche is approximately 2' (61 cm) off the floor and is 6' 2" (1.89 m) wide and high. The challenge was to make a dignified and meaningful presentation, visible to a person standing before a niche (Fig. 7, p. 193).

The Foundation solicited proposals from exhibit design professionals, selected the best concept, provided ideas and facts for the theme chosen ("New England Sources of the Stars and Stripes"), and monitored the construction and installation closely. State authorities approved the work at every stage, but the funding and supervision were entirely the responsibility of the Foundation.<sup>5</sup>

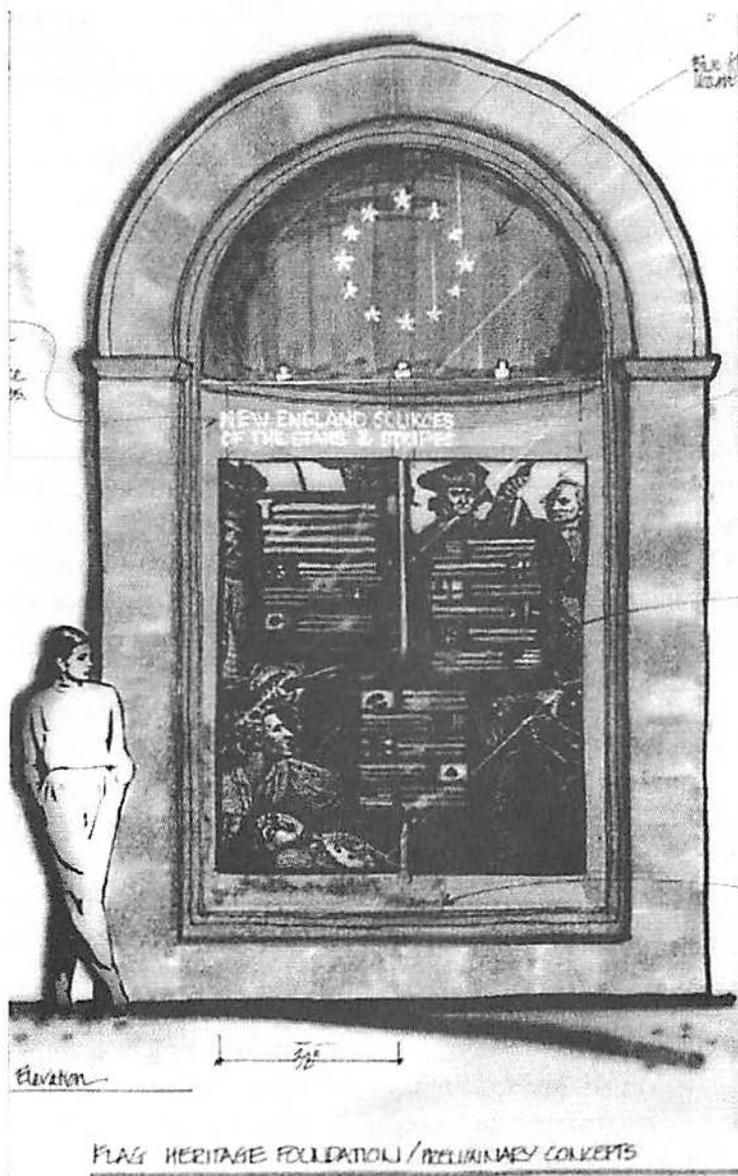
The work was completed in five months, before any of the state agencies had even made a commitment to provide exhibits. Authorities were so favorably impressed with the results that the Foundation was requested to submit a proposal for filling the other seven niches. While this required removal of the original exhibit, it meant that all eight niches could be coordinated into a single exhibit with a coherent message about flags.

Drawing on its own collection of flags as well as those belonging to the state, the Foundation presented eight significant banners from Massachusetts history. Color transparencies, made in the same size as the original flags, were mounted on the inside of the glass which covers the niches. The rest of the area was blacked out, such that the lights installed within the niche illuminate the flag brilliantly. There is a small caption under each giving the significance of the flag. The result has transformed what originally was a rather gloomy area into a chamber suggesting the inside of a cathedral, the illuminated flag transparencies serving as surrogate stained glass windows.

A separate exhibit is mounted on a triangular kiosk that stands in the hall. It can be wheeled around, as required, to be out of the way of public meetings or special temporary displays, such as those presented by veterans' groups. The kiosk theme (as originally explained to state authorities) is

"The Constitution and the Flag"... expressed through assembling graphic material including photographs, engravings, [and] flags... as well

**Fig 7: HALL OF FLAGS WITH A PRELIMINARY DESIGN FOR THE ORIGINAL VERSION OF THE FLAG HERITAGE FOUNDATION EXHIBIT**



as appropriate text to express the spirit and substance of the United States Constitution as reflected in flag-related incidents (Fig. 8) in American history.

It quotes Chief Justice John Marshall who said, in a unanimous US Supreme Court Decision of 1819, that the Constitution (like the American flag) was "intended to endure for ages to come and, consequently, to be adapted to the various crises of human affairs."

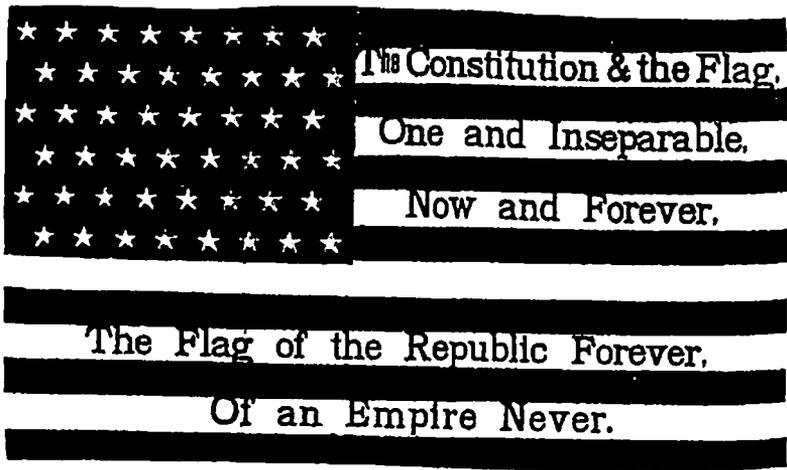
### **COINS, STAMPS, AND TABLECLOTHS**

Disappointed by the results of its efforts regarding Fort Independence, the Foundation nevertheless held to its vision of a permanent institution devoted exclusively to vexillology. It was clear that two areas needed to be developed if the Foundation was to be in a position to work with others to realize its core program. Building up resources, both financial reserves and collections, had to be linked with real contributions to the general public.

Vexillological associations and institutions generally have not explored the possibilities of public relations and marketing. While the Foundation is committed to the advancement of scientific vexillology, it has also recognized that wide public appreciation for the importance of flags is one element in achieving that objective. Since its establishment the Foundation has been involved in joint undertakings with a number of commercial firms in the United States with very positive results.

The author has contributed his time and experience on the Foundation's behalf, writing and researching material for the Franklin Mint, Gino's, Calhoun's Collectors Society, Thinc, and others. Each firm has had a specific product to sell or service to provide in which flags play a major role. The Foundation has

Fig. 8: EARLY 20TH CENTURY FLAG IN CURRENT HALL OF FLAGS EXHIBIT (MASSACHUSETTS STATE HOUSE)



insisted on strict editorial control of all text and graphics to be certain that the flag information is correct. Each company had paid a fee to the Foundation for work done and, in many cases, unrestricted donations have been made to the Foundation in acknowledgement of the success of the undertaking.

The Franklin Mint created "flag ingots" of silver, displayed in wooden chests or, in one instance, a table with a built-in display case. In addition paperback books with historical text about the flags, prepared by the Flag Heritage Foundation, were provided to customers. The series included *Flags of the United Nations*, *Historical Flags of Canada*, *Banners of Royalty*, and many similar topics.

One project was never realized. The Mint wanted a collection of the banners and standards carried by the great armies of the past – especially ones associated with famous battles. Research revealed that often the flags of a defeated force, preserved

as trophies in churches or recorded in manuscript catalogs, were much easier to find than the flags of the victorious army. The Mint concluded that research would be too time-consuming and costly. It also turned down a proposal (made in jest) for a collection of *Banners of Great Losers Throughout History*.

The program for Thinc involved the production of sales promotion items, perhaps the most unusual of which was a plastic tablecloth or picnic spread (Fig. 9). This and the plastic drinking cups offered were described by Thinc as providing

the fast food account [business] with a unique opportunity to help their consumers learn more about their country by its flag history. It also provides the fast food account with repeat sales, since customers are motivated to return and collect the entire set.

Instead of the traditional selection of American flags repeated so often in encyclopedias, schoolbooks, leaflets, etc. the program featured 70 little-known but authentic flags. As the promotional material explained,

[each flag] has played a role in the development of our nation or one of its states, yet... are unknown to the general public. Homespun or sophisticated, each carries a message about diverse peoples, efforts, and aspirations. Collectively they tell us something about how the country has developed, where it is today, and where it is heading tomorrow.

Such materials have only rarely been purchased by individuals with a specific interest in flags. Nevertheless, through their distribution the Foundation has been able to provide flag

Fig. 9: POINT OF PURCHASE ADVERTISING FOR FLAG CUPS AND A FLAG TABLECLOTH

# HISTORIC OFFER



get this  
**PICNIC Americana set**  
including:

- FLAGS OF USA PICNIC CLOTH**  
...easy clean - long wearing!
- INSULATED ZIPPER COOLER**  
...folds flat for easy storage!
- 4 FLAGS OF USA CUPS**  
...washable - reusable!
- WOVEN PICNIC BASKET**  
...plus food separation tray!

★ A Salute!  
As your salute to the flags of the U.S.A., a portion of the price of this offer will be donated to the Flag Heritage Foundation to establish an historic museum center.

ONLY **\$11<sup>76</sup>** IN THE USA

GET COUPON ON SPECIAL DISPLAYS OF DR PEPPER

information to tens of thousands who otherwise might have had little or no contact with the subject. Moreover, much of the data was not readily available in regular library sources and many frequently misrepresented flags were corrected in the Foundation's text and graphics. In the balance, both the products and the revenues derived from them have made important contributions to the Foundation.

## **BUILDING A FLAG COLLECTION**

It is remarkable that the United States, a country devoted to its national flag, should have no museum devoted exclusively to flags. There are some outdoor exhibits of state flags, historical flags, or mass displays of the Stars and Stripes, but their motivation is patriotic rather than strictly educational and the flags themselves are simply replicas. The Smithsonian and the Museum of Confederacy are two of many institutions that have flags only as part of larger collections.

A large collection of historic flags utilized both for permanent and rotating exhibits could make the subject more accessible to the general public. If youth groups, veterans, tourists, and others could be given an introduction to the physical presence of authentic flags — their designs, size, fabrics, mode of manufacture, and colors — the social and political significance of those flags would be easier to absorb. Large numbers of visitors to a museum might help to justify grants by government and donations by corporations which, understandably, insist on concrete evidence of a wide spectrum of public interest in any institution seeking financial support.

Over the years, the Foundation has made contact with those holding flag collections or individual flags of high interest. Pro bono work has been done on request for individuals or institutions uncertain of the identification, significance, and value of one or more flags. For example, a complete flag inventory was

undertaken for the First Corps. One of its framed flags — found resting against the furnace which heated the museum building — proved to be the only known 18th century flag for which the staff, finial, cravat, and flag-belt have been preserved.

Historical flags at the State House in New Hampshire, ones at the Higgins Armory (Worcester, Massachusetts), the pre-Revolutionary Moulton Flag owned by the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, and a flag reportedly brought to Beverly (Massachusetts) in 1623 are among those examined. This work has been done in partial fulfillment of the obligation of the Foundation to provide non-profit public services.

In a few instances flag owners have indicated the desire to dispose of their possessions. For example, the Foundation was offered the opportunity to purchase the Forster Flag, which it did in 1975.<sup>6</sup> The following year Mrs. Antoinette Rungee of New Haven, Connecticut, graciously donated to the Foundation a collection of flags (plus related material) which had been amassed by her late husband, Dr. Clarence R. Rungee. The total number of flags was 673 — most of them being 2'x3' (61 x 92 cm) or larger.

At the time of his death in December 1971, Dr. Rungee had one of the most extensive and unusual private collections of flags anywhere in the world. He had obtained them from people such as General Eisenhower, Emperor Sellassie of Ethiopia, President Rhee of the Republic of Korea, and President Weizmann of Israel. He displayed his flags in his private museum and in the hundreds of lectures he delivered over the years 1947-1971.

Individual flags have been donated to the Foundation and a few have been purchased, including two authentic 19-star Stars and Stripes. An elderly veteran sent a flag he had brought back from World War II, taking the trouble to write out in longhand the story behind it. That soldier had been in Seoul, Korea, on

the day that Japanese forces surrendered to the Americans and Russians in 1945. He removed the Japanese flag flying over the Capitol and took it home as war booty. The Foundation has also been able to obtain from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration a 4" x 6" (10 x 15 cm) United States flag taken to the Moon on the Apollo XI mission.

Among the most spectacular acquisitions of the Foundation are flags obtained under unusual circumstances from the Wanamaker department store in Philadelphia. When their building was acquired by another corporation in 1988, the new owners discovered hundreds of flags in the fur storage vaults. Having no interest in the flags, they were ready to throw them away, but fortunately it was suggested that the Smithsonian Institution might be interested in their acquisition.

A curator sent from Washington to examine the flags quickly discovered they were not appropriate for the National Museum of American History. He telephoned the Foundation and the author, acting on its behalf, examined the flags the following day. There was no inventory — not even a total — and the building owners insisted that the entire collection be removed in less than a week. The flags, quickly moved and put into storage, have gradually been catalogued as time allows.

The Foundation has made no attempt to build a collection of books, plates, and similar printed items on flags. Hoping that donations will be made by collectors who have amassed such material, it has focused on acquisition of a few limited manuscripts which might otherwise disappear and be unavailable to vexillologists. The most important of these is the original well-known 1669-1670 flag manuscript.<sup>7</sup>

## THE FUTURE

While the Foundation has had success in a number of undertakings, its grand vision has not yet been realized. Many

circumstances in the world at large and in vexillology in particular have altered over the years, affecting the Foundation for better or worse. Thus the Foundation, as it enters the fourth decade of its work, is emphasizing themes constant from its inception as well as ones designed to take advantage of new possibilities and necessities.

The General Assembly of the International Federation of Vexillological Associations at the 13th International Congress of Vexillology approved the "Flag Bibliography International" (FBI) program of the Foundation. It was likewise endorsed by the 23rd annual meeting of the North American Vexillological Association. Modern technology is now being utilized to preserve and index the accumulated published documentation of the field of vexillology. The FBI ultimately will far exceed all existing resources in quality and quantity.<sup>8</sup>

Serial literature on flags has produced a tremendous corpus of work. Unfortunately, most of that is not readily available. Few public libraries subscribe to even a single newsletter or journal in the field and their holdings rarely encompass the entire run. For example, *Bulletin*, the oldest and highest-circulation journal, *The Flag* probably cannot be found in more than 25 complete collections in the entire world, a number of which are in private hands.

Cataloging all of these journals and their contents is an important (if difficult) undertaking in part because very few have their own indexes. The Foundation has committed substantial funding to a program for the creation of a CD-ROM with interactive capabilities covering the first 30 years of *The Flag Bulletin*. It is a formidable project and will take several years to complete.

Determined to find a partner institution in order to realize its original objective of preserving vexillological collections from around the world, the Foundation has approached a number of universities and museums to explore prospects for long-term collaboration. Counsel on this enterprise has been sought from

experienced individuals, especially those with a genuine commitment to expanding knowledge of flags. Objectives and procedures have been constantly refined in the light of changing economic and technological trends. The Foundation draws on many of the ideals set forth by the author in his essay "The Next 25 Years of World Vexillology."<sup>9</sup>

The realities faced by the Foundation have been made clear in intense and extensive discussions with librarians, college presidents, and others. The social sciences do not command the funding resources and interest garnered by the natural sciences and information technology. Vexillology is not a recognized academic subject and its value to existing disciplines (social psychology, semiotics, political science, military studies, etc.) has not been proven. There are few natural constituencies within universities or museums for promoting vexillology.

Commercial firms manufacturing and/or selling flags generally speaking are disinclined to assist in funding institutions relating to vexillology. No existing vexillological association, including the Flag Heritage Foundation, has the financial resources to endow permanent preservation of private libraries which might be donated, let alone to provide for staffing and future acquisitions. In addition to documentation, the inclusion of actual flags in any future International Institute of Vexillology raises other difficult issues of space, maintenance, funding, and priorities.

As it enters its fourth decade, the Foundation is confident that its efforts will continue to result in modest contributions to vexillology. Vexillologists will be able to follow that progress and share in concrete programs when its web site is activated in 2003. Queries, suggestions, and critiques may be addressed to the trustees by contacting the author. The Foundation also welcomes donations of flags and flag-related material.<sup>10</sup> Future reports to "vexillopolis," the world community of those

interested in flags, will appear in the publication of the Foundation, *The Standard*.

## NOTES

1. Manogg began research on flags in the 1950s and amassed hundreds of pages of notes on the subject, many from rare or obscure sources. He was active in the early years of NAVA and designed the flag which NAVA still uses. In 2001 he was made an honorary member of the association. His current major flag-related interest is old pictorial postcards with representations of flags and coats of arms.

2. As a result of extensive landfill, Castle Island became a peninsula in the 20th century.

3. See "New Flags: Massachusetts," *The Flag Bulletin*, Vol. X, No. 1, pp. 3-5, and Vol. X, No. 4, pp. 232-233.

4. Details may be found in *Flags for the Fort: The Program of the Flag Heritage Foundation* (Lexington, Mass.: Flag Heritage Foundation, 1972) and in *Preliminary Proposal for the Occupation of Fort Independence, Castle Island, South Boston, by the Veteran Association of the First Corps of Cadets and Its Museum* (Boston: Veteran Association, 1972).

5. The Foundation did demur at paying fully a bill it received from a carpenter, contracted to paint the back of three spotlights black (to prevent glare in the eyes of viewers), invoiced at \$586.92.

6. The complete story is recounted in "The Forster Flag, 'The First American Flag Ever Made,'" *The Flag Bulletin*, No. 205, pp. 82-118.

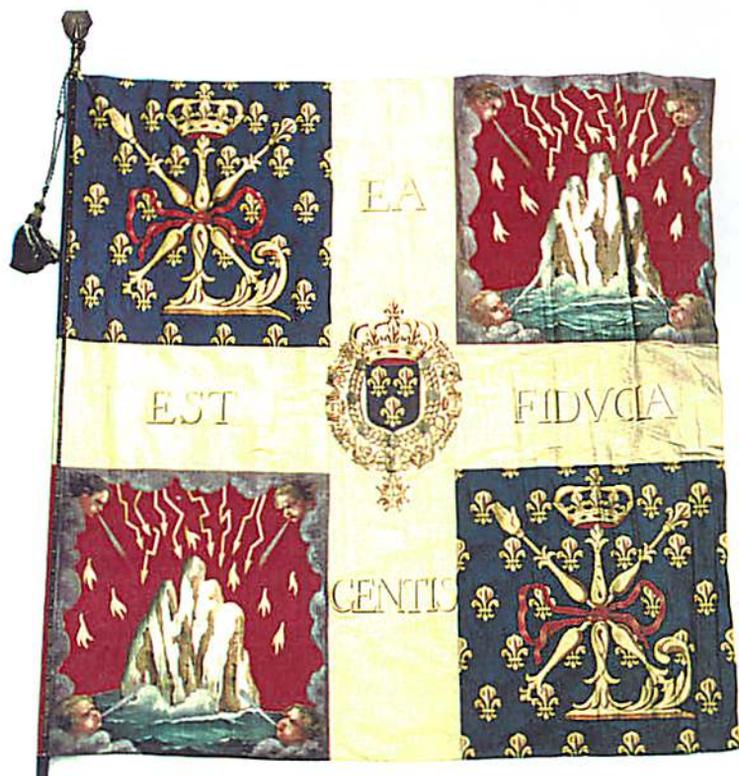
7. A facsimile reprint, published in 1966 by Emmering in Amsterdam under the title *Flags of the World 1669-1670*, contains commentary by Klaes Sierksma. Other Foundation-owned books include a 17th century manuscript volume of the arms of kings and other distinguished individuals plus a number of 19th century manuscript signal flag books.

8. Whitney Smith, *The Bibliography of Flags of Foreign Nations* (Boston: J. K. Hall, 1965) and the flag bibliography of the Flags of the World web site.

9. *Report of the 12th International Congress of Vexillology (The Flag Bulletin, No. 130)*, pp. 246-253.

10. Tax deductions for donations may be made by US citizens in accordance with Internal Revenue Service regulations.

STANDARD OF THE HUNDRED SWISS GUARDS  
(Collection of the Flag Heritage Foundation)



This flag, made in the early 20th century, is an exact replica of one carried by the Company of the Hundred Swiss Guards under the Ancien Régime. The troop was created in 1480 and traditionally accompanied the king of France on his voyages. The color often "was displayed at the right door of his stagecoach" according to Pierre Charrié (*Drapeaux et Étendards du Roi* [Paris: Le Léopard d'Or, 1989], p. 23). It bears the white cross of St. Denis, the arms of France, symbols of the king (his cipher, crown, scepter, and "the hand of justice"), and an allegorical scene.