



The Flags of Arkansas Post



In front of the Arkansas Post National Memorial visitor center is a circle of six flagpoles, from which fly flags representing the countries that have laid claim to the Arkansas Post region since 1686.

Flags are used as symbols signifying nations, and the story behind the flags that flew over Arkansas Post helps to illustrate the complex history of the first European settlement in the Lower Mississippi Valley.

Bourbon France 1686 - 1763

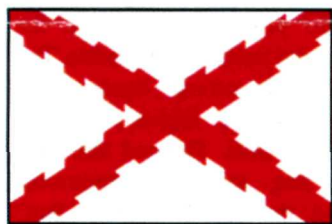


While Spanish explorers under Hernando de Soto were the first Europeans to explore the area of Arkansas Post, they retreated following de Soto's death in 1542. One hundred and thirty years later, French missionaries ventured down the Mississippi River to the mouth of the Arkansas River. The Arkansas River region was claimed for France by La Salle in 1682, and in 1686, Henri de Tonti established the first Arkansas Post near the Quapaw village of Osotouy.

A plain white flag symbolized the Bourbons, the French royal family, and the Fleur-de-Lis (Lily) has long symbolized France. Legend has it an ancient king found lilies growing on an island in the Seine River, and founded his capitol there, which later became Paris.

Charles V modified the arms of France in 1365 to honor the Holy Trinity. After that time the flag representing Bourbon France included three yellow Fleur-de-Lis with either a white or blue field.

Spain 1763 - 1804



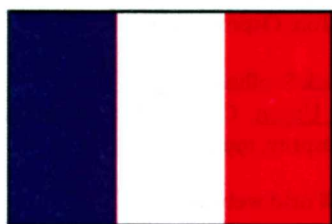
In the 1763 treaty that ended the French & Indian War, France gave the Louisiana colony to Spain, thus ending France's dreams of a North American colony. Spain, more interested in protecting the valuable mines in Mexico, wasted little effort on Louisiana, using the colony to keep the British on the east side of the Mississippi River.

When King Charles I ascended the throne, he adopted as his standard the "Cross of Burgundy," in honor of his father Philip, the Duke of Burgundy.

This is the flag which led conquistadors from Florida to and across Mexico.

The Burgundy cross, based on the wooden cross where St. Andrew was crucified, is an old symbol used by Spain. In more recent times, it was used by the Carlists during and after the Spanish Civil War, and by the Traditionalist Party during the post-Franco years.

Napoleonic France 1803



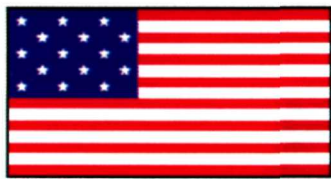
As a part of Colonial Louisiana, Arkansas Post was effected by the Louisiana Purchase of 1803. In 1800, Spain secretly returned control of Louisiana to France, under the control of Napoleon Bonaparte. While France sold Louisiana to the United States without formally taking over control of the colony from the Spanish, the flag of Republican France was used in many of the official transfer ceremonies in 1803 and 1804.

The blue-white-red flag of the French revolution comes from the combination of the royal white with the Parisian red and blue (the latter derived from the arms of Paris, and in use since the Middle Ages); the

colors were combined for the first time when King Louis XVI visited Paris on July 17, 1789, a few days after the taking of the Bastille. It quickly became the symbol of the French Revolution.

The flag went out of use with Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo, but was brought back in 1830 and has remained in use ever since. Although significances have been attached to the colors these are all false and invented after the fact. The red and blue of Paris were the livery colors of the coat of arms and natural ones for use by the militia.

United States of America 1804 - 1861



When the Post of Arkansas was transferred to the United States of America in 1804, following the Louisiana Purchase, for the first time in almost two hundred years the flag of a European power no longer flew over the Post.

This flag became the official United States flag on May 1st, 1795. Two stars and two stripes were added for the admission of Vermont (the 14th State on March 4th, 1791) and Kentucky (the 15th State on June 1st, 1792), and was to last for 23 years.

This was the only U.S. flag to have fifteen stripes. In 1818, Congress proclaimed that one star for each new state would be added on the 4th of July following the state's admission to the Union and there would be thirteen stripes representing the thirteen original colonies. The 15 star flag flew over Fort McHenry during the War of 1812 and inspired the writing of the National Anthem, *The Star Spangled Banner*.

Confederate States of America 1861 - 1863



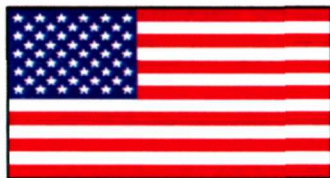
For two years during the Civil War, the state of Arkansas was a member of the Confederate States of America. The first national Confederate flag pictured here flew over the earthwork fort built at the Post (Fort Hindman) by the Confederate army.

The first official flag of the Confederacy was approved by the Confederate government on March 4, 1861. The first national flag is the Confederate flag properly known as the "Stars and Bars."

It is said to have been designed by Nicola Marschall, a Prussian artist and to have been inspired by the Austrian flag. The seven stars represent the first states to secede from the Union following Abraham Lincoln's election in 1860.

This flag was used as the official national flag of the Confederacy until May 26, 1863.

United States of America 1863 - Present



Following the Civil War, Arkansas was re-admitted to the Union, and since that time, the Stars and Stripes have flown over the Post.

From 1818 onward, a star was added to the flag for each new state to join the union. The most recent addition of a star to the flag was 1960 when a star was added, representing Hawaii, bringing the total number of stars to 50. From 1818 on, the flag has thirteen stripes representing the thirteen original colonies.

During the twentieth century flag codes were established governing the display and everyday use of the flag. The laws relating to the flag of the United States of America are found in the United States Code. Title 4, Chapter 1 pertains to the flag and seal, seat of Government and the States; Title 36, Chapter 10 pertains to patriotic customs and observances. These laws were supplemented by Executive Orders and Presidential Proclamations.

The Quapaw Tribe



During the time the Quapaw people resided in what is now Arkansas, they had no tribal flag. In recent years the Tribal Business Committee designated this flag to represent their tribe.

When French explorers reached this area in the 1670s, they were welcomed by members of the Quapaw tribe. The Quapaw, with a population of approximately 2,500 people, lived in the villages of Kappa, Tongigua, Tourima and Osotouy located near the confluence of the Mississippi and Arkansas Rivers. They pledged allegiance to the French king and La Salle erected a cross bearing the coat-of-arms of Louis XIV to claim the Louisiana colony as French territory. Several years later, in 1686, Henri de Tonti established the first European settlement in the Lower Mississippi River Valley near the village of Osotouy.

The French and later the Spanish became very close allies of the Quapaw and the Europeans survived

almost entirely because the Quapaw protected them from marauding Chickasaw and Osage warriors. After the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, the influx of American settlers forced the Quapaw to leave their traditional homeland. The U.S. government finally forced the tribe to relocate to Oklahoma in the 1820s.

The buffalo in the center represents the importance of this animal to the Quapaw people. They used the buffalo to provide food, clothing and ceremonial items - paintings, maps, etc. The four eagle feathers symbolize the cardinal points of the land, the number four being a sacred number to the tribe. The eagle is also held high in esteem because the Quapaw believe it flies the highest, thereby surmising that it talks to God. The red and blue background of the flag represent traditional Quapaw clothing and the word "O-Gah-Pah" translates as "Downstream People" and signifies the Quapaw language.

For Further Information

For more information on this and other topics, please contact the park:

Arkansas Post National Memorial
1741 Old Post Road
Gillett, AR 72055
(870) 548-2207

<http://www.nps.gov/arpo/>

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Author: Eric Leonard

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FOTW Flags Of The World website:
<http://www.fotw.ca/>

The Flag of the Quapaw
<http://users.aol.com/Donh523/navapage/quapaw.htm>