

Report of the South Carolina State Flag Study Committee

Established Pursuant to
South Carolina Budget Provisos
117.158 (FY 2018/19) and 117.139 (FY 2019/20)

Committee Members

Dr. W. Eric Emerson, Chair
Director, Department of Archives and History
Mr. Paul Koch
Chief of Staff, Department of Administration
Mr. Robert Dawkins
Appointee, President Pro Tempore of the Senate
Mr. Scott M. Malyerck
Appointee, Speaker of the House of Representatives
Dr. Walter Edgar
Governor's Appointee

March 4, 2020

The South Carolina State Flag Study Committee was first established in Proviso 117.158 (FY 2018/19) of the South Carolina State Budget and continued in existence with passage of budget Proviso 117.139 (FY 2019/20). The text of these provisos charged the Committee with “proposing an official, uniform design for the state flag based on historically accurate details and legislative adoptions.” During the course of its existence, the Committee has met on five occasions to fulfill its charge. It is submitting this report to summarize its efforts in standardizing what has long been considered one of the most attractive, recognizable, and marketable state flags in the nation.

The committee met for the first time at the Archives and History Center on November 27, 2018. Following introductions and needed background regarding the passage of the establishing proviso, Dr. Emerson presented a history of the state flag, from its earliest origins as a signal flag created by William Moultrie during the American Revolution; to its evolution as a legislatively approved state flag on January 28, 1861; to the more recent legislatively approved state flag created by A.S. Salley, the first secretary of the Historical Commission, and others (see Illustration 1). Salley’s design was repealed in 1940, and since that time the design of the flag has been determined by flag manufacturers responsible for a handful of variations that we recognize today.

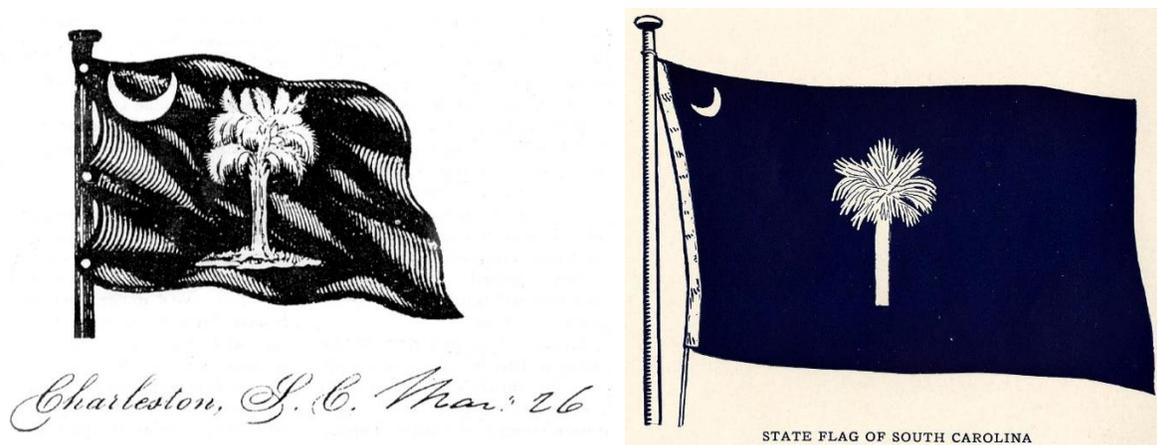


Illustration 1. *Right: First Official South Carolina State Flag, 1861-1910; Left: Second Official South Carolina State Flag, 1910-1940. From the collections of the Alabama Department of Archives and History and the South Carolina Department of Archives and History.*

Following its initial look at the history of the state flag, the Committee determined that it would “limit itself to submitting a design of a state flag that would be a blue flag, with the palmetto tree and crescent and no other design changes be made.” This initial, and vitally important, decision has allowed the Committee members to focus on proposing a design based on historical antecedents, while taking into consideration previous legislatively-adopted designs of the South Carolina flag. It also has allowed the Committee to retain the core elements of an extremely popular and easily recognizable banner.

The field of any banner is the foundation upon which subsequent designs are added. With this in mind, Committee members turned their attention to the specific shade of blue to be used

on an official state flag. Since the 1940 repeal of South Carolina code dictating an official design and color for the state flag, flag manufacturers have determined the flag's color. Oftentimes they have used the same color blue for the South Carolina flag that appears in the blue field of the United State flag as a cost-saving measure. Committee members realized that simply continuing to follow that practice would be historically inaccurate, since the creation of a South Carolina flag preceded any Continental flag design with a blue field with red and white stripes. Furthermore, the State of South Carolina designated the color "Indigo Blue" as the official state color in 2008, since the officers and men of the 2nd South Carolina Regiment, commanded by Colonel William Moultrie during the Revolutionary War, wore uniforms of that color. Those blue uniforms also inspired Moultrie to create the first South Carolina flag using the same color. The production of Indigo dye, derived from Indigo cultivation in the South Carolina lowcountry at the time of the Revolution, made blue a logical choice for South Carolina uniforms and flags.

Surviving textiles from the American Revolution are rare, but the Committee determined that the color of any official state flag should be based on a color sample from that period. Dr. Emerson and SCDAH staff searched for examples of period blue textiles with special focus on any surviving uniforms from the 2nd South Carolina Regiment (see Illustration 2). They were unable to find any surviving uniforms, and Moultrie's original blue flag, which flew over Fort Sullivan during the battle of June 28, 1776, does not survive.



Illustration 2. Uniforms of the 2nd South Carolina Regiment; No known surviving examples exist. "The First and Second South Carolina Regiments, 1775-1780." Erd, Darby and Fitzhugh McMaster *MCH*, 29 (Summer 1977), pp. 70-73. MUIA Plates 449, 450.

The Committee also sought to find period examples of the crescent that appeared on the Moultrie flag, which was inspired by the cap badges of the 2nd South Carolina Regiment. SCDAAH staff were able to locate two samples of surviving Revolutionary War cap badges, which archeologists from the South Carolina Institute of Archeology and Anthropology (SCIAA) recovered at Old Jacksonboro and Fort Johnson on James Island (see Illustration 3). These cap badges influenced the Committee’s first discussions regarding the shape of the crescent on any official state flag.



Illustration 3. South Carolina Regimental Cap Badges (Crescent), c. 1776-1783; *Courtesy of the South Carolina Institute for Archeology and Anthropology.*

The most authentic source for the Committee’s purposes was a flag that the South Carolina State Museum (SCSM) and the Smithsonian Institute’s National Museum of American History (NMAH) purchased in 1989, and which is now housed at NMAH in Washington, DC. In 1776 a new regimental flag was fabricated for Moultrie’s 2nd South Carolina Regiment. It, and a red version of the same flag, were presented to the regiment on July 1, three days after the famous battle on Sullivan’s Island, by the wife of Major Bernard E. Elliott, a former officer of the regiment. Both flags were carried by the regiment until October 9, 1779. During an assault on the British earthworks at the Siege of Savannah, Lt. John Bush of the 2nd South Carolina Regiment planted the blue flag on the British earthworks and was immediately shot down. He fell upon the flag, which was captured by troops of the 60th (Royal American) Regiment, later of the Kings Royal Rifle Corps (the red flag also was carried to the top of the earthworks but was not captured; it is not known to survive). The captured blue flag was given to the regiment’s commander, Colonel (later Major General) Augustin Prevost. The banner was passed down through his descendants until being loaned to the Royal Green Jackets (Rifles) Museum in Winchester, England, early in the twentieth century. In 1989 the NMAH and the South Carolina State Museum purchased the flag and have owned it jointly since that time (see Illustration 4).



Illustration 4. 2nd South Carolina Regiment Flag, 1776, Captured at Siege of Savannah.
Courtesy of Smithsonian Institute's National Museum of American History and the South Carolina State Museum.

The 2nd South Carolina Regiment contains two elements that proved to be extremely useful in creating an official design for the South Carolina state flag: a historic sample of the color blue, and a crescent, which appears on the drum in the center of the banner. The Committee members believe that these are the oldest surviving examples of both of those important elements of the South Carolina flag. At a Committee meeting on December 17, 2018, the Committee approved the use of the crescent from the 2nd Regiment Flag and the color from the same flag (once an analysis was completed) to be used on an official state flag.

Because the flag is in the possession of NMAH, the Committee sought a detailed color analysis of the banner from that organization. Regrettably, the staff at NMAH were unable to

provide more than a cursory color analysis, since the Committee's request coincided with a furlough of Federal employees that began on December 22, 2018. An increase in NMAH staff workload following the furlough prevented them from conducting more work regarding the banner's color. Fortunately for the Committee, NMAH staff provided an object examination report with a limited color analysis prior to their furlough (see Appendix 3).

Presented with the work limitations of NMAH staff, the Committee turned to an in-state institution for assistance. From 1906-1910, A.S. Salley worked closely with the Textile Department at Clemson College to create the second official state flag. Legislation regarding that banner dictated that Clemson College produce, at cost, state flags of a design to be approved by the Secretary of the Historical Commission (Salley). In recognition of the role that Clemson played in designing and producing the second official state flag, the Committee contacted Dr. Sam T. Ingram, Professor and Chair (now Emeritus) in the Department of Graphic Communications at Clemson University. Dr. Ingram was enthusiastic about being involved in the project, and the Committee has relied greatly upon his knowledge, insight, and design skills. Dr. Ingram also reached out to Anna Chamberlain, a graduate student in the department, who has conducted much of the design work that accompanies this report.

Soon after joining the project, Dr. Ingram conducted his own color analysis of the 1776 flag after assessing materials provided by NMAH (see Appendix 2). Dr. Ingram's findings regarding the color of the 1776 flag largely confirmed the NMAH's initial assessment. The NMAH assessed the flag's closest color as Pantone 282 U (Uncoated). Dr. Ingram assessed the color accurately as Pantone 282 C (Coated). These findings presented the Flag Study Committee with a color to use on an official state flag. At its March 29, 2019 meeting, Committee members approved the color Pantone 282 C (Coated)-Indigo (see Illustration 5) to be the color recommendation for the official South Carolina State flag design.



Illustration 5. Color of 2nd South Carolina Regimental Flag, 1776 approved by the Committee for an official state flag. Color Name—Indigo; Pantone 282 C (Coated). See Appendix 1 and 2. *Courtesy of Dr. Sam T. Ingram, Professor Emeritus, Department of Graphic Communications, Clemson University.*

After determining a color for an official state flag, the Committee members turned their attention to the shape and tilt of the crescent to appear on that banner. The Committee sought to replicate the shape of the crescent on the drum in the center of the 1776 flag and tasked Clemson and a commercial graphic designer to copy, to the best of their ability, the shape of that symbol. As this work was being conducted, Committee members addressed the tilt or positioning of the crescent on Moultrie's flag during the battle of Fort Sullivan on June 28, 1776. Two works of art contemporary to the battle provide us with the best evidence regarding the appearance of that flag. Shortly after the battle, Lt. Henry Gray of the 2nd South Carolina Regiment completed two small paintings showing Fort Sullivan during and after the battle on June 28, 1776. Both paintings are in the collections of the Gibbes Museum of Art in Charleston and show the crescent appearing in the upper, or dexter corner nearest to the staff. The points of the crescent are pointing toward the corner where the flag is attached to the staff (see Illustration 6).



Illustration 6. Painting of the Battle of Fort Sullivan, June 28, 1776, Lt. Henry Gray, 2nd South Carolina Regiment. Image shows the crescent points angled toward the upper corner of field. *Gibbes Museum of Art* courtesy of the *Carolina Art Association*.

The other contemporary image of the flag that flew over Fort Sullivan appears in a sketch made of the fort by Lt. Colonel Thomas James of the Royal Regiment of Artillery. From his vantage aboard a ship anchored off of the fort, James sketched the fort in some detail. Later published in London, his sketch showed the flag with the crescent in the upper dexter corner with its points angled toward the staff (see Illustration 7).

The two official, or legislatively approved versions of the South Carolina flag that would later follow displayed the crescent in the same location, the dexter corner (left corner as viewed and closest to the staff) of the flag. On each flag, however, the crescent pointed in different directions. The flag approved on January 28, 1861 featured a crescent with its points directed upwards (see Illustration 8). The flag established by legislation in 1910 (and codified in 1932) featured a crescent with the points tilted on an angle similar to the Gray painting above (see Illustration 9).

The Committee then considered the number of years that each flag design had existed with the crescent pointing in various directions. For the overwhelming majority of the existence

of the South Carolina flag as an official or unofficial symbol (1775-1861 and 1910-2020), the points of the crescent most frequently have pointed on an angle toward the upper corner of the field. From 1861-1910, the official state flag featured a crescent with the crescent points angled upwards. For these reasons, the Committee members determined that the crescent should remain tilted toward the upper corner of the field on an official state flag.

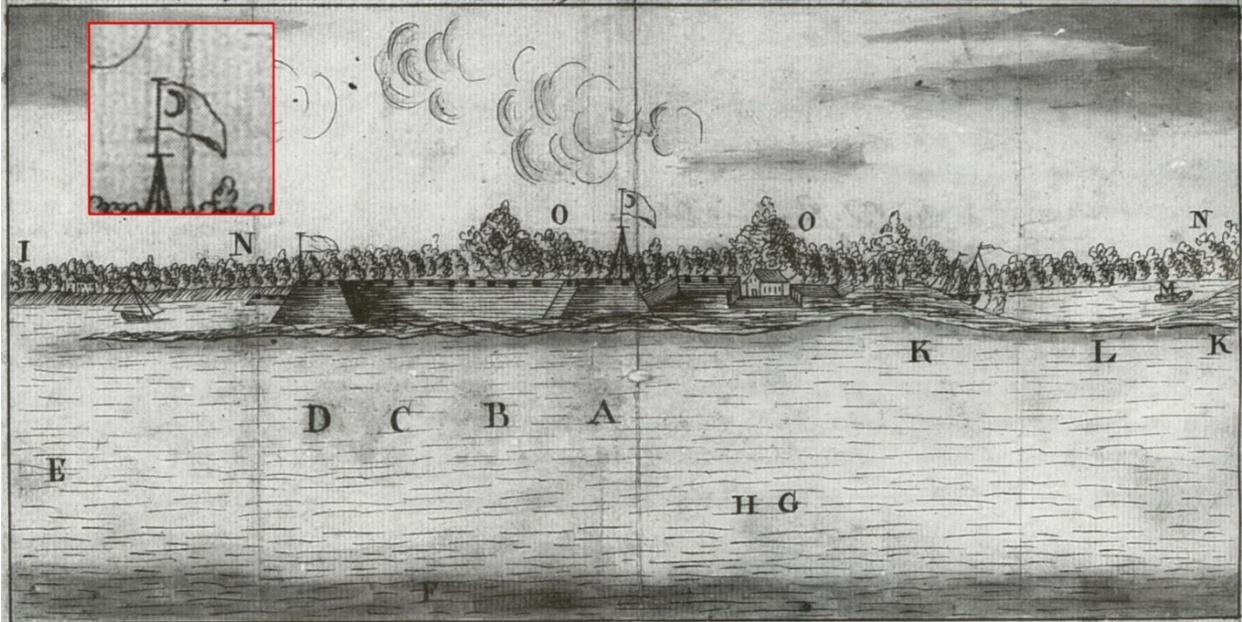


Illustration 7. Sketch of Fort Sullivan on Sullivan's Island (at the time of the June 28, 1776 battle) by Lt. Colonel Thomas James, Royal Regiment of Artillery, published on August 10, 1776 (*A View of the Fort on the Western End of Sullivan's Island...*) James' sketch shows the crescent's points angled toward the flag staff.



Charleston, S.C. Mar: 26

Illustration 8. First Official State Flag. Image shows points of the crescent angled upwards. Letterhead, W. Alston Hayne to Benjamin F. Perry, March 26, 1861. Benjamin F. Perry Papers, Alabama Department of Archives and History.

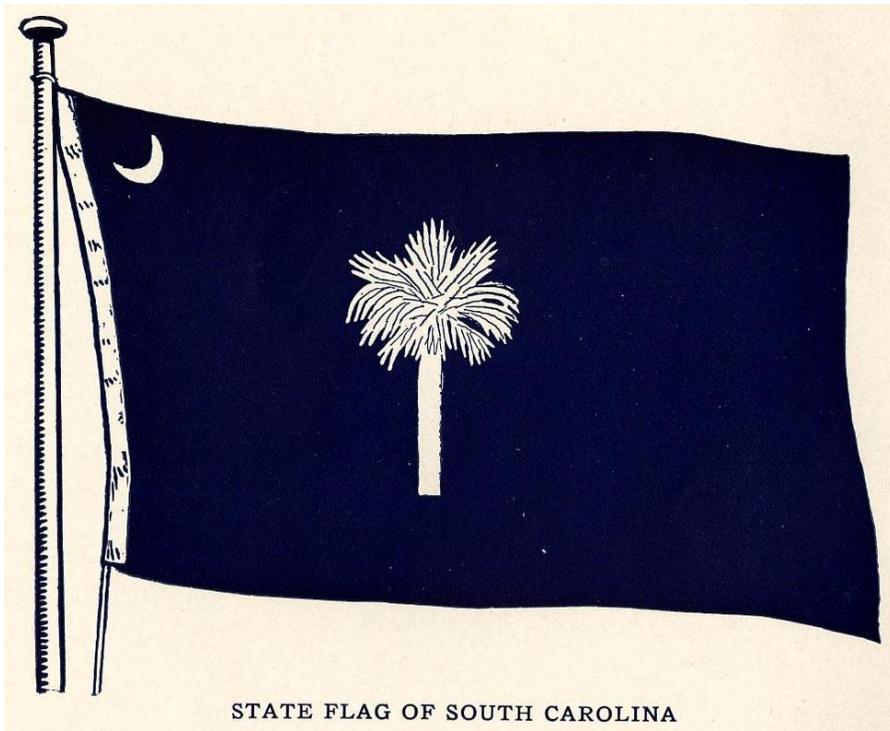


Illustration 9. Second Official State Flag. Approved by legislation in 1910 and codified in 1932. The points of the crescent are angled toward to corner of the field.

Once the Committee determined the tilt of the crescent for an official flag, the members looked at the design samples that both Clemson and a commercial graphic designer produced in an effort to copy the crescent appearing in the center of the 1776 flag (Illustration 4). At its March 29, 2019 meeting, Committee members adopted the reproduction of the commercial graphic designer for use on an official flag (see Illustration 10).



Illustration 10. Committee approved crescent design copied from the 2nd South Carolina Regimental Flag, 1776.

Perhaps the most difficult task that the Committee has faced in its work has been the adoption of an appropriate and historic palmetto to appear on the flag. Aside from the flag's color, the palmetto is the flag's most conspicuous design element, and innumerable historic examples exist from the period after the General Assembly created an official state flag in 1861. At each meeting Committee members discussed examples of palmettos, but at the December 17, 2018 meeting they agreed on a path forward. After viewing numerous historic palmetto designs, the members turned their attention to the source of the palmetto appearing on the second official flag (Illustration 9). That palmetto was an adaptation of the artwork of Ellen Heyward Jervey (1879-1967). Jervey was an amateur artist and librarian from Charleston, who provided sketches of crescents and palmettos to A.S. Salley as he designed the 1910 flag. Two of those drawings survive in Salley's correspondence at the Department of Archives and History. Jervey's sketch of a palmetto tree (see Illustration 11) was of particular interest to Committee members, and after some discussion they decided to submit Jervey's drawing to Dr. Ingram and the Clemson University Graphic Communications Department for replication as the palmetto tree to appear on an official state flag.



Illustration 11. Pencil sketch of Palmetto Tree, Ellen Heyward Jervey, c. 1910. *From the Collections of the S.C. Department of Archives and History.*

After seeing a number of design samples produced by Clemson, the Committee met on November 4, 2019 to discuss progress regarding this last element of an official flag. Shortly thereafter, on November 8, 2019, Dr. Emerson traveled to Clemson, where he had an opportunity to speak with Dr. Ingram and Ms. Chamberlain and conveyed to them Committee members' suggestions regarding a final design. Since that time, Ms. Chamberlain has submitted design work in keeping with their suggestions.

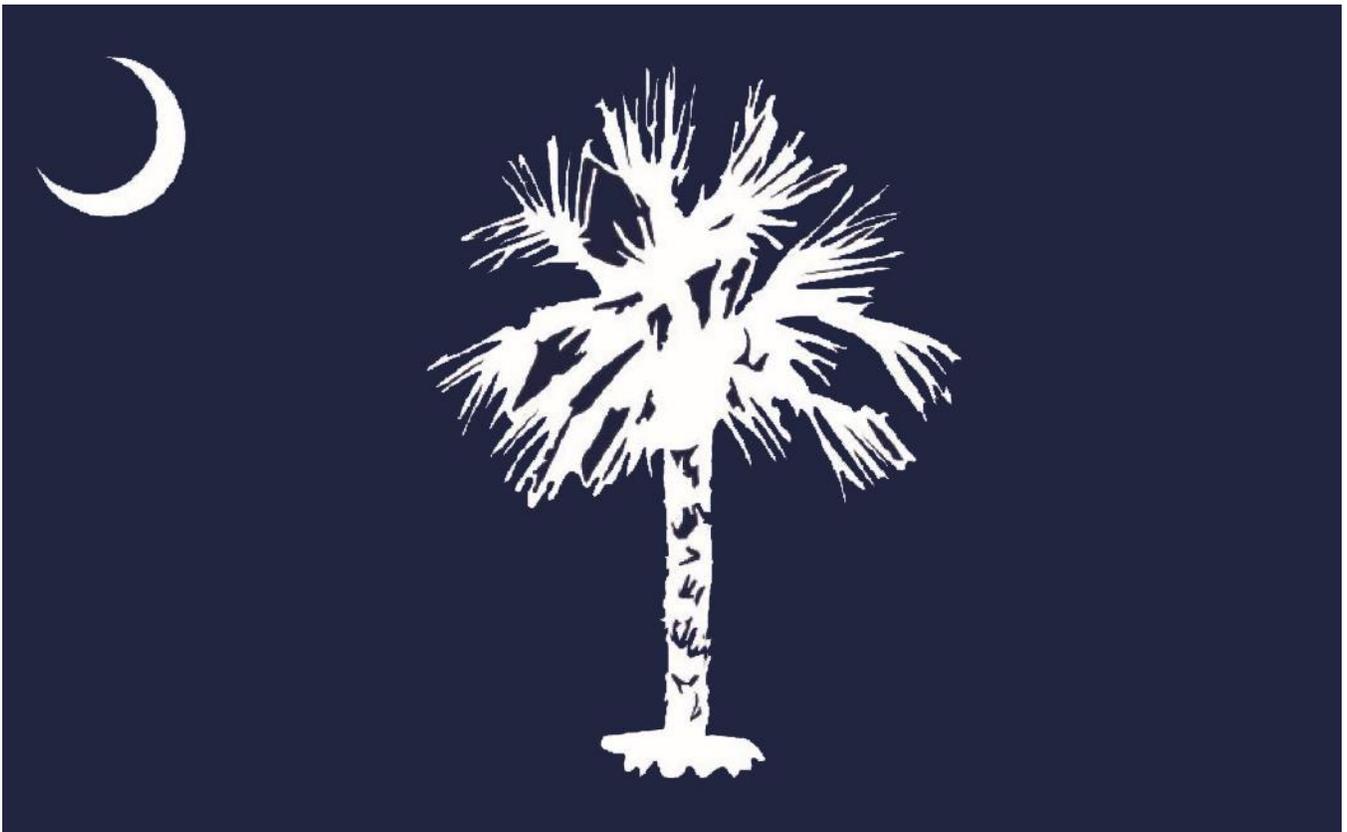
On March 4, 2020, the Committee members agreed on a design for an official state flag to be presented to the General Assembly (see Appendix 1). The Committee is also recommending that Dr. Ingram's assessment of the 1776 flag's color as Pantone 282 C be incorporated into code establishing the official state color.

The Committee members are grateful for the opportunity to serve on the South Carolina State Flag Study Committee would like to thank the following individuals and institutions for their assistance during this undertaking:

- Dr. Sam T. Ingram, Professor Emeritus, and Ms. Anna Chamberlain, Department of Graphic Communications, Clemson University.
- Mary Ballard, Smithsonian Museum Conservation Institute
- Jennifer Jones, Margaret Grandine, and Scott Nolley, National Museum of American History
- Robyn Adams and JoAnn Zeise, South Carolina State Museum
- Patrick McCawley, Donna Foster, Wade Dorsey, and Bryan Collars, South Carolina Department of Archives and History
- Sara Arnold and Zinnia Willits, Gibbes Museum of Art
- James Legg, South Carolina Institute for Archeology and Anthropology (SCIAA)
- Allen Roberson, South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum, and
- Steve Murray, Alabama Department of Archives and History

Appendix 1

South Carolina Flag Study Committee Recommended Design
Official South Carolina State Flag



Appendix 2

Color Study of 2nd South Carolina Regiment Flag (1776), conducted by Professor Sam T. Ingram, Professor Emeritus, Department of Graphic Communications, Clemson University

SC Flag Project



Indigo Color Specifications

Name—Indigo

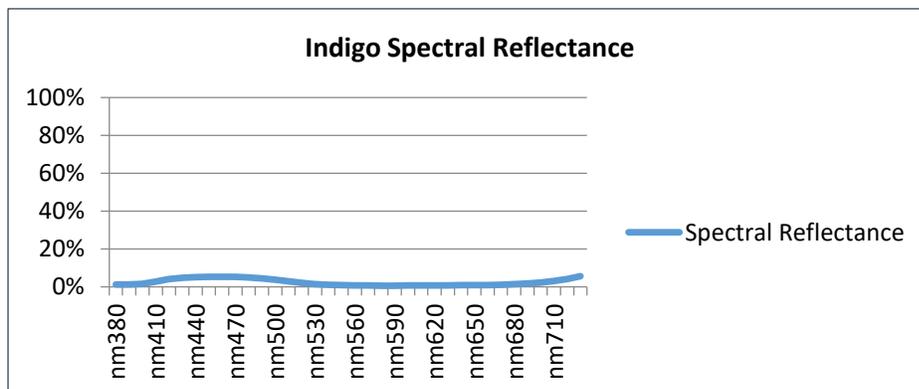
The color produced on the first state flag(s) was produced from indigo dye resulting in a color described as located in the blue sector of a color wheel. Indigo dye production was prominent in the agricultural production of colonial South Carolina. The specifications presented are referenced to the original 1776 Regimental Flag housed in the Smithsonian.

CIELAB—L* 11.2, A* 2, B* -25

The three number coordinates LAB represent the color indigo's position in three dimensional color space. The reference values are easily compared to sample color measurement values to determine difference of the sample to the intended value. Samples should be measured with an instrument illuminant of D50 (5000° Kelvin).

Pantone 282 Coated is a visual reference for color specification comparisons. The Pantone visual reference should be updated annually to account for possible color change due to fading or other environmental conditions.

A spectral reference curve may be constructed from sample data measured in 10nm intervals. The curve shape may also be compared to a reference curve. The following graph is an example of a color reflectance curve representing the indigo flag color. Spectral data may be used in color management systems used in manufacturing.



A Pantone reference is a quick subjective tool to use for comparisons of samples. The CIELAB reference is measured data offering objective comparisons of reference color to sample data. Both accuracy and precision are achieved providing increased confidence when determining color reproduction acceptance.

Appendix 3

Objects Examination Report, 2nd South Carolina Regiment Flag (1776)
Smithsonian's National Museum of American History



Smithsonian
National Museum of American History
Kenneth E. Behring Center

Objects Examination Report

Project # Loan 1990.0548

Owner / Agent Smithsonian NMAH/South Carolina State Museum page 1 of 3

Examiner Scott W. Nolley, Conservator Project : Enquiry- SC Flag Study Committee

Report Date 01.01.2019 Date Received 12.18.2018 Owner # N/A

Artist (owner's attribution) Unidentified maker

Title / Date Regimental Color, 2nd South Carolina Regiment

Structure Dyed silk panel decorated with silver-wrapped and dyed silk thread embroidery – mounted.

Dimensions (HxWxD inches) 66” x 64 ” x 2 1/4 ” - mount outer dimensions

Signature & Location None visible

Accessories Accompanying mount/structural support

Labels/Legends/Distinguishing Marks “**II^D ; REG^T**.” embroidered into flag field, located UL corner.

Flag Description

Fabricated in 1776, the flag is comprised of two panels of dyed, medium-weight silk joined along a horizontally-oriented, overlapping seam that spans the presentation field of the flag. The central design depicts a wreath of what appear to be olive leaves, enclosing imagery including two crossed flags and a drum bearing an upward-turned crescent. This central design is executed in in raised embroidery using silk floss and metallic silver threads (w/silk core). The regimental designation - “**II^D REG^T**.” – appears in the upper left quadrant of the flag’s blue field.

There is evidence that at one time the flag had an attached pole sleeve – an integral fabric sheath into which a support rod would have been inserted. The original pole sleeve has been removed in the past and has been re-placed during a previous treatment/restoration campaign. That addition has since be removed.

The flag presents evidence of an extensive treatment history, undocumented and documented, a history of handling and restoration commensurate with the artifact’s age.



Flag Condition

The flag is in an advanced state of deterioration. The silk is exceedingly weakened and structurally compromised throughout. Previous restoration and conservation attempts have resulted in an overall pattern of holes resulting from previous stitching and tear repairs. There are losses to the blue silk field visible along the its edges – both hoist and fly - and associated with the heavy embroidery of the central design. The field is wrinkled and presents a pattern of creases that suggest a history of



Smithsonian
National Museum of American History
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Objects Examination Report

Project # L 1990.0548

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Artist (owner's attribution) Unidentified maker

Title / Date Regimental Color, 2nd South Carolina Regiment

Flag Condition (continued)

having been folded for storage. Many of these creases are accompanied by splits and weaknesses within the weave.

The embroidery appears in fair condition, though the silk fibers of the polychrome embroidered details have become weak and have faded somewhat from their original hue. The metal-wrapped threads are misaligned in some areas though there is no evidence of insecurity.

The field of the flag exhibits patterns of staining – grit filled areas of weave that appear red-brown in color. These stains show signs of insect damage, approximating the size of the individual areas of staining. Previous documentation and analysis suggest these might be blood stains, having provided a proteinaceous food source for the associated insect infestation (NMAH DOC Log No. 91.159, p. 1 – 12.18.1989).

Treatment History/Analysis

The flag has been the subject of at least two global treatment campaigns (NMAH DOC Log No. 91.100 – 12.7.1991). These previous treatments appear to have primarily addressed the structural vulnerabilities of the silk panel and included the attachment of support backing fabrics, a Velcro™ mounting strip, and at least one wet treatment (washing). Also undertaken were the reversal of attached elements not original to the flag's fabrication – backing and facing fabrics as well as tear repairs. At some point following these treatment campaigns, the flag was attached to a fabric-covered plywood panel and framed behind glass.

Following the flag's treatment by The Textile Conservation Center at Hampton Court (Conservation Report #0313A, 1979), NMAH conservators assessed an advanced degree of deterioration – embrittlement and breaking of the silk fibers both on the macro and micro scale (Jan 1991, NMAH, Thomasson Krause et al.) Analysis was undertaken to characterize the artifact's condition and to attempt to determine the cause of this deterioration.

SEM analysis (NMAH DOC Log No. 91.159 – 12.18.1989) identified high levels of calcium in the fibers, at the time thought to be characteristic of textile works treated in the UK, sources of water being contaminated by the prevalent deposits of limestone surrounding the area. These accumulations appear to have bound to the fibers acting as a “weighting agent,” imparting a “stiffness” to the fibers, and while imparting support to the structure of the fabric, this added rigidity makes the silk more susceptible to mechanical damage and loss as a result of vibration and movement.

Infrared Spectra Analysis and three wet-chemical analysis techniques (conc. Sulphuric acid / Ammonia-sodium dithionate, and NaOH+ sodium dithionate+ethyl acetate), carried out on the blue silk fibers indicate the colorant to be indigo. SEM analysis produced a negative result for the presence of iron – indicating the blue is not and does not contain Prussian Blue as a colorant.

The silver-wrapped silk floss fibers associated with the central ornament detail were also tested using SEM-EDS by Robert Kessler at the Conservation Laboratory of the Metropolitan Museum of Art (NMAH DOC Log No. 91.159 – 12.18.1989), indicating a composition of almost pure silver with no trace of gold - the visible yellow tone to the silver wire thought to be the result of corroded impurities in the silver wire wrapping, or tarnish to the metal surface.



Smithsonian
National Museum of American History
Kenneth E. Behring Center

Objects Examination Report

Project # L 1990.0548

Owner / Agent Smithsonian NMAH/South Carolina State Museum

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Artist (owner's attribution) Unidentified maker

Title / Date Regimental Color, 2nd South Carolina Regiment

Frame Enclosure

In 1991 (NMAH DOC Log No. 91.100 – 12.7.1991- Thomasson Krause et al.) the flag was presented for exhibition preparation and loan to the State Museum of South Carolina. It was determined the flag was too fragile to tolerate washing – the short-term benefit of increased flexibility, offset by what would be a loss of fiber weight and strength, noticeable in sample tests after a few weeks. A suitable support and framing mechanism were designed to minimize vibrational stress; dimensional responses to environmental changes; and damage resulting from exposure to light. The flag was separated from its plywood panel, lining cloth and the two backing layers of nylon netting were removed, as was the “bright blue” facing net and the fine, highly spun and coarse black cotton threads that held these layers in place.

The flag was “sandwiched” between layers of Stabiltex™ and silk crepoline and secured in place by stitching through the splits and losses to the shredded silk (at this point, NMAH Photo Services photographed the flag with the intent of documenting the flag’s then current condition, and for future publication – “... so that the flag will not need to be further photographed in the future.”

The flag was then mounted in its present extruded aluminum frame – a “TensionQuick™ Frame,” manufactured by Diamond Chase of California – under a protective glazing of ultraviolet light-filtering Plexiglas™.

Current State

In July 2018, the flag was scheduled for condition survey in preparation for its loan to co-owner South Carolina State Museum. Upon examination the frame enclosure was found to exhibit a number of age-related compromises – most notably adhesive failure between backing board and frame support, as well as a number of disfiguring abrasion damages and scratches to the Plexiglas™ glazing.

NMAH is in conversation with the South Carolina State Museum and a conservation framer, evaluating the current condition of the frame assembly, and is designing treatment steps to resolve these structural insecurities and the replacement of glazing material.

Submitted:

Scott W. Nolley
Conservator, Exhibitions and Loans
Smithsonian Museum of American Art

January 1, 2019