

OUR FIRST OLD GLORY

HISTORY OF THE ORIGINAL AMERICAN FLAG.

It Was Made by Mrs. Betsey Ross Under Direction of Gen. George Washington—How Some of the Stars Got Lost.

THE STORY OF the origin of the first American flag has been told a great many times, but is curiously subject to variations. Some of the facts here set forth have never before been stated accurately. There seems to be no question but that the stars and stripes adopted by this government as a national emblem had birth in the colonial house now standing in Philadelphia, 239 Arch street. Mrs. Betsy Ross was the maker. The War department, State and Colonial records from Maine to California fully confirm this. The number of stars and stripes was



MRS. BETSEY ROSS.

fixed by an act of Congress at thirteen stars and thirteen stripes, representing the thirteen States in the Union.

History tells us that Mrs. Ross received the contract for making all the government flags, but after the design was heralded over the country people seized upon it and applied it in every conceivable fashion, even taking to red, white and blue shirts and all manner of patriotic garments. The makers, of course, were not all artists and the loss of one or more stars or a stripe was not noticed. In this way many misstatements have been made honestly about the original standard.

In the first days of the Revolution each State or colony had its own banner and at every battle fought under it perhaps added to it a motto. At Bunker Hill "Come if you dare" was the watchword. Massachusetts marched under a green pine on a white ground, with the words, "An Appeal to Heaven." Connecticut troops adopted for their motto, "Qui transtulit sustinet" (translated "God who brought us here will sustain us").

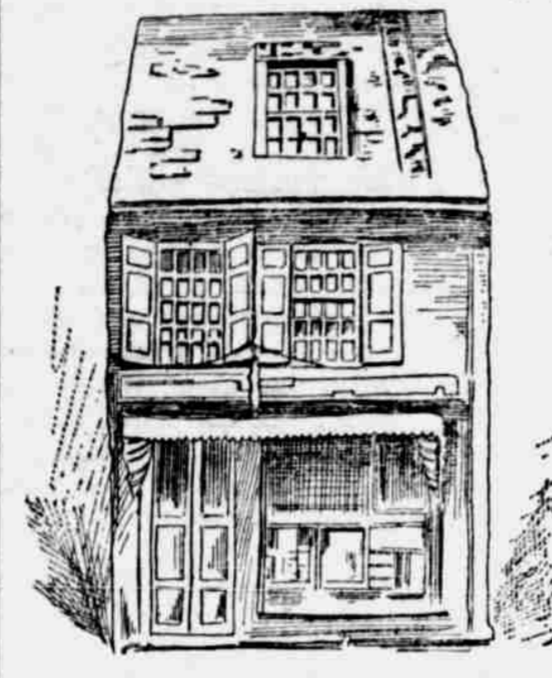
In July, 1775, Gen. Putnam displayed a red flag on Prospect hill, with the mottoes of Connecticut and Massachusetts.

It is not fully known what inspiration blended the stars and stripes. The Philadelphia Ledger in June, 1877, in an article on the flag, said that, as a whole, it was the same, or nearly the same, as that of the East India company, but it has been held that the new flag may have been suggested to Washington by the banner of the Philadelphia Light Horse, the first city troop which escorted him on the way to Cambridge. That ensign had a canton of thirteen stripes of blue and silver.

Mrs. Ross' grandchildren—George Canby, Mary Canby Culin and Mary Sidney Garrett—authorize the state-

ment that the picture here published of the house 239 Arch street correctly represents the building in which the first United States flag was made. The picture of Mrs. Ross is from the only photograph of her in existence.

Mrs. Ross worked under the direction of a committee of the Continental Congress, of which her husband's uncle, Col. George Ross, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, was chairman. The design was furnished by Gen. Washington in person, and Mrs. Ross modified it by changing



THE ROSS HOUSE.

the form and arrangement of the stars and the general proportion of the flag. Mrs. Ross was assisted in her work by her eldest daughter, Mrs. Clarissa S. Wilson, who afterward succeeded her in the flag-making business.

IMMIGRATION.

The Time Will Come When Americans Will Be Crowded Out.

The American people have never thought that perhaps sometime in the future a tide of emigration may flow from our shores as the tide of immigration now flows toward us. But what is to prevent, if things, as they now exist, continue. For many years the United States will offer better opportunities for labor than the old world will offer, and just so long as that is true, the steamships from the old world to the new world will be loaded with those who will be seeking to better their fortunes. This country is destined to have a very dense population. Not only will all our territory be occupied, but the time will come when there will be a thousand farms of twenty, thirty and forty acres to one of a quarter section, and none of larger size than 160 acres, and this means the depopulation of the old world to a very sensible degree. As New England is now complaining of a abandoned lands Europe will in time be complaining of lessening population. Indeed it complains already. An Italian paper of recent date says that last year the number of emigrants rose from 217,240 in 1880, to 2,500,000 in round numbers—an increase of about 77,000 emigrants, of whom 1,000 declared that they left their native land with no intention of returning to it. Further the official statistics show that of the persons who emigrated with the expressed intention of never returning, there were 7,000 in 1885, 85,000 in 1886, 128,000 in 1887, 160,000 in 1888, 113,000 in 1889, 100,000 in 1890 and 176,000 in 1891. Thus in the past seven years about 900,000 citizens have abandoned their country because they have despaired of being able to earn their bread at home.

Last year the number of people who came to this country from foreign nations was 555,496, not including the immigrants from the British North American possessions and from Mexico. Thus the country is filling up, and still there is more to follow. Such a foreign emigration, as would naturally be expected, disturbs the labor market. Many of these people are willing to work for less than the native and adopted citizen is willing

to work for. But we do not propose to discuss that phase of the question in this connection. It is to the fact that an immense population is to occupy this country, that we desire to call attention. Naturally the cities will enlarge, and most of them are too large now. Farming will be loosely done by many of these people, to the injury of the land and the discouragement of the poor farmer. Added to all these disadvantages, suppose that the present untrammelled exhibitions of greed and plunder should continue; suppose that trusts should be allowed to multiply; suppose the few should go on getting richer and the poor should continue to become poorer; suppose, in a word, that the few, should make it their business, backed by class legislation and the feebleness of government, to grind the masses into the dust, absorbing the fruits of their labor and claiming to be "Lords of all they surveyed, in what a comparatively short period of time almost—before the babe now lying in its cradle should go to its grave—the people would think about emigrating.

But whether these last-named abuses are permitted to exist or not, emigration will come. It will start first from the west to abandoned New England and extend to abandoned Europe. That is what the greed of steamship companies, land sharks and American demagogery is doing for this beautiful country. While the Farmers' Voice would not forbid the industrious, honest foreigner who wishes to become an American, coming to America, it would vigorously shut out the criminal and the pauper, the loud-mouthed anarchist, and it need not be said that it would put a quick stop to the robbing of the masses.

Railways vs. Waterways.

There is but little use in trying to improve our water ways so long as we allow the railroads to shove the freight rates up in the fall, after navigation has closed, and then reduce their rates the moment navigation opens in the spring. Boats running but half the year cannot compete with this sharp practice. And it must be borne in mind, too, that when the boats can not run there is more freight to be moved. During some years there are no boats from St. Louis up the Missouri, simply because the boats can not compete with the freight rates then in force on the railroads. Of course for points off the river the railroads have made no reduction in freight, but charge whatever the traffic will bear the whole year round. The railroads are getting to be a bigger power than the government itself. It is high time the people had called a halt, and if the railroads can not be made to realize the fact that the people have some rights which they, the railroads should respect then we are in favor of the government operating all lines of railroad, and we have held that the government should do this anyway.—Chicago Free Trader.

Who Owns America?

Who owns America? The railroad companies own 211,000,000 acres or enough to make six states as large as Iowa. The Vanderbilts own over 2,000,000 acres. Mr. Disston, of Pennsylvania, owns over 4,000,000; the Standard Oil company 1,000,000; and Murphy, of California, an area equal to that of the state of Massachusetts. The Schenley estate owns land from which the heirs have received annually \$1,000,000. 21,000,000 acres are owned by foreigners who owe no allegiance to our government, and are no friends to a republic. What will our children own?—a right to pay rent.—Tulare Citizen.

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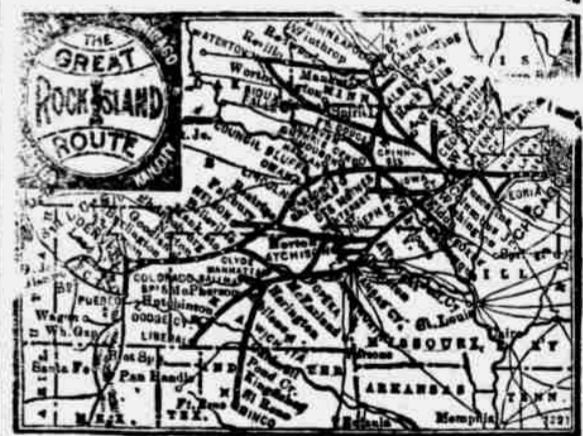
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