November 1, 2007

This is the First Section of the manuscript "Radio Stations Common? Not This Kind"

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A BIT ON THE BEGINNING

When you seriously try to imagine what life will be like for our grandchildren, it is just as impossible as to imagine what life was really like for our grandparents. Very few a hundred years and more ago could either read or write. The few medieval men who could were very inefficient. When great grandfather, twelve generations and more ago, bolted himself inside his armour and went clinking, clanking and squeaking about the countryside, there was nothing to be gained by painting his name on his armour if he were capable of doing so. Very few if any of those he met, most similarly attired, would be capable of reading and knowing who was bolted inside.

During that period they overcame this problem by using Heraldic Shields known as Family Arms. It was customary for a family to earn these family arms by a member doing an outstanding deed for society. Usually this deed involved some type of heroism during a war. The English and French were continuously, as it appears, at each other's back yard in a skirmish of one kind or another. My forefathers were awarded these family arms through these skirmishes.

The Roscoe family arms from York Insignia, Goodramsgate, England.

This is the West Family Arms from York Insignia, Goodramsgate, England.

It is rather obvious that ships, such as they were years ago, were not much concerned with a means of communication. Other than a few basic signals, normally by some flag or another, often the position of the national ensign or flag of the country that owned the vessel was sufficient.

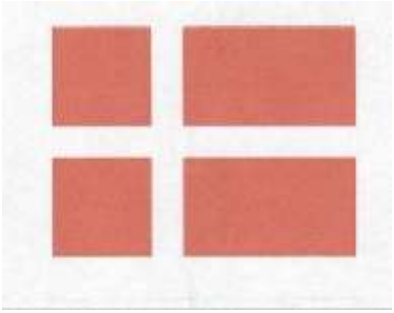
There was no Navy when the first of these small ships started visiting this the North American continent, these first ships were rigged as much for self-protection as for general transportation. During any events of war, any and all ships, which were needed to fight this war were rounded up and used by the various armies involved. In the few battles, which took place on the sea the ships used, were in the form of floating platforms for hand to hand combat. Gunnery had not been advanced far enough for them to do much if any damage from a distance from each other. Some of the rigging was designed or altered for this purpose. The yard tips were fitted with iron hooks in order for the ship to hook into the rigging of any foe and thereby remain locked to it in order to assist the hand to hand combat which would take place on the decks below. For this reason these vessels were fitted with the higher forward and after castles on these earliest ships, which was an Army design rather than a marine feature.

The world did not have the population that it does today and therefore there were not nearly as many ships as there are now. For example during the time of the Spanish Armada in 1588 England had only 135 merchant ships. These ships were very small, some were as large as 400 tons and a few were as large as 500 tons. Other than a very few special flags or pennants, the only flag or means of communication by these ships was the flag of England, a white flag with a red cross known as the St. George's Cross which is the flag of England to this day.

The National Flag first appeared as a carryover from the Crusades in Europe. The word Crusade originated from the term carriers of the cross. These Crusaders had their armour, banners, and so on emblazoned with

various forms of the cross. The St. George's cross can also be called the Greek cross. The Greek cross is the same, except it has four equal sides and once this is transferred to a rectangular flag, the more common form of a National Flag, these four sides or bars of the cross, are no longer equal.

Possibly the oldest flag is that of Denmark which became their national flag in 1219 and is a white cross on red. All the Scandinavian countries use a cross as their national flag. Norway: blue with a white border cross on red. Finland: blue cross on white. Sweden: yellow cross on blue. Iceland: red with white border cross on blue.

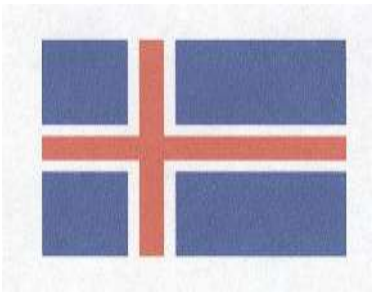


Denmark

Norway

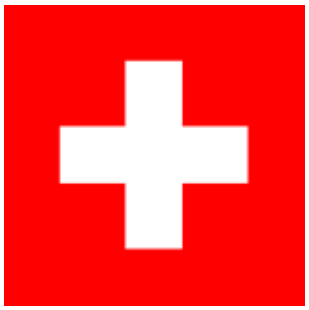
Finland

Sweden



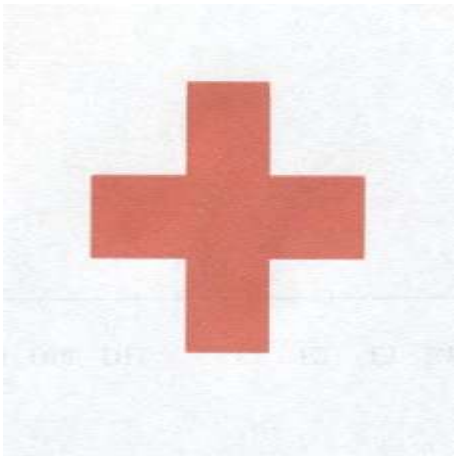
Iceland

There are several more countries that use the cross as the National Flag. Switzerland uses a white Greek cross on red and the Red Cross Society (in most countries) uses the reverse of this flag; a red cross on a white flag.



World Flags 101

Switzerland



Red Cross

The Union Flag of Great Britain is often called the Union Jack. It is a combination of three flags using crosses. The St. Georges Cross of England, the St. Andrews Cross of Scotland and the St. Patricks Cross for Ireland. Apparently no one in the province of Newfoundland thought it necessary to have a provincial flag for many years, so this province took the Union Flag as their official Provincial Flag until 1980. This flag is also used in the canton of many other flags, the flags of areas that had close ties with Great Britain at one time. The province of Ontario and Manitoba are but two examples. The province of British Columbia uses it as the top half of its flag. Even the state of Hawaii in the United States of America, has it as the canton of its flag. These are but a few of the many flags using this Union Flag.

World Flags 101

The Union Flag of Great Britain

It should be mentioned that a Jack is the correct term for the flag flown on the bow of a ship. This is flown from a Jack Staff a small pole fixed to the bow of a ship and is normally flown only while the ship is in port. British ships use the Union Flag as their Jack and this is the reason the Union Flag is more often called the Union Jack rather than by its correct term – Union Flag.

The current Canadian Naval Ships, the ones with the prefix HMCS use the Canadian Navy Jack. This is a white flag with the Canadian Red Maple Leaf and Bars Flag as the canton defaced with the badge of the Canadian Forces Maritime Command on the fly.

Wikipedia
The Canadian Navy Jack

United States Naval Ships use the canton of the United States Flag as their Jack, a blue flag with fifty white stars, one star for each state in the union.

The first feeble attempts at designing any means of communications between ships at sea took place during the English Dutch Wars, which were the first major wars to take place mostly on the seas. These battles were fought during the mid-sixteen hundreds.

When great (nine times) Grandfather Francis West and his brothers became part of the Virginia Company of London, which was often called the London Company, they purchased three ships. This Company was chartered by King James I for colonization purposes in 1606, and was the one to establish the first English settlement in the New World of North America in what is now the state of Virginia.

The three vessels purchased for their transportation needs were named SUSAN CONSTANT, GODSPEED, and DISCOVERY. Hardly the type of vessel you or I would consider sailing anywhere, let alone use to make several trips across the Atlantic Ocean. But at that date and time, they were the best available and as far as is known SUSAN CONSTANT and GODSPEED had been in service transporting coal around the English coast for the Muscovy Company. DISCOVERY had been specially built for service in the New World. At least she remained on station in Virginia for exploratory purposes and did not return to England. The other two did return and SUSAN CONSTANT is believed to have made as many as seven trips back and forth between this new colony and England. Great grandfather it seems made a number of these trips. Francis West is referred to as Captain Francis West in several places. This title was along the lines of an Army Captain and not a Sea Captain. He was Governor of Virginia for a two-year period. The Captain's of the three ships were: SUSAN CONSTANT, Captain Christopher Newport, who was also the fleet Commander; GODSPEED, Captain Bartholenew Gosnold; DISCOVERY, Captain John Ratcliffe.

These three ships were and are good examples of the type of ship in use at that time. They were much the same as the French were using to settle their colonies at Port Royal, Nova Scotia, in 1604, and Quebec in 1608. DISCOVERY being the smallest at only 20 tons – 49 feet long, would put her in about the same size category as a small inland-fishing vessel of today. SUSAN CONSTANT at 100 tons and 111 feet long and GODSPEED at 40 tons and 68 feet long make them larger, but definitely not large enough to be called deep-sea ships in today's terminology.

We are very fortunate to have replicas of these three ships available in order to give us some idea of what the actual ships were really like. The replicas were built for the sole purpose of being on display at the Jamestown Festival site. Both the river and town were named for King James I.

There was a replica of SUSAN CONSTANT built in 1991. This replica replaced the one built in 1957. My photographs are of the one built in 1957.

Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation

This is the SUSAN CONSTANT, GODSPEED and DISCOVERY from left to right.

These three ships were constructed from extensive research provided by various people and organizations. This design encompasses all the ships of that period, including MAYFLOWER, which landed the first Pilgrims at the present area of Cape Cod, Massachusetts, in 1620. There is a replica of this vessel located at this site in Plymouth, Massachusetts. This replica was built in England and given to the United States by the British. She sailed over in 1957.

Another replica worthy of mentioning was the HALF MOON. This replica was constructed during the first decade of this century and based in the New York City area. Henry Hudson used the original vessel, HALVE MAEN (HALF MOON), in 1611 to explore the eastern United States as it is known today and more explicitly the river named for Hudson in the area of the present state of New York. The replica of this vessel ran into some difficulty. This HALF MOON replica had gravel or fairly small sized stones in it for ballast. Over a period of time a good many of those who visited the replica pinched a stone or two to keep as a souvenir of the visit. No doubt the publicity surrounding the vessel left many with the impression that it was the actual vessel that had been recently found stored away in some hidden spot for 300 years. The end result of all this was that after a period of time, it was decided to take a number of people on a sight seeing cruise in the vessel. During this cruise something took place that caused these passengers to become excited and all rush to one side of the vessel. Having lost a good deal of her ballast to souvenir hunters, this sudden rush to one side and corresponding shift in weight distribution, caused the replica of HALF MOON to capsize drowning some of her passengers.

Since this unfortunate incident the United States Coast Guard had to step in and place certain restrictions on these replicas. This restriction placed on SUSAN CONSTANT, GODSPEED, and DISCOVERY is in the form of poured cement for ballast. This cement, of course, hardened and made it impossible for anyone to

remove any of it. It was also of sufficient amount to make it impossible for as many people as could possibly be carried in either of the vessels to rush to one side and cause a shift in the vessels stability.

There was another replica of the HALF MOON built at Albany, New York, in 1989.

But I am getting away from trying to explain the communication and navigation aids carried by these first ships to visit this continent. In addition to the magnetic compasses carried in these vessels, they probably carried an astrolabe, a sea ring or circle, the fore-staff or cross-staff, a backstaff and a pegged traverse board. In order to explain the operation of these primitive instruments, one must quote the literature provided by the Jamestown Foundation, Williamsburg, Virginia, which is taken from their correspondence as follows:

"The transatlantic navigation of ships in the beginning of the 17th century was hazardous and uncertain. The instruments available were simple and highly inaccurate. Maps were rare, and those available were vague and usually greatly distorted. An air of mystery surrounded knowledge of navigational routes; fishermen and navigators tended to foster secrecy concerning such matters. Nations vying for control of various parts of the New World suppressed all information which might benefit their competitors.

It is highly probable that the three ships, SUSAN CONSTANT, GODSPEED, and DISCOVERY, were supplied with some form of map, such as the portolan. This was a coastal chart conceived by seafaring men and based strictly on experience with the local scene, in contrast to the general maps of the world as a whole, and of countries and provinces, which were projected academically and geometrically for the use of a small group of scholars.

The traditional date of the "invention" of the mariner's compass is 1602. In 1607 the "strange behavior" of varying declination of the compass was still not thoroughly understood, though it was accepted without fear. In 1492, Columbus had difficulty suppressing mutiny in his superstitious crew who were greatly distressed when their compasses began acting erratically.

Aboard ship it was commonly a three-man job to take a sight with the astrolabe, regardless of the size or weight of the instrument. One man held the instrument by a ring passed over this thumb, while he stood with his back braced against the mast; the second man took sight, measuring the altitude of the sun or star, and the third man read off.

The mariner's astrolabe was hung by a ring so that it could turn with the motion of the ship, but it was made heavy (the bottom part often thicker than the top, and sometimes a weight of six or seven pounds was hung to the instrument) to "keep a perpendicular situation during the motion of the ship."

The flat surface or face of the circle was divided into four quarters; one, two, or all of the quarters were divided into 90 degrees, and very often into halves and fourths of degrees. A pointer (also called a rule or index) with holes bored through the sights, was adjusted so that the rays of the sun or star passed through its holes. The number of degrees then shown to be between the extremity of the pointer and the horizon line showed the altitude of the sun or star above the horizon (the zenith distance).

The sea ring or circle was used for measuring the altitude of the sun above the horizon.

The fore-staff or cross-staff was used to take the altitude of the sun or stars, or the distance of two stars. This instrument consists of a straight, square, graduated staff and four crosses or vanes which slide stiffly thereon. The four sides of the staff have different, graduated scales, each used with one of the four vanes.

The fore-staff was fitted with three peephole sights in the form of plates; one at either end of the vane and one on the near end of the staff, which served as the eyepiece. The obvious defect of both the fore-staff and the astrolabe was that the observer had to look directly into the sun.

The pegged traverse board was a crude instrument, probably made by the ship's carpenter or by someone who could use a few tools, and there was no standard size. They were apparently used by the steersman to

keep a record (rather rough) of the directions and speeds of the ship during his four-hour watch. The account would then be written into the ship's log."

This gives an excellent description of the navigational aids used in sailing these early ships across the Atlantic and as for communications they were limited to that of visual flags or the like, and the audible sound of a gun or cannon. All three of these ships as well as all the other ships in operation at that time carried guns or cannon. SUSAN CONSTANT was pierced for eight gun ports, each having a gun capable of being fired. Some pre-arranged audible signal system would be established and maintained during any voyage if it were deemed necessary, although it is more than likely none was set-up. Should one of the ships have strayed out of sight of Captain Newport, he would have fired a shot now and then until the straggler showed up by steering towards the sound of these shots. Quite naturally the inevitable "boom" followed by a string of profane language would have meant a screw-up of some description.

In addition to the audible sounds made by the gun or cannon fire there would have been the visual flag or the like, for signal purposes during the hours of daylight and good visibility. These signals of course would have been prearranged as well. For example, if Captain Newport flew his ensign at the forepeak, at the top of the fore or forward mast, it could have meant most anything. This could have meant that he wanted the other two ships to sail close enough to him for a verbal chat by shouting back and forth from each ship.

It is known that on 12th April, 1606, a Royal Proclamation was made of which the following is an extract:-

"Whereas some difference has arisen between Our subjects of South and North Britain, travelling by seas, about the bearing of their flags: for the avoiding of all such contentions hereafter, We have, with the advice of Our Council, ordered that from henceforth, all Our subjects of the Isle and Kingdom of Great Britain, and the members thereof, shall bear in their maintops the Red Cross, commonly called St. George's Cross, and the White Cross, commonly called the St. Andrew's Cross, joined together, according to a form made by Our Heralds, and sent by Us to Our Admiral, to be published to our said subjects: and in their foretops Our subjects of South Britain shall wear the Red Cross only, as they were wont; and our subjects of North Britain in their foretops the White Cross only, as they were accustomed."

This makes it clear that SUSAN CONSTANT, GODSPEED, DISCOVERY, MAYFLOWER, and all the other British ships of that date and time were so attired. This can be seen in the photographs on these pages.

Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation

SUSAN CONSTANT, DISCOVERY and GODSPEED

All of these factors make it very interesting and should help one to understand what one of these original vessels resembled.

Columbus's voyage of 1492 brings to mind a most interesting point concerning human comfort in these early ships. Columbus sailed over in three ships, the NINA, PINTA, and SANTA MARIA, as most school children know. There was only a bunk or two fitted in these three ships for the comfort of a few of the officers. The remainder slept wherever they could find room to lie down. On landing in the New World as Columbus called it, these seamen found the native Indians, the Arawak tribe of the West Indies as it was named by Columbus sleeping in a rig they called a hammacus. These seamen found these hammacus so comfortable they began making them of sail canvas and hanging them on their ships. From the word hammacus these became hammocks and can be found in use to this day. Many of the ships of the Royal Canadian Navy were still using these hammocks when I was in the Navy during the 1950's. I have yet to hear a complaint from one who ever slept in one at sea. Most swear they are the only comfortable means of getting a good sleep at sea because of the motion of the ship. I sailed with one officer who slept in one during the 1970's.

There were very few and minor changes in the ships of Columbus's three-ship fleet, to that of Great grandfather West's three-ship fleet, which spanned a period of just over 100 years. It was to be nearly another 100 years before any really great changes were to take place in ship construction. At this time gunnery had progressed whereby ships were capable of doing some damage to another ship without going alongside the vessel. This meant that there was now a place for an actual Navy rather than just an Army. This fact was to bring about the end of the Castle on a ship. The larger of the earlier ships, like SANTA

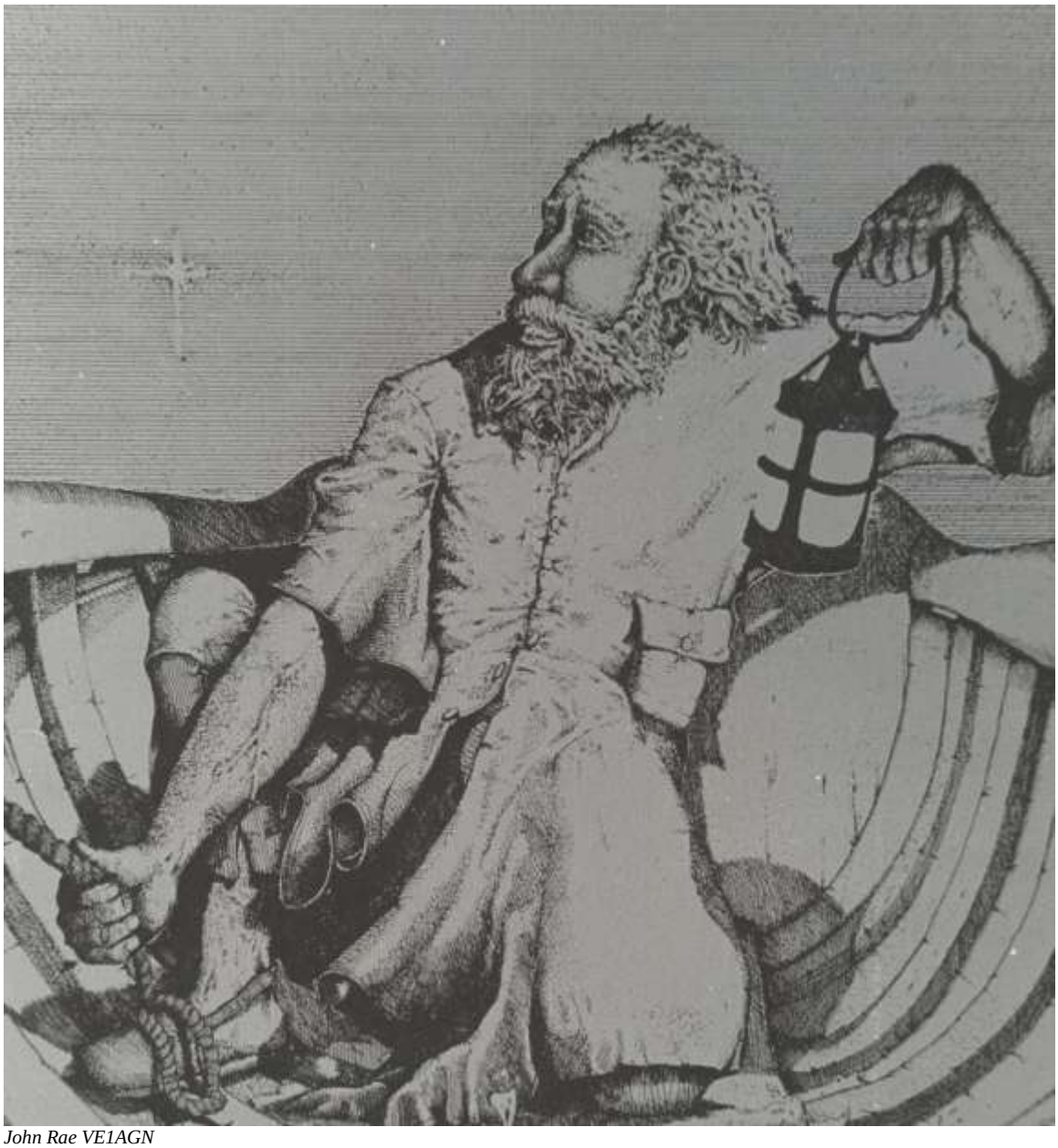
MARIA, PINTA, SUSAN CONSTANT, GODSPEED, HALF MOON, MAYFLOWER and those of similar size had these castles.

But the greatest change, which improved the sailing capabilities of these ships the most, was the use of what are known as fore and aft sails. These sails were fixed between the masts in a line parallel to the centerline of the ship. Prior to this all sails on the largest ships had been square, in many cases they looked a lot like bed sheets, the upper portion lashed along a yard on the mast with the lower corners seized via lines to points on the ship's deck. These latter fore and aft sails, which were the only sails fitted on most schooners, enabled these ships to sail much closer to the wind. This meant they were able to maintain a course closer to their desired course, when sailing into the wind.

Great grandfather West's DISCOVERY was known as a Pinnace, a term used to describe most any small vessel and was even used to describe certain ships' boats. Columbus's NINA was known as a Caravel which was the term used to describe small fast sailing vessels, normally containing a high poop deck and lateen sails.

Five years after Columbus first discovered the New World England sent out the first of many explorers, John Cabot. In 1497 he explored the current island province of Newfoundland and parts of the current Province of Nova Scotia. This being an English expedition meant that the ship would have flown only the St. George's cross, the flag of England. John Cabot's ship was called the MATTHEW and a replica of this vessel sailed over in the 1990's.

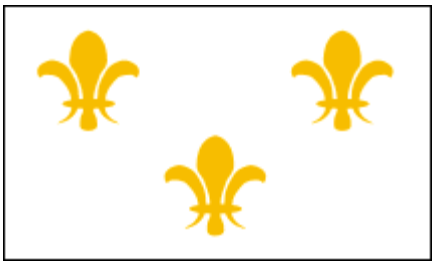
The French were also visiting this area regularly. Their fishermen were regular visitors along the coast of the current island of Newfoundland, province of Nova Scotia, and the New England States back during the 1500's and 1600's prior to their ever attempting to establish settlements in this area and after these settlements were established. Naturally they had their guns and cannons for audible signaling as well as protection. They also could have used any of the various visual flag, lantern, and the like means for signaling. But the only big difference was that they flew a flag emblazoned with three gold fleur-de-lis (flower of the lily) the flag of France which was first used in the 500's, possibly as late as 596 A.D.



John Rae VE1AGN

This drawing is compliments of Marital Inc., the distributors of Japan Radio Company Marine Electronics in the United States.

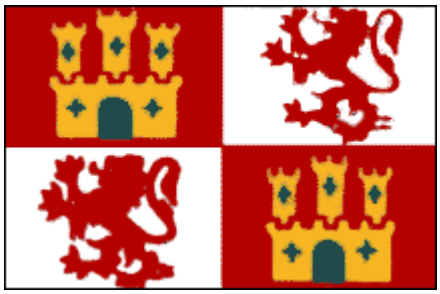
The present French tri-colour, the red, white and blue vertical bars was not adopted until King Louis XVI used it in 1789. This meant that the French explorers, Champlain with Sieur de Monts and Jacques Cartier, would have flown the flag with the three gold fleur-de-lis and planted this flag on any country they were claiming in the name of France. They claimed what is the current area of eastern Canada.



Any Flag.Com

This is the first flag flown in the current area of Eastern Canada.

It is worthy of note that Columbus was Italian, also John Cabot who was exploring for England, but Columbus was sailing for the King and Queen of Spain and his ships were therefore Spanish. The Spanish, by nature, enjoy decorating their possessions and their sailing ships were favourite objects. The sails were invariably marked with bright coloured designs and for this reason their ships would stand out visibly from the others. In addition to the markings on the sails, Columbus carried the flag of Spain. This flag combined the arms of Castile and Leon at that time.



Any Flag.Com

This is the flag of Spain carried by Columbus.

The present red and yellow Spanish flag was not in use until 1785. Columbus also carried his personal flag, a white banner containing a green cross with the letter F and Y on either side of the cross being the predominant markings. F stood for King Ferdinand and the Y for Queen Isabella or Ysabel as the Spanish spelled it.

Any Flag.Com

The personal flag carried by Columbus.

Columbus made three voyages to the New World and Spain accumulated vast colonies in both what is now known as Central America and north to and including the present state of Florida on the East Coast of North America.

Therefore there was a lot of travel between the old and new worlds during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that involved the flags of a number of nations, England, France, Spain and the Netherlands.

The Dutch founded New York City in 1624. Henry Hudson was a British sea captain. His first two voyages were made for the English Muscovy Company. His third voyage involving the present New York area and accomplished with the HALF MOON was for the Dutch East Indian Company. The HALF MOON flew the Dutch Flag. It was on Henry Hudson's fourth voyage that he explored the present Hudson Bay, named for him, that his crew mutinied and cast him, his son, and seven loyal seamen adrift in a small boat. Hudson, his son, his boat, and these seven seamen were never heard from again. Hudson was sailing for the English again in a ship called the DISCOVERY at the time he was cast adrift. After his successful voyage with the Dutch he had been forbidden to sail for any other country besides England. DISCOVERY was not only a popular name for these ships but most appropriate. The Dutch flag flown by HALF MOON was a flag containing three equal horizontal bars, gold at the top, white in the middle, and royal blue along the bottom and depicted in the middle of the flag and on the white bar only were the initials of the Dutch East India Company as it was spelled in Dutch. About 1630 the Dutch replaced the gold bar on this tri-colour flag with a red bar and this has been their flag, the flag of the Netherlands to this day.

Mark Sensen Flags of the World

Those in charge of these things are not sure what the letters stood for and like so much of this history apparently there were several of these flags in use.

There have been and will always be thousands of flags. It is believed that the first flag flown over North America was the flag of Leif Ericson, a white flag depicting a large bird – a caricature of the Raven. This was flown in the 1000's some 500 years prior to the English, French, Spanish, and Dutch arriving.

Another flag to see extensive use in this area is not a flag in the singular sense. The Pirate Flag the black flag with the white skull and cross bones that we today consider the Pirate Flag was actually the flag of pirate Edward England. Each and every pirate during the colourful or memorable years as we depict pirates and pirating had his own flag. Most were black flags with white skulls, bones, swords, and the like. The hourglass was another favourite symbol depicted on these flags to signify your time has run out. Although black was the favourite colour, other colours or combinations of colours were used, red being another favourite.

It is a pity a written record of my great (six times) Grandfather Thomas West's voyages had not survived, if ever there was one, so that I could record same here. He died at the early age of about forty, in 1728, at Rhode Island, from injuries received in a shipwreck exposure and disease contracted in the West Indies. He had made his home at Tisbury, on Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts, where he was an inn holder, a mariner, and a pilot.

Great grandfather Thomas West's voyages to the West Indies would have been made during the time of the glorious period of pirating as we tend to depict pirates in general, and any detail on these voyages would be most interesting. The difference between a pirate and a privateer was very small indeed. In certain areas it is hard to actually draw the line between the two. Captain Kidd swore he had been a privateer only with his

ship ADVENTURE GALLEY. There is a record that at one time Captain Kidd flew only a red broad pennant, which was believed to signify an order to surrender or no quarter given.

When a vessel such as ADVENTURE GALLEY was built and outfitted, as a privateer it was a well-known fact that in many cases if the privateer was not paying as the crew felt it should, they mutinied, seized the ship and turned to pirating. This was not the case with Captain Kidd, but he did have some trouble in distinguishing between privateer and pirate, which cost him his life by hanging in 1701.

During the latter part of the 1600's under the leadership of Samuel Pepys, the English began the construction of a large Navy. We today are indebted to Samuel Pepys because by nature he was a collector. Being a high naval official some of his collections have survived to give us a better insight as to what constituted this fleet. Pepys also kept a diary, which has survived and has given an account of life during the period in which he lived.

The growth of this Naval Fleet with their high-ranking officers, created a problem concerning flag signaling, such as it was. It was the practice for a naval ship to fly the Union Flag, the combination of the St. Andrew and St. George crosses, from one mast or another signifying the rank of the officer commanding. (The Union Flag at the main, fore or mizzen, according to their rank as full, vice or rear admiral). There were many instances of inconvenience arising from the use of this flag by private ships. Therefore in 1660 the Duke of York gave an order that the Union Flag was to be worn only by the King's Ships, the Naval Fleet.

The first use made of the red, white and blue ensign took place in 1627, in the Duke of Buckingham's expedition to the Isle of Rhe. The Duke divided this fleet into five squadrons. As Admiral and General in Chief, he flew the Standard of England in the main top and the red ensign. The Earl of Lindsay was Vice Admiral and flew the King's usual colours in his foretop and a blue ensign in his main top. The Lord Harvey was Rear Admiral and flew the King's usual colours in his mizzen top and a white flag at the main top. The Earl of Dunby used St. George's flag and Captain Pennington St. Andrew's cross. This made the flags for each squadron commander. This fleet consisted of approximately 200 ships. Very confusing at this date and time is exactly why a certain pennant or flag had not been designed to signify the rank of the officers commanding, thus leaving the Union Flag as the national flag, or colours.

In addition to these flags and ensigns mentioned thus far, after May 2nd, 1670, another flag was widely used in North America. The flag of the Hudson's Bay Company formed on this date flew over all their lands, that of the North American continent that has rivers that empty into Hudson Bay. All ships owned by this Company are still legally, by royal charter, allowed to fly this flag. A former Captain of one of these ships recently told me that they actually flew this flag on their ships up until Canada received its present red and white maple leaf flag on February 15th, 1965. At that time they decided to fly the flag or ensign of the country of the ship's registry, mainly Canada since the majority of these ships were registered in Winnipeg, Manitoba. This was decided because of dissension amongst the French Canadian inhabitants towards anything British. These ships use the ports of the province of Quebec extensively. The Hudson's Bay Company Governor's flag is a white flag containing the company badge, crest or arms (whatever the proper terminology) in the centre and this is the flag flown on land.

HBC Web Site

The Hudson Bay Company Ships flew the “red duster” with the letters HBC on the fly as shown below. I did not know this until I looked at the HBC web site. I always felt the white bed sheet with the company coat of arms was their only flag.

HBC Web Site

The Nova Scotia flag was created in 1621by Royal Charter. At this time King James I of England and Scotland granted Acadia, the French name for this area to Sir William Alexander who renamed the area Nova Scotia. Nova Scotia is Latin for New Scotland. This grant included what is now Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, part of Quebec and part of the present state of Maine. Through my research it has become clear that either a blue flag with a white cross resembling the letter X, or the colours reversed, a white flag with a blue cross resembling the letter X constitutes the flag known as the St. Andrews Cross. Therefore the present flag of Scotland, blue with white cross, and the flag of Nova Scotia, white with blue cross, are both considered the St. Andrew’s cross. The Nova Scotia flag also includes the lion of the Scottish Kings in the centre. This also means that Russia flew the St. Andrew’s cross, a white flag with a blue cross, until the adoption of the hammer and sickle in 1917. And of still further interest the

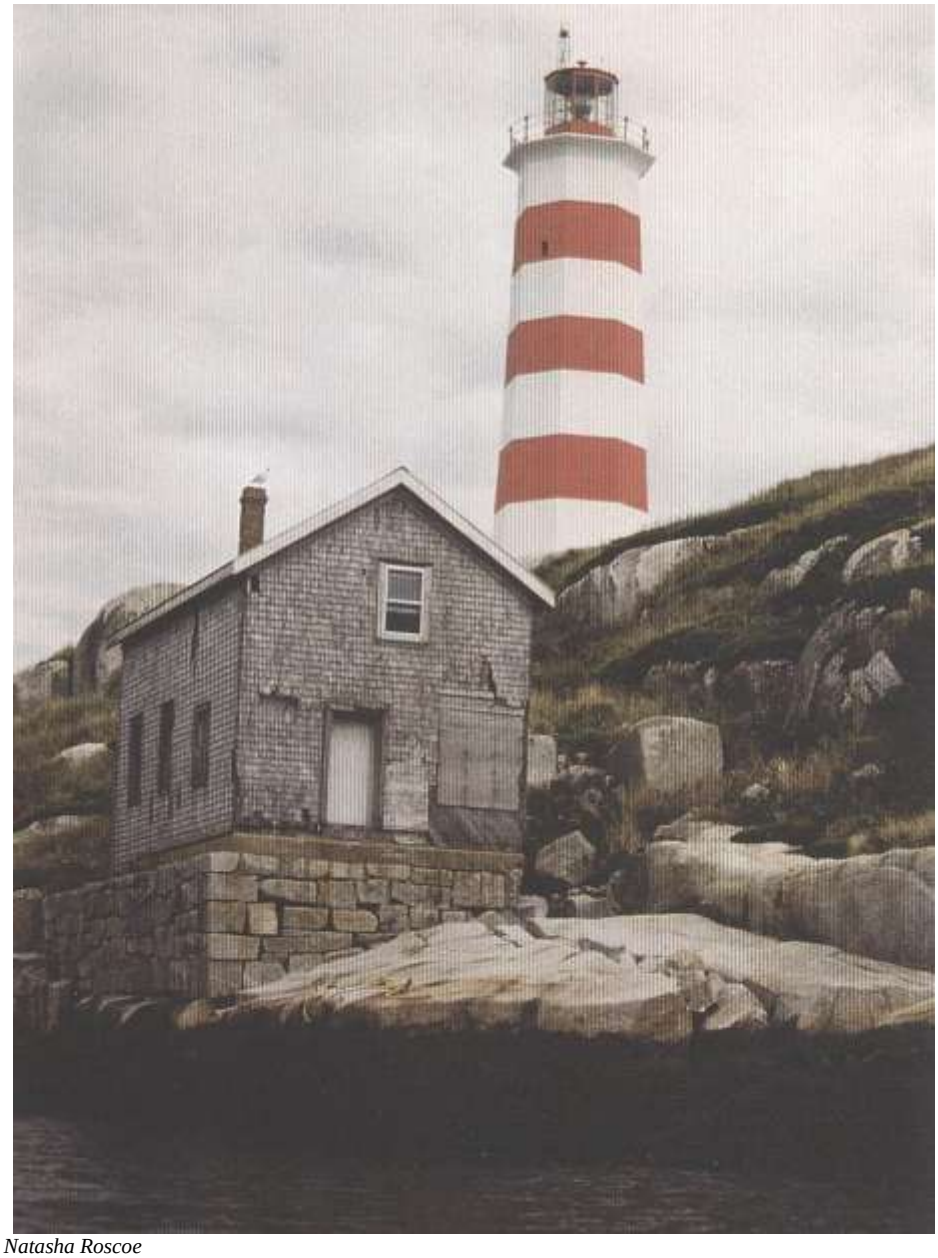
flag signifying the letter M in the International Code of Flag Signals, could be termed the St. Andrew's cross. At least it makes for one means of remembering that particular flag or letter.

The flag of Nova Scotia

To my knowledge and research I have not been able to locate a ship that ever flew the Nova Scotia flag signifying the country of registry. Nova Scotia had one of the largest fleets of merchant ships in the world just prior to entering the Dominion of Canada as a province. All of these ships were considered of British registry, flew the British Ensign, and were known as British North American Ships. This same procedure applied to all ships of all the seafaring areas making up the present provinces of the Dominion of Canada.

On July 26th, 1758, the British made their final capture of the French settlement of Louisburg. Up until this date, the history books tell us that this area had changed hands between the French and English on several occasions. All of Nova Scotia, except for Cape Breton Island had been British since the Peace of Utrecht, in 1713. The city of Halifax was not founded until 1749 when Edward Cornwallis commanded a fleet of transports bringing over settlers for this purpose. Cornwallis was Nova Scotia's first Governor.

It is worthy of note that the French had set up a light at Louisburg for the express purpose of guiding ships, which was the first lighthouse in this area of the new world. In 1759 work was begun on the Sambro Island Lighthouse off the approaches to Halifax harbour. But in 1762 a signal station was put in service on Thrum Cap, also in the approaches to Halifax harbour. This was the first station, as such, for communications from the sea to shore. I have not been able to locate the exact detail on this station, but it was a small station in visual range of the fort established on Citadel Hill, now in the centre of the present city of Halifax. It was not able to communicate with a ship, but merely advised the fort of anything approaching the harbour. The British and French had been at war with each other for so long that it was many years before this fear of each other vanished. In 1762 Halifax had received an alarm of possible French invasion. Therefore the reason for the British erecting this Thrum Cap station was to give their military organization located in the area as much warning, in the event of an enemy attack, as possible.



Natasha Roscoe
This is the Sambro Island Lighthouse in 2002. Note the seagull on top of the old chimney.

This first Thrum Cap station was undoubtedly nothing more than a high flagpole type, capable of flying either flags, balls constructed from some light material, lanterns of some type for night use, and the like. It merely informed the Citadel Hill station of the number of ships approaching, their types or classifications, and if possible their nationality. As crude as it was, no doubt those in charge were very proud of this station and felt they had the very latest and most fascinating contraption created by man.

In 1755, seven years prior to the establishment of this Thrum Cap signal station, the Acadian French then established in the area of Minas Basin, had been expelled from the area and resettled in what is now the present United States of America. These Acadian French were the remnants of the French settlements in this area. They refused to swear allegiance to the British government and had also created a fair amount of trouble for the British, by instigating the native Micmac Indians into raids on the British settlements.

It was decided to resettle these vacated French areas, mostly the best farming area in Nova Scotia, from the established English colonies in what are now known as the New England states of the United States of America. The first of these settlers began arriving in 1760, and were known as "The Planters".

The son's of great (six times) Grandfather Thomas West became Planters. Among these were great (five times) Grandfather William with Grandmother Jane and their children, which included great (four times) Grandfather Cyrus and his brother Jabez. Jabez was born in 1737 and Cyrus in 1740. Cyrus remained in the Cornwallis district, which is now part of Kings County, but Jabez returned to the United States and made his home at Machias, in the present state of Maine. He became the Captain of an American Privateer during the American Revolutionary war in 1788-89, another relative who could add a lot to the history of seafaring in this area, had more written records of his activities survived. He is mentioned in Thomas H. Raddall's book "His Majesty's Yankees".

There were no roads to speak of between these settlements containing the newly arrived planters and the new capital of Halifax, which meant that a good deal of their communications was carried out via ship from one place to the other. This involved circumnavigating the whole of the western half of the province of Nova Scotia. Relying solely on wind and weather meant these voyages could be rather lengthy and very arduous.

The elite of the world has visited Halifax at one time or another over the years. This has involved both famous people and famous ships. This of course, for many years, was due to the geographical location of the city. One of the most famous ships in the annals of the history of shipping, I am convinced, visited this area in 1786. I have been unable to actually state it was indeed this particular ship, but all indications are certainly favourable. In 1786 a ship by the name of BETHIA of 230 tons, built at Hull, England, in 1784, visited this area from London, England. She belonged to R. Dale and her Master was Captain P. Ellis who was relieved later in the year by Captain Blair. BETHIA disappears from the Lloyds Register of Shipping after this entry and is the only BETHIA on record.

About this time the British Admiralty purchased a ship fitting this description and this exact name. They refitted this vessel, renamed it BOUNTY and sent it to the South Seas, now the South Pacific, to take delivery of a cargo of breadfruit. These breadfruit plants were to be transferred and planted on the island of Jamaica and used as food for the Negro slaves held there. Captain Bligh with eighteen of his shipmates, were cast adrift after a mutiny by the crew led by Fletcher Christian, BOUNTY's mate.

The mutineers took BOUNTY along with several natives of the island of Tahiti and populated Pitcairn Island, in the South Pacific, and burned BOUNTY shortly after their arrival on this island. Captain Bligh performed one of the greatest feats of navigation on record. He sailed the BOUNTY's overloaded ship's boat over three thousand six hundred miles, and saved all but one of those in the boat. The one lost was a seaman who was killed by the natives when they landed on an island for fresh water.

Once Captain Bligh reached England another ship was sent out to transport these breadfruit plants. This trip was successful except for the fact that the slaves in Jamaica refused to eat the breadfruit and therefore the whole effort was a total waste of time.

London News Agency Photos Limited

This is the Canadian replica of HMS BOUNTY at anchor off Dover, England, 1962.
She is "Making Her Number" VYFM, the four flags in a vertical line on the mizzen yard.

There have been several books written and movies made concerning this incident. In 1962 Metro Goldwyn Mayer Inc. completed a movie of this mutiny and the BOUNTY they used was the first time a ship had been specially built for the sole purpose of filming a movie. This BOUNTY had been built at Lunenburg, Nova Scotia, one of the few places in the world with people who had the knowledge required to build such a vessel. I was this BOUNTY's second and last Radio Officer. All other ships used in the making of movies, previous to this BOUNTY, had either been sister ships of the one involved in the plot of the movie being filmed or had been vessels specially converted to play the part.

The original BOUNTY was one of the first ships to carry one of the earliest means of communication from ship to ship, on an international or general basis. Although, from the time BOUNTY left the English Channel on December 23rd, 1787, until the mutiny took place on April 28th, 1789, she did not encounter anyone or anything in order to make use of this signal system. But Admiral Kempenfelt had introduced a code of flag signals about the year 1780, and after his tragic death in 1782, other naval officers worked on the problem.

About the year 1801 Sir Home Popham produced a code of flag signals that was formally adopted by the Admiralty in 1803 and it was Popham's code, still comparatively new, that Nelson used to convey his famous signal at Trafalgar.

Popham's code is rather interesting, one you would have to refer to as telegraphy and not spelling, although the Admiralty (British Navy) did consider it spelling for the simple reason any word could be spelled out. Popham had each letter in the alphabet numbered per their sequence in the alphabet. A was number one and so on down to Z, except for two significant points of interest. He let the number nine serve both the letter I and the little used letter J and the fact that in the 18th century alphabet the letter U followed the letter V. Therefore, this required the use of only ten distinctive flags for the number 0 through to 9.

It is apparent that it would take a very large number of these flags to send a plain language message of any length. So Popham made up codes in two and three numbers up to and including 999 in order for one such code to equal an English word.

Admiral Nelson in his famous signal at Trafalgar, "England expects that every man will do his duty", was able to fly all the words except for DUTY which he had to spell out. Actually it is believed that Nelson wanted to start this signal with "England confides" but was advised against this because the word "confides" would have to be spelled out. Therefore he settled on the signal flown in order to decrease the work involved.

A number of flags used in Popham's code are to be found in our present International Code of Signals. These are: his flag for 1 is our letter X, his 2 is our letter P, his 3 is our letter M except his yellow cross is now white (St. Andrew's Cross). Popham's figure 4 is our letter U. His figure 5 is not used today but was of three equal bars, yellow across the top, red through the middle, and yellow again across the bottom. The United States Navy uses this flag as their figure two. Our pennant for the figure 7 is of the same colour scheme yellow and red horizontally.

Popham's flag for 6 is no longer used. It was also three equal bars, blue on the top, white in the middle, and red across the bottom (the flag of the Netherlands). His flag for 7 is no longer used in the International Code of Signals, although the United States Navy use it for their figure 9, three vertical stripes, blue, white in the middle, and blue again on the fly. Popham's flag for 8 is no longer used except as a flag of truce, a plain white flag. His flag for 9 is our letter K. His flag zero is no longer used. It was divided in two equal triangles of white and blue, the blue being an upright right-angled triangle with the right angle at the bottom of the fly, the white being an inverted right-angle triangle, with the top of the flag held at the right-angle.

Although I often use the national flag of a country as an example for a letter or code flag, this is simply because the colours and description fit. Most flags signifying the nationality of a ship (the flag of the country of registry) are rectangular in shape. All code flags are square, except for the pennants signifying the ten numerical digits, the answering pennant, and the three substitutes or repeaters. Two of these code flags, the letters A and B, are swallow tailed. The ships of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and other western navies also use a fourth substitute or repeater, another pennant.

Because two identical flags flying together are difficult to distinguish at a distance, Popham had a substitute or ditto flag. This was a yellow flag with two narrow horizontal bars, one at the very top and the other at the very bottom, in black. For example if it became necessary to use code 331 through 339, or 333 for that matter, by placing the substitute flag in the middle it made this code much easier for the receiving ship or station to read. These substitutes or repeater flags have been retained to our present International Code of Signals as mentioned, except there are now three, the first being yellow bordered in black, the second blue with a white fly, and the third white with a black horizontal bar.

In addition to the three substitutes we have an answering pennant, containing five equal vertical divisions, the two centre being white and the remainder red. I will be discussing the present International Code of Signals later.

It was in 1792 that Claude and Ignace Chappe, of France, perfected their signal system. This was at a time when England was still perfecting her communications by a system of bon fires, a system used by various groups of human type beings over the years. This was also at the time when Napoleon was having a grand old time conquering various sections of the European continent. The Chappes have been credited with the origin of the word telegraph, which was to become and still is a very popular word.

A drawing by Ronald Finnigan, Kamloops, British Columbia

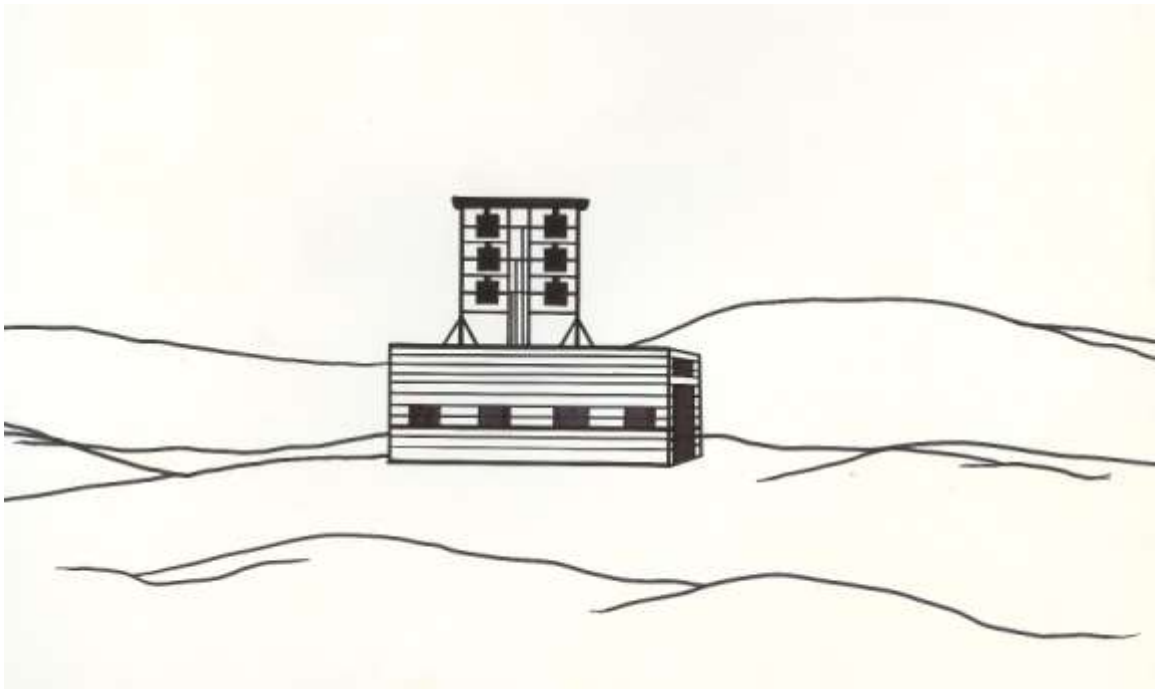
This is the Chappe system of semaphore.

The contraption invented for communications by the Chappes looked rather like a giant stick man, minus the neck and head, a long vertical portion resembling the body, with two arms complete with an elbow and forearm. By a system of ropes and pulleys, through the long vertical portion and controlled at the base, these arms could be adjusted to bend or point at various angles, thereby using the contraption as a form of present day semaphore.

When the British first learned of the Chappe system or contraption as I have called it, they immediately set to work and came up with a similar but much different system, one using a huge box containing six ports complete with shutters for each port. This at its best was another contraption, but one has to admit much improved over a bon fire.

It was a rather time-consuming proposition to pass any messages over these first telegraphs. It was claimed that a message could be sent over 150 miles in 15 minutes. This was a big improvement and thereby received a lot of recognition, but one has to admit a message over 150 miles in 15 minutes would have been a very brief message.

The British shutter system, for example, worked as follows: all ports open meant the station was not at work. All ports closed meant the standby signal for the next telegraph to get ready to receive a message. No doubt the next telegrapher opened or closed his telegraph to signal he was ready to copy. Just to send a letter of the alphabet took a deal of doing on this thing. The alphabet was broken up into four sections and each section was known as a course. Therefore the course had to be sent and then the letter followed. The first course was signaled by closing all ports, the second course by opening all ports, the third by opening all ports on the receivers right and the fourth by opening all ports on the receivers left. The letter could be signaled, by opening or closing the appropriate ports after the course was signaled.



A drawing by Ronald Finnigan, Kamloops, British Columbia

This is the British shutter system of signaling.

The second course was signaled – all ports open – then opening the first port denoted letter G, second letter H, third letter I, and so on through the alphabet. Rather time-consuming to be sure, but it brought the whole town out to watch the sights and marvel at the modern wonder. Those of that generation were quite impressed with these things and had a merry old time with them.

Once these first telegraphs appeared in use, it was not long before everyone became carried away in the excitement, and any number of ingenious rigs, designs, or whatever the proper term should be, followed. The Chappes actually designed various apparatus, and one previous to their system of mechanical arms consisted of a large round face resembling a clock with the letters of the alphabet placed around the clock face. By means of a pointer held in the centre of this clock face, identical to a hand on a clock, the sender merely pointed to the letter in the alphabet in order to send this particular letter to the receiving station.

All these ingenious designs were not restricted to mechanical signal systems alone. Any number of flag signal codes appeared as well. The hard part for us today is to actually learn how much use was made of each or any of these various systems. Granted they were all of some value for the simple fact that the object of the game was to be able to communicate over much greater distances with much greater ease than at any time previous. One individual, worthy of mention, was Colonel MacDonald. When he retired from the British Army Engineers he undertook this hobby as a serious vocation. He is known to have designed in excess of one hundred signaling devices. One in particular involved two flags of two equal bars each, the four bars being of four distinctive colours. Being able to fly either or both flags by any of their four sides meant that eighty-eight codes could be flown. A rather ingenious system except that when the harness enabling these flags to be flown, from either of their four sides had been fitted, close to a gale of wind was needed in order for the flags to blow out so they could be seen. Like Colonel MacDonald, many people who were dabbling in this activity had their designs recorded. These records have survived and have created confusion.

The main reason given Colonel MacDonald for not accepting his systems for use by the Admiralty, in 1824, was that his systems were of telegraph only and that the Admiralty had been using and wanted to continue to use a system of spelling. Telegraph involved a book of codes, both by the sender and receiver. These could very easily become lost or destroyed whereas with spelling the operators involved could use

the system without a book of codes as long as they knew the various letters of the alphabet within the code in use.