

Saint Andrew's Cross, the Scottish National Flag from 832 A.D. till today.

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In the year 500, the Scots crossed from Ireland to Scotland under King Fergus, ancestor of our present queen. A successor of his, King Angus Mac Fergus, reigning in the year 832, had to repel an English invasion under Athelstane. Encouraged by the appearance of a white St. Andrew's Cross in the sky, the Scots won the battle. In gratitude King Angus adorned the church of St. Andrews, St. Andrew became the Patron of Scotland, and his cross the emblem of the Scottish people. Such is the legendary origin of the Scottish flag, and it is commemorated in the arms of the local community. A memorial now stands in the churchyard at Athelstaneford near Edinburgh, and there the St. Andrews Flag flies always, floodlit at night.

St. Andrew was probably the patron of Scotland by the year 1000: in 1286, St. Andrew crucified appears on a seal of the Kingdom; about 1350 a saltire appears on coins. In 1385 an Act of the Scots parliament decreed that every man in a Scots army invading England should wear a white St. Andrew's Cross. The saltire was used also in many family arms; and a few old chieftains standards survive from this period.

During the 1500s the St. Andrew's Cross began to appear on flags. Contemporary paintings and sculptures show it used, on land and at sea - (1588). In 1542, the Royal Arms of King James V, father of Mary Stuart, have Unicorn supporters bearing lances with saltires, as they still do.

The use of the saltire as a national flag at sea was confirmed in 1606. James VI of Scotland had succeeded Elizabeth on the throne of England in 1603: a purely personal union. He established the first "Union Jack", combining the Scots cross of St. Andrew and the English St. George's cross, while confirming the continued use of the old National flags. This new Union Jack was restricted to Royal ship, in 1634 by King Charles I.

Very numerous examples are found of ships flying saltire flags alone in the 1600s it became a true national flag at sea during that time. In -- 1672 our Public Register of Arms in Scotland was established, the St. Andrews Cross was recorded as the Arms and Badge of the Kingdom of Scotland and the arms of many seaports show ships flying the St. Andrews Cross. - Sometimes the St. Andrew flag forms a canton in a larger red flag, presumably for better visibility; as represented in the 1669 flag book edited by Sierksma.

In the 17th Century, Scottish regiments carried the saltire as their colours, at home and as mercenaries in foreign armies. The Royal Scots, our oldest unit originated as a combination of Scottish regiments from Sweden and France, and carried the saltire, commemorated on a recent stamp (1983). In the civil wars of the 1600s in the British isles, the Scottish Army - fought first with Cromwell against Charles I and then for Charles II -- against Cromwell, who eventually defeated us in 1652: many Scottish saltire colours were captured by him. He then incorporated Scotland with - England, in the new State Arms, the Lion Rampant was abolished and the saltire substituted; but in 1660 the monarchy was restored and Scotland again became independent. Since 1681 the Earl of Lauderdale has the title of "Hereditary Bearer for his Majesty of the Scottish National Flag."

In 1707 occurred the Treaty of Union between Scotland and England, and the Union Jack became the National flag of Great Britain.

But the St. Andrew's Flag has continued in use at home in Scotland and when Scotland is represented on the international scene: it was used in Prince Charles Eduard Stuart's rebellion in 1745.

For a while in the 19th and early 20th centuries the Lion Rampant flag became very popular to fly in Scotland - which is quite wrong, indeed illegal. But the saltire has now regained its status as the everywhere recognized National flag of Scotland, altho many football fans still wave the lion flag. Public buidings in Scotland have two staffs and the Union Jack and St. Andrew's flag: fly side by side.

In the sporting fielding apart-from the Olympic games-Scotland is represented independantly, e.g. in World Cup Football, Rugby, Golf, Swimming and in the Commonwealth games: there are few "British" teams. Curiously, the English supporters generally use Union Jacks! Scottish never do. But then, if one asks 100 Englishmen, what is the flag of England? 99 reply, the Union Jack! The Union Jack is not a popular flag in Scotland. I show a few examples of the saltires use on International occasions, including Curling. Scottish teams play in blue and white.

The St. Andrew's cross is now used by many bodies, private and public, in many logos and adaptions, sometimes combined with Scotland's other national emblems, the lion rampant and the thistle plant badge -as in the stylized thistle of the SNP- and sometimes with Celtic symbols. I show you illustrations of a parade of Scottish Nationalists with a variety of devices and logos incorporating the saltire; and also the armorial shields of a variety of organizations. From the bank of Scotland to the Grocers' Federations.

On interesting modern use occurs in our Football League Championship. The Champion team receives as a prize a flag of St. Andrew, in the - team colours; with an appropriate inscription. I show you some of those "Championship flags", Rangers, Celtic, Dundee United and Aberdeen FC. (who beat Real Madrid in the 1983 Cupwinners Cup of Europe, final). The saltire is of a shape very suitable for inscribing words round it and this is very common.

Other national flags derived from the St. Andrew's Cross are those of Nova Scotia, the Confederacy and some of its states, the Shetlands, Tsarist Russia and the P & O shipping flag (possibly).

Scotland is the home of tartan (where the crossing of the coloured threads suggests the saltire) the Kilt, Celtic Art and design: these are often -- intertwined with heraldry and vexillology: Tartan patterns are recorded in the Public Register of arms. I show you some examples of Clan Chief's standards; and finally the Saint Andrew's flag proudly flying from the trunk of a newly-cut pine tree, founded in a pile of rocko, on a stormy day by the shore of a remote estuary encircled by the wild mountains of Northern Scotland.

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