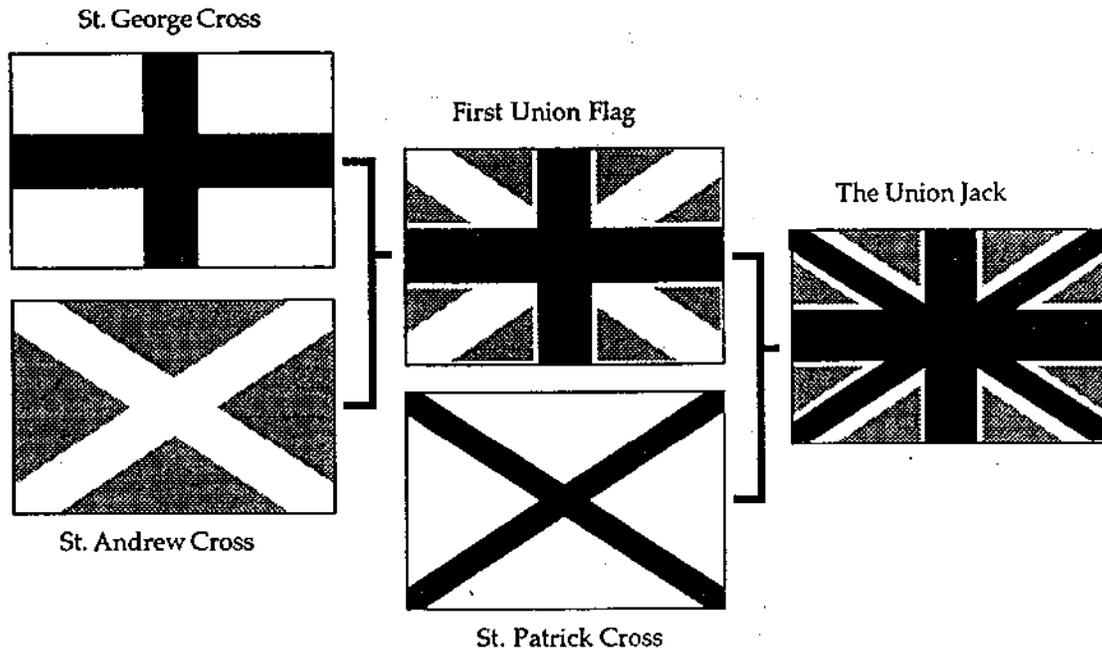


THE LOYALIST FLAG



The First Union Flag, which came into being in England in the year 1606, is the flag that symbolizes the heritage of the United Empire Loyalists. Created at the command of James I of England (formerly James VI of Scotland), it symbolized the unity of those two countries under his rule. The flag was composed of the Cross of St. George, patron saint of England (a red cross on a white background), and the Cross of St. Andrew, patron saint of Scotland (a diagonal white cross on a blue background).

Neither the English nor the Scots welcomed the new flag. Each complained that its part of the flag was blurred or obliterated by that of the other. Their protests, however, were to no avail, and a new union flag, which was to fly in many new and strange lands, was born. The flag was intended chiefly for use at sea, to be flown on the mainmasts. By 1707, the flag, then known as the Union Jack, was accepted without question as the flag of the British Empire. The word "Jack" comes from the same root as "Jacket" and refers to the coat that warriors and knights wore for protection as early as the Crusades. The cross of the patron saint of each warrior was sewn on his surcoat and served as identification.

It was such a flag that the British explorers, and later the settlers, brought to Canada during those early years of our country's history. This flag was flown on the ships of such explorers as Henry Hudson and James Cook. It flew from the ramparts of the Hudson's Bay Company trading posts and the British military forts all over the world. The forces of Gen. James Wolfe and Col. George Washington marched behind this flag during the Seven Years War in America, and it replaced the French *fleur-de-lis* on the fortifications of Louisbourg and the Upper Town of Quebec when those strongholds fell to the British in 1758 and 1759, respectively. It flew from the masts of the ships that brought the despised tea belonging to the East India Company to Boston in 1773.

When the Continental Congress of the Thirteen Colonies adopted the “Stars and Stripes” in 1777, forces loyal to the British government continued to display the First Union Flag. Indeed, the First Union Flag still flies at colonial historic sites in the United States. When the United Empire Loyalists left the United States for their new homes in British North America, they brought their flag with them.

The Union Jack, that we know today, became the official flag of Great Britain in 1801, when the cross of St. Patrick (a diagonal red cross on a white field) was incorporated in the first Union Jack. (Refer to the flow diagram at the top of the previous page.)

In 1892, the Canadian Red Ensign — a red flag with the Union Jack in the upper corner next to the staff and the Canadian Coat-of-Arms to the right — became the official flag of Canadian merchant ships. Both the Ensign and the Union Jack were accepted as Canada's flags until 1965, when the Canadian Parliament approved a distinctive national flag.

The Union Jack is flown in Canada today as the national flag of the United Kingdom and as a symbol of Canada's membership in the Commonwealth and her allegiance to Queen Elizabeth II, the Queen of Canada. It is flown during Royal visits, for example, and is flown, along with Canada's national flag, on such occasions as the official observance of Her Majesty the Queen's birthday (the Monday preceding May 25).



The First Union Flag, now recognized as a symbol of the United Empire Loyalists

Originally the symbol of the union of two peoples, today the First Union Flag represents the unity of the British Empire for which the Loyalists stood. In addition, it reminds us of the traditions of peace, order and good government that the Loyalists upheld and brought with them to their new homes.