

“Battle Born” Vexillology: The Nevada State Flag and Its Predecessors

James J. Ferrigan III

Salute the rugged son of the Star-Spangled Banner!
State Flag of Nevada!
Like its sire flung to the breeze Battle born
Behold! The fulfilled wish of immortal Lincoln!¹

In 1934 when Lester Summerfield penned this piece of patriotic doggerel people were paying scant attention to the new state flag. There were but seven in existence.² This was an inauspicious beginning for the flag of the state that has had an odd and unintentional love affair with flags. Nevada has the dubious honor of having had more state flags than any other state in the union. The legislature has considered five and the governors have approved four flags. Nevada is also a vexillological curiosity in that Nevada is the only state in which every county has adopted a flag.³ Further, Nevada is the only state with two governor’s flags, one civil and one military.⁴

Origins

The use of symbols by a nation’s internal political subdivisions can be traced back to antiquity. In modern times the practice evolved from feudal Europe and was an outgrowth of the social science of heraldry. As dukedoms became

¹ *Nevada State Journal*, 6 May 1934.

² *Sparks Tribune*, 24 Apr. 1936.

³ Thomas C. Wilson, “The County Flag Array . . .,” in *The Final Report of The Nevada Centennial Commission* (Reno: Reno Printing, 1964), 40–41.

⁴ *Las Vegas Age*, 7 Dec. 1934; Frederic C. Gale, *State of Nevada, Flag of the Governor* (Carson City: Governor’s Office, 22 May 1968).

part of kingdoms, and kingdoms part of empires, the constituent units retained various symbols, among them flags. Indeed, these flags often became rally points for revolts against old (or new) order.

In North America there are similar origins. State flags can be traced to the creation of state navies during the American Revolution.⁵ The need to identify vessels, and by extension yards and docks, as state property gave rise to the first true state flags. The various militias also used flags and colors that identified state military organizations. As the state militias and navies were either absorbed or disbanded, most actual state flags fell into disuse. During the War of 1812 and the Mexican War, the use of state flags and colors was revived as needed. It was after the Civil War that many Union and some of the former Confederate states came to honor their former battle flags as official state flags. This was especially true during and after the Centennial Exposition, held in Philadelphia in 1876, when 19 of the 38 states participating had flags.⁶ Nevada was not among them.

The desire for a general usage state flag gained impetus during the next half century. State fairs, the launching of namesake warships, construction of state capitols, national expositions, and the Spanish-American War all helped prompt states to adopt flags.⁷ Another unlikely source of motivation was the publication of an all-color, all-inclusive article on state flags in the October 1917 *National Geographic Magazine*.⁸ All 48 states submitted flags, although not all had been officially adopted. By the time of the 1926 Sesquicentennial all 48 states had officially adopted flags.⁹

Nevada Statehood to 1905

When the State of Nevada was created in October 1864, no thought was given to state flags. The territory never had a flag, only a seal, which depicted a miner in period dress holding a Stars and Stripes.

The adoption of any state symbols, other than the Great Seal of the State of Nevada, would have to wait until 1865. In January, the legislature

⁵Edward W. Richardson, *Standards and Colors of the American Revolution* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982), 1–9.

⁶Whitney Smith, *The Flag Book of the United States* (New York: William Morrow and Co., 1975), 92.

⁷Smith, *United States*, 92.

⁸Gilbert Grosvenor, ed., “Our State Flags,” *The National Geographic Magazine*, 32 (Oct. 1917): 325–41.

⁹Smith, *United States*, 92.

unanimously created a judicial seal for its supreme court.¹⁰ It is interesting to note that the seal contains the allegorical female goddess of liberty and her attributes of liberty, a pole with cap. She is accompanied by an American Eagle and stylized flag in shield form, rather than the more familiar goddess of blind justice with her sword and scales.

Other than the addition of a new star to the Stars and Stripes, statehood for Nevada created no new official flags. No record or surviving example of regimental or battalion colors exist for Nevada's two Civil War military units. Based on surviving examples in other western states, it is highly unlikely that the colors would have deviated significantly from the regimental and national flags issued by the War Department.¹¹ Since the various Nevada cavalry and infantry companies were dispersed over a wide area and never paraded as a unit, it is probable that none were ever issued.¹²

To say that Nevada was uninterested in flags would be incorrect. In the Comstock, a Nevada regional silver rush that began in 1859, the celebration of the "Glorious Fourth" was always a loud, ceremonious and festive occasion, especially during the Civil War, the heyday of the Comstock. One Comstock pioneer, Alf Doten, described Virginia City as a "wilderness of flags" on the fourth.¹³ While there are no references to a Nevada "state flag," there are many references to "Nevada," the "ship of state," the goddess of Liberty, and other flags.¹⁴ Two of these flags are of particular interest. In 1865, a fabulous American flag was paraded in Virginia City. Mr. Doten also observed, "In the procession were borne numerous flags and banners of great beauty, some costing as high as \$500.00, being made of the heaviest silk with gold bullion fringe and tassels and stars embroidered on the union in gold and silver thread."¹⁵ Such a flag is preserved but not exhibited at the Nevada Historical Society. It is from the Miners Union Hall in Virginia City. It is a 36-star U.S. flag, appropriate to the period. What is significant is that thirty-five of the stars are arranged in a Great Star pattern (all of the stars form a large five-pointed star centered in the blue canton). Each of the Great Star's arms contains seven gold stars. In the center of this Great Star is a large silver star. The obvious symbolism is that Nevada, the Silver State,

¹⁰"An Act Concerning the Courts of Justice of This State, and Judicial Officers," in *Statutes of the State of Nevada, 1864-1865* (Carson City, Nev.: State Printer, n.d.), 117-18.

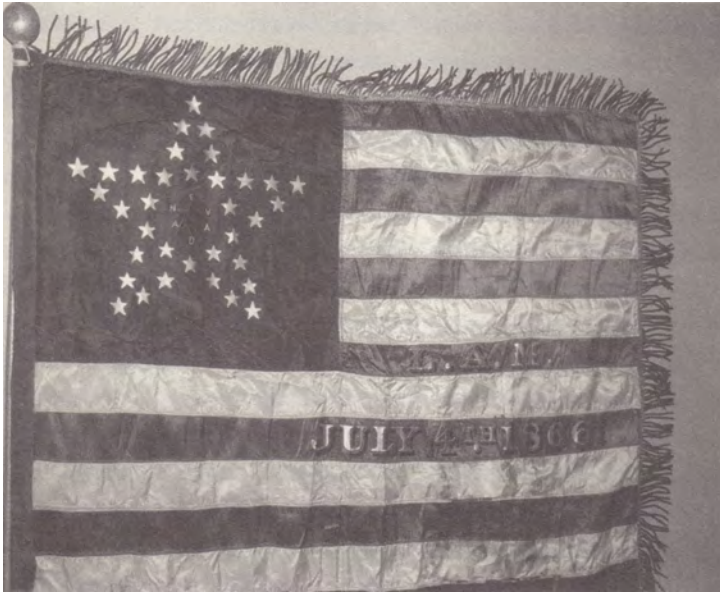
¹¹Frederic Todd, correspondence with author, 18 Oct. 1975.

¹²Todd, correspondence.

¹³Walter Van Tilburg Clark, ed., *The Journals of Alfred Doten 1849-1903* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1973), 1798.

¹⁴Clark, 841.

¹⁵Clark, 842.



Great Star pattern U.S. flag carried by Louise Altea Meyer in July 4th 1866 parade.

has taken its place in the constellation-forming union. This interpretation is supported by a second U.S. flag preserved, also not exhibited, at the Nevada State Museum. This flag has a Great Star consisting of thirty-six stars and is inscribed "L.A.M., July 4th 1866." It was carried by Louise Altea Meyer in the Virginia City parade that year. Like the Miners Union flag, it is silk with thirty-five gold stars. It differs in that the large central silver star had six points and at the tip of each point, reading clockwise, are the letters "N-E-V-A-D-A." These so-called Great Star pattern U.S. flags were common in the nineteenth century.¹⁶ It is the use of the single large silver star that makes these flags Nevadan. These flags are the earliest known that represent the Silver State, but they are still within the context of a national flag. There was still no distinctive state flag. Presumably, this star arrangement was sufficient to represent the new state. The symbolism was apparent to the viewer.

In 1872 and 1880, the first scholarly history of the U.S. flag was published.¹⁷ The author, Rear Admiral Henry Preble, included a section on

¹⁶Boleslaw Mastai and Marie-Louise D'Otrange Mastai, *The Stars and the Stripes* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1975), 99–123.

¹⁷George Henry Preble, *History of the Flag of the United States* (Boston: A. Williams and Co., 1880), 1.

the flag of each state. For Nevada, Admiral Preble corresponded with Mr. Chauncy Noteware, the secretary of state, and Miss Frances Hodgkinson, state library clerk, and was told, "Nevada has no state flag but is proud to float the Stars and Stripes."¹⁸ This Nevada did until 1905.

Near the end of the century, the Spanish-American War provided an opportunity to adopt flags representing the state's military. Nevada raised two regiments, one each of cavalry and infantry. Again, there are no records to indicate that any distinctive flag was adopted or issued. If one had been, it most assuredly would have followed the general practice of placing a state emblem on a blue field.

The Sparks-Day Flag of 1905

The paucity of state flags in the nineteenth century was remedied in the twentieth century by their proliferation. Nevada's first state flag was adopted by the 22nd session of the legislature in February 1905.¹⁹ The flag, dark blue with silver-gold inscriptions and stars, was overtly symbolic of the precious metals produced by the state's then dominant industry, mining.

Accurate information about this flag is sparse. It was designed by Governor John Sparks and Adjutant General Harry Day.²⁰ They then ordered one made. At Governor Sparks' solicitation, a bill was introduced by Senator N. W. Ruff (Silver-Democrat, Washoe County) to adopt it as a state flag. The bill quickly passed the Senate but was the butt of some jokes by assembly Democrats who moved that the matter be tabled. Others suggested modifying the design with sagebrush. It was finally moved that a page go and get the flag from the governor so that the assembly might gaze upon it. After more ridicule for the flag from the assembly Democrats, the bill was called and passed.²¹ The bill was approved by the governor on 25 February 1905.²² The flag had already been fabricated, but for what purpose, and to what use it was put after approval, we have no record. It was never mass produced; in fact, only one was made so it must have had limited use. Nevertheless it remained official until 1915.

¹⁸Preble, 650.

¹⁹*Tonopah Bonanza*, 20 Feb. 1905.

²⁰Maude Sawin Taylor, "Nevada Has Known Many Flags Since 1760s," *Nevada State Journal*, 22 Oct. 1950.

²¹*Reno Evening Gazette*, 20 Feb. 1905.

²²"An Act Adopting the Design of the Flag of the State of Nevada," in *Statutes of the State of Nevada, 1905* (Carson City, Nev.: State Printing Office, 1906), 42.



Courtesy Nevada Historical Society

The Sparks-Day flag of 1905. This flag is currently (as of Fall 1993) preserved at the Nevada Historical Society in Reno. It is being studied for potential conservation and ultimate display.

The Crisler Flag of 1915

The act adopting the flag of 1905 was repealed in 1915 by the twenty-seventh session of the legislature.²³ The bill made rapid progress, being introduced by Assemblyman C.G. Smith (Republican, Humboldt) on 11 March, and approved by the governor on 22 March.²⁴ The flag this bill did establish was much more ornate than its predecessor. The blue field was retained, as were the eighteen gold and the eighteen silver stars. The inscription “NEVADA” was reduced in size and moved upward. Inserted into the center of the field was a stylized shield containing the principal design elements of the state seal. It was executed in traditional Victorian pictorial heraldic style with approximately forty colors. This flag was designed by Carson City school

²³Memorandum, Dana R. Bennett, *Nevada Flags*, 1989, file 19.235, Legislative Counsel Bureau, Carson City, Nevada.

²⁴“An Act Creating an Official Flag for the State of Nevada, and Prescribing the Words, Letters, and Devices to Be Contained Thereon, and Repealing All Other Acts in Relation Thereto,” in *Statutes of the State of Nevada, 1915* (Carson City, Nev.: State Printing Office, 1915), 251–52.



Crisler flag of 1915.

teacher Clara Crisler.²⁵

Although this design was made official in 1915, it appears, as is so often the case, that it had been in use prior to its adoption by the legislature. Miss Crisler's flag was first described in 1912.²⁶ It was also the design of the state flags used for the Semi-Centennial of Statehood celebrations held at the University of Nevada, Reno in October 1914.²⁷ The combination of the Semi-Centennial, the Panama-Pacific Exposition of 1915, and the launching of the USS *Nevada* in 1916 inspired this new design. The flag figured prominently in all of these ceremonial events.

The official state flag presented to the USS *Nevada* was made by the M. C. Lilley Co. of Columbus, Ohio. Miss Crisler corresponded with Mr. Lilley and was told that this flag was the finest his company had ever made. Through her efforts the flag was presented to the vessel in the name of the Women's Relief Corps of Nevada by the Hon. E. E. Roberts, Nevada's congressman.²⁸

Based on both surviving examples and photographs, it appears that

²⁵ Maude Sawin Taylor, *From My Nevada Notebook* (Sparks: Western Printing and Publishing Co., 1965), 11.

²⁶ Taylor, *Notebook*, 11.

²⁷ Jeanne Elizabeth Wier, *The Celebration of Nevada's Semicentennial of Statehood* (Carson City: State Printing Office, 1917), 12.

²⁸ Taylor, *Notebook*, 11.

at least four attempts were made to manufacture this flag. The extreme complexity of the design kept the costs high, and the flag was never widely used.

The Schellback Design of 1926–1929

The high cost of the 1915 flag precluded its widespread use. It was relegated to the state's namesake battleship, the governor's office, and to the occasional ceremony. This lack of use was one of the factors which led Lieutenant Governor Maurice Sullivan to change the flag.

In 1926, Lieutenant Governor Sullivan felt a more economic flag would allow for its greater use by schools. To encourage this he organized a flag contest. The prize was to be \$25.00 and the honor of having designed the flag. The contest was announced in June 1926 and the entries could be submitted until 10 October of that year.²⁹

At the thirty-third session of the legislature in 1927 the senate and the assembly both appointed members to serve on select committees. These committees were to judge the various designs. On 26 June 1927 the assembly committee concurred with the senate's and a winning design was chosen.³⁰ The winner was "Don" Louis Schellback III, a state highway department artist-draftsman. The flag was to be displayed at the inaugural ball.³¹ This design also retained the blue field but replaced the ornate seal with a half wreath of sagebrush, a silver star, and a golden scroll bearing the state's slogan "Battle Born." Curiously, after all this work, Lieutenant Governor Sullivan's efforts were thwarted. The 1927 legislature did not even consider a bill creating a new state flag. The 1915 banner remained official.³²

In 1929, at the thirty-fourth session, Senator William Dressler (Democrat, Washoe) introduced S.B. 51, repealing the 1915 flag and officially adopting the Schellback design. The bill passed the senate without amendment.³³

In the assembly, Mr. C. C. Boak (Republican, Nye), the former postmaster of Tonopah, noticed that the flag did not say "NEVADA." Accordingly, he introduced an amendment to S.B. 51 to include the letters "N-E-V-A-D-A" around the star.

It is interesting to note that this revision is highly reminiscent of the Meyer flag of 1866. It would be tempting indeed to assume some direct

²⁹*Nevada State Journal*, 17 June 1926.

³⁰Memorandum, Bennett.

³¹*Nevada State Journal*, 27 Jan. 1927.

³²*Nevada State Journal*, 24 July 1927.

³³Memorandum, Bennett.

link between these two flags, or even that Mr. Boak knew of the Meyer flag. However, this has not been established and remains only conjectural.

The senate, however, would not concur with the assembly amendment. Further, the assembly would not recede. It was decided to resolve the impasse through negotiation.

A conference committee from both houses was established and a compromise was reached. In this compromise the word "NEVADA" would be added to the flag. But, instead of placing the letters around the star, the letters would be placed horizontally on the field, under the emblem. No color was given for the letters. On the last day of the session, both houses adopted the committee report.³⁴

However, this design was not meant to be. The committee report was left out of the final draft, and instead S.B. 51, as amended by the Assembly, was approved by the governor on 26 March 1929.³⁵

Thus, from 1929 until 1991, Nevada flew an official flag, which did not reflect legislative intent. Sadly, there are no archival records from 1926 or 1929 that record these designs and modifications.

The In-Between Years, 1930 to 1990

The Schellback design, as modified by the assembly, would be official for sixty-two years. It would never attain the level of popularity that Lieutenant Governor Sullivan sought for it. The flag was definitely easier and more economical to mass produce than the Crisler design. However, being adopted on the eve of the Depression did not help foster the flag's widespread use. Even the state's namesake battleship was not presented with a new state flag.³⁶ The Depression and World War II did nothing to promote the flag, and its use was intermittent. It would not come into the public eye again for more than two decades.

However, the "in-between years" were not to be a hiatus for flags in the state. What follows is an annotated chronology of Nevada's vexillological activity.

In 1934, the Board of Capitol Commissioners ordered an official flag for the governor as commander-in-chief of the state's military forces. The

³⁴Memorandum, Bennett.

³⁵"An Act Creating an Official Flag for the State of Nevada, and Prescribing the Words, Letters and Devices to be Contained Thereon, and Repealing All Other Acts in Relation Thereto," in *Statutes of the State of Nevada, 1929* (Carson City, Nev.: State Printing Office, 1929), 193.

³⁶*Sparks Tribune*, 24 Apr. 1936.



Courtesy Nevada Historical Society

The Schellback design in use 1929–1991.

design was similar to the new flag except that the emblem was placed in the center and a five-pointed white star was added to each corner. This was symbolic of the fact that all state governors are ex-officio four-star generals of their state's military establishments.

World War II saw the usual patriotic displays, but as in the days of the Comstock, the displays were primarily national in focus. The postwar era would see the rise of gaming as the state's principal industry. In 1953 a new flag design was proposed. Looking for new ways to promote the state, the Chambers of Commerce of Reno, Las Vegas, and Elko supported a flag change.³⁷ The design was the creation of the Thomas C. Wilson Advertising Agency which had samples of the new flag produced for Senators Kenneth F. Johnson (Republican, Ormsby) and John E. Robbins (Democrat, Elko). These senators introduced S.B. 231 to change the state flag. This design was a radical change. The background was to be a tricolor of blue, white, and silver with a silhouette of the state in red in the center stripe. The bill passed both houses and was sent Governor Russell, who promptly vetoed it without comment.³⁸

The year 1964 saw the adoption of flags by every county as a way to

³⁷ *Nevada State Journal*, 20 Mar. 1953.

³⁸ Memorandum, Bennett.



1953 Nevada flag proposal.

locally celebrate the centennial of statehood. Fascinating as they are, they must be mentioned only in passing.

In 1967 the legislature adopted a flag. White with appropriate blue and gold devices, it made Nevada one of the few states with such a flag. It flies in front of the legislature only when it is in session.

In 1968 the state acquired its second governor's flag. This flag reflected the governor's role as chief executive officer. It flies at the governor's mansion in Carson City.

The 1929 flag would survive an attempt to change it in 1973 when the Hon. Laurence Jacobsen (Republican, Minden) submitted legislation calling upon “the students of Nevada” to submit new flag designs.³⁹ The resolution passed the assembly but died in the senate for lack of action.⁴⁰

The legislature would not change the state flag with the scrambled lettering around the star, and it also took little interest in the state flags used in its chambers. In 1984, the flags that had been on display since the opening of the new capitol building in 1971 were replaced. At that time a condition report was made. It was discovered that the assembly flag was only one-sided. However, an even more glaring error was that the senate's state flag omitted

³⁹ *Nevada State Journal*, 18 Apr. 1973.

⁴⁰ Nevada Legislature, *Journal of the Senate*, 57th sess., 1973.

the silver star entirely on both sides of the flag!⁴¹ Clearly little attention was being paid to the flag and its manufacture. It would be the juxtaposition of two unrelated events in 1991 that allowed for the most recent modification of the state flag.

The Raggio Modification of 1991

During the sixty-sixth session of the legislature, Senator William Raggio (Republican, Washoe) introduced S.B. 396 on 10 April 1991. This bill would alter the 1929 flag by taking the word “NEVADA” from around the star’s points and placing it on a curved line within the wreath of the sagebrush, but below the star. To accompany this bill, Carson City artist Vern Horton prepared a mock-up of the new design.⁴²

Unknown to Raggio, the state’s director of General Services, Terry Sullivan, was already concerned about the lack of uniformity in flags produced by various manufacturers.⁴³ In late 1989, Director Sullivan contacted suppliers regarding the lack of uniformity in the production of flags. Of chief concern was the great variety in the depiction and placement of the half-wreath of sagebrush.⁴⁴ Director Sullivan was told, by at least two suppliers, that since the interpretations conformed to the “letter of the law” they had no intention of asking their manufacturers to change their printing screens.⁴⁵ Since each flag company’s art department was free to interpret the design, there were as many “official” flags as there were successful bidders.

Unaware of Senator Raggio’s intentions, Director Sullivan called a meeting, coincidentally on 10 April 1991.⁴⁶ Present at the meeting were members of the state’s purchasing staff, last year’s successful bidder, and the author of this paper. At the meeting Director Sullivan briefed those present about the uniformity problem. This author noted that while it was true that a “legal” description of the flag existed, there was no specification or drawing from which to create consistent artwork. Director Sullivan produced a mock-up of a proposed emblem, the merits of which were discussed by those present. Copies of illustrations of the state flag were exchanged as were examples of

⁴¹Memorandum, Robert E. Erickson, *Flags in Legislative Building*, 1989, file 19.235, Legislative Counsel Bureau, Carson City, Nevada.

⁴²Nevada Legislature, Senate Committee on Government Affairs, 66th sess., meeting on S.B. 396, 26 Apr. 1991, exhibit C.

⁴³Terry Sullivan, interview with author, 13 Dec. 1991.

⁴⁴Sullivan.

⁴⁵Sullivan.

⁴⁶Sullivan.

specification drawings for the California state flag. The meeting adjourned and everyone agreed to stay in contact. On 11 April 1991, Director Sullivan called the author and discussed the possibility of promulgating a set of specifications for the state. At that time it was noted that the press had reported on Senator Raggio's bill.⁴⁷ It was decided to wait and see what action the legislature took.

Both Director Sullivan and the author closely watched the progress of S.B. 396. Both testified at a senate committee hearing on 26 April and urged the bill's positive recommendation to the senate. Incidentally, it was during the senate hearings that Senator Raggio revealed his motivation for introducing his bill. When he was a Boy Scout at camp, he noticed that the Nevada flag was hard to read. He had always remembered that, and now he was in a position to do something about it. The committee decided in favor of S.B. 396, providing that it had no fiscal impact on the price of flags and that the design changes would cost the state nothing. With the committee's endorsement, the bill passed the senate on 15 May 1991.

In the assembly the procedure was similar. The assembly committee met on 28 May and again both Director Sullivan and the author testified for the bill. The assembly committee concurred and also recommended passage for S.B. 396. They also expressed similar fiscal concerns.

The assembly voted on 30 May. The vote was 40 yeas and 2 nays. The nays were the Hon. Ken Haller (Democrat, Washoe) and the Hon. Warren B. Hardy (Republican, Clark). Mr. Haller said he voted against the bill because he thought it was a "garbage bill" that would cost money and do nothing.⁴⁸ Mr. Hardy voted against S.B. 396 as a protest "because the previous bill was to vote money to the Nevada Historical Society, to preserve our past, and then here we go changing it."⁴⁹

S.B. 396 was sent to Governor Robert "Bob" Miller on 3 June and approved by him on 8 June 1991.⁵⁰ The flag statute is known as Nevada Revised Statutes section 235.020. The passage of S.B. 396 delayed the official implementation of the design until Nevada Day, 31 October 1991. However, it was the desire of both the Governor and Director Sullivan to have a "first" hoisting ceremony of the new flag in front of the capitol on Flag Day, 14 June. Since there were no new flags in existence and no specifications yet

⁴⁷ *Reno Gazette-Journal*, 11 Apr. 1991.

⁴⁸ Hon. Ken Haller (Democrat, Washoe), interview with author, Nov. 1991.

⁴⁹ Hon. Warren B. Hardy (Republican, Clark), interview with author, 13 Dec. 1991.

⁵⁰ "An Act Relating to the State Flag; Changing Its Design; and Providing Other Matters Properly Relating Thereto," in *Statutes of the State of Nevada, 1991* (Carson City, Nev.: State Printing Office, 1991), 773–74.

written by which to manufacture them, it was decided to alter existing flags in order to have them for the Flag Day ceremony. Two flags were produced by cannibalizing Nevada emblems and adding the rearranged star and lettering.

Once S.B. 396 became law, it was up to Director Sullivan to have new flags ordered. It was decided that since it was the goal of Senator Raggio to more closely reflect the “intent” of the 1929 legislature by placing the word “NEVADA” on a horizontal line, but within the wreath so as not to radically alter the familiar sixty-two-year-old design, the original 1926 Schellback design would be used as a basis for the new specification.

However, since it had already been discovered that no original specifications existed and that Mr. Schellback’s original artwork was lost, it was decided to find a 1929-era flag to copy. Incredibly, none could be located in any public or private collection. In fact the oldest 1929-pattern flag in the state was of postwar manufacture. Fortunately the Nevada Historical Society had a photograph of the original flag, and this became the basis for the 1991 specification.⁵¹

Thus no attempt was made to create a new design, but rather to restore Mr. Schellback’s design to its rightful place while still incorporating the specified modifications. In promulgating the new specifications, it was decided to break the emblem into its basic design components and tackle them one at a time.

Since S.B. 396 only really changed the lettering and since the lettering was the result of Mr. Boak’s amendment, the scroll, star, and half-wreath were described as they appeared in the photograph of the 1929 flag. In addition, the constraints imposed by both the senate and assembly committees prohibited the spending of any state funds, so it was decided to do all art work “in house.” The only problem with this was that the State of Nevada had no art department in the Department of General Services.

At the suggestion of the author, it was pointed out that the state currently produced excellent quality maps. Accordingly, the creation of the specification drawings was turned over to the Nevada Department of Transportation. (Ironically this was the same department that employed Mr. Schellback in 1926.) After several sessions, artwork was approved.

Since the law assigned colors to the flag and none had been specified before, it was decided at the time of the legislative hearings to leave this to the Department of General Services. The author and Director Sullivan compared several sample flags and then assigned the colors described in the

⁵¹Dept. of General Services, State of Nevada, *Specifications, Flag, State of Nevada (Un-mounted)* (Carson City: State Printing Office, 1991).

act to industry-standard colors from the Pantone Matching System. At the time it was observed that if we did not do this, it was anybody’s guess what color green a manufacturer’s art department would assign to Nevada’s state flower, sagebrush.

After the specifications were completed, copies were sent to Nevada flag dealers to secure bids. The first flags were ordered for hoisting on the large poles in front of the Capitol on Nevada Day, 31 October 1991. The first printing was given special markings and hoisted by the author and an officer of the Capitol Police. These numbered flags were then taken to the governor’s office for distribution to prominent Nevadans.

Thus, Mr. Schellback’s design, and not a manufacturer’s variant, is the basis for the 1991 version.

Since all the changes were effected in house and within the 1991 budget, the modifications had no fiscal effect. Perhaps now the dream of Lieutenant Governor Sullivan — a flag flying over every school — will become a reality.

Appendix A: 1991 Nevada State Flag Specifications



Senate Bill No. 396

Introduced by Senators Raggio, Adler, Coffin, Cook, Getto, Glomb, Jacobsen, Neal, Nevin, O'Connell, O'Donnell, Rawson, Rhoads, Shaffer, Smith, Titus, Townsend, Tyler and Vergiels

Section 1. NRS 235.020 is hereby amended to read as follows:

235.020 The official flag of the State of Nevada is hereby created. The body of the flag must be of solid cobalt blue. On the field in the upper left quarter thereof must be two sprays of sagebrush with the stems crossed at the bottom to form a half wreath. Within the sprays must be a five-pointed silver star with one point up. The word "Nevada" must also be inscribed below the star and above the sprays, in a semicircular pattern with the letters spaced apart in equal increments, in the same style of letters as the words "Battle Born." Above the wreath, and touching the tips thereof, must be a scroll bearing the words "Battle Born." The scroll and the word "Nevada" must be golden-yellow. The lettering on the scroll must be black-colored sans serif gothic capital letters.

Sec. 2. 1. Any state flag made on or after October 1, 1991, must bear the design described pursuant to the amendatory provisions of section 1 of this act.

2. A state flag made before October 1, 1991, may be displayed notwithstanding the amendatory provisions of this act.

Bob Miller

BOB MILLER, Governor

Cheryl Lau

CHERYL LAU, Secretary of State

Terry Sullivan

TERRY SULLIVAN, Director of Department of General Services

Phyllis Williams

PHYLLIS WILLIAMS, Administrator of Division of Purchasing

STATE OF NEVADA



Specifications

FLAG, STATE OF NEVADA (Unmounted)

I. PURPOSE

These specifications establish, in minimum, acceptable requirements for manufacture of the official State Flag of Nevada, as provided for in Nevada Revised Statute 235.020 of 1929 and as amended in 1991.

II. APPLICABLE SPECIFICATIONS

- A. The following specifications, with their latest revisions, shall form a part of this specification and be in effect on any State of Nevada bid opening date.
 1. Bunting (fabric)
 - (a) Cotton, Federal Specification CCC-C-439.
 - (b) Nylon, Federal Specification CCC-C-476.
 - (c) Nylon-Wool, Federal Specification CCC-C-476E.
 2. Colorfastness, Federal Specification CCC-T-191.
 3. Colors, Pantone Matching System, Pantone, Inc., Current Edition.
 4. Thread, Federal Specification V-T-276.
 5. Stitching, Federal Standard No. 751.
 6. Type, Compugraphic Corp., The Type Book, current edition.
 7. Flag, Federal Specification DDD-F-416e.
 8. Procedures for sampling and inspection, United States Military Standard, MIL-STD-105.
- B. All other details pertaining to State of Nevada Flags not specifically mentioned in this specification must conform to Federal Specification DDD-F-416e, or any special and/or temporary specification issued by the State of Nevada, Department of General Services, Purchasing Division.

III. REQUIREMENTS

A. MATERIALS

1. Materials used in the manufacture of this flag shall be of first quality and shall conform to the following requirements:
 - (a) *Bunting* shall be of any of the aforementioned fabrics. When applicable, the warp thread shall be in the fly (longitudinal) directions.
 - (b) *Duck* white, bleached of 8 ounce minimum weight per yard. Grade A.
 - (c) *Dyes*, all emblems must be *died*. All dyes used in coloring the emblems and on fields of finished flags must be of quality and type or class that will show no appreciable change in colorfastness or nontransferability of colors to normal laundering and exposure to minimum of 60 hours of sunlight as specified using test methods in Federal Specification CCC-T-191. Flags with painted, screened with pigments or sewn emblems are not acceptable.
 - (d) *Thread*, all thread shall conform to Federal Specification U-T-276 and have a breaking strength as determined by test method 4100 of Federal Test Standard 191.
 - (e) *Grommets*, all flags to be grommeted in the duck heading with a spur type brass grommet.

B. DESIGN

The design of the State Flag of Nevada shall be as stated in Section 1 of the Nevada Revised Statutes 235.020 and all flags shall conform to the original drawing of the official State of Nevada Flag in the custody of the Administrator of the Purchasing Division. See Figures 1, 2, and 3.

REQUIREMENTS—Continued**1. COLORS**

Colors shall comply with those in the Pantone Matching System, latest edition, of Pantone, Inc. Colors shall be as follows:

Black	Pantone Black
Blue (cobalt)	Pantone No. 286
Green	Pantone No. 348
Yellow (golden)	Pantone No. 137
White (silver)	Pantone White

When tested all colors shall demonstrate colorfastness and color transferability. **Note:** These colors facilitate the economic manufacture of the flags and are not meant to be botanically or mineralogically accurate.

2. DETAILS OF DESIGN

- (a) Field, plain cobalt blue, PMS 286.
- (b) Emblem outline, a line drawing of entire outline of emblem, black in color.
- (c) Star, silver, PMS white; 5 points, 1 point up.
- (d) Half Wreath of Sagebrush—The stylized half wreath of sagebrush to be comprised of 2 crossed sprays of sagebrush each with 2 sprigs coming from a single stem. The branches at the bottom of the sprays will cross with the bottom of the fly (right hand) spray passing over the hoist (left hand) spray. The sprays will mirror images of each other. Sprays and leaves to be green, PMS 348; flowers to be golden yellow, PMS 137.
- (e) Scroll—The scroll shall be a continuous flowing ribbon of golden yellow, PMS 108. The ends to be swallow tailed. The ribbon to be in an arc above the star. The ends to be mirror images of each other.
- (f) Lettering—All lettering to conform with San Serif Gothic lettering in the Compugraphic Corporation's The Type Book.
 - (1) NEVADA—All capital letters; golden yellow, PMS 137 in color in an arc below the 2 bottom points of the star and above the wreath.
 - (2) BATTLE BORN—All capital letters; black in color centered on the scroll in an arc.

3. DIMENSIONS

- (a) The official dimensions in feet of the State of Nevada Flag shall be 2 feet by 3 feet; 3 feet by 5 feet; 4 feet by 6 feet; 5 feet by 8 feet, and 6 feet by 10 feet. Specifications for smaller or larger flags will be created upon need.
- (b) All dimensions stated are flat measurements of finished flags and contain no allowances for heading seams or hemming of flag ends.
- (c) All dimensions and references to detail are made on the obverse side or flag only. The obverse being defined as that side on which the lettering reads correctly from left to right.
- (d) A maximum tolerance of 3 percent is allowable for all dimensions.

4. DIMENSIONS OF DETAIL

- (a) Hoist or width of flag=1.
- (b) Fly or length of flag=V (varies according to Section 3, (a)).
- (c) Height and width of imaginary square containing emblem=.44.
- (d) Distance of sides of imaginary square containing emblem from upper fly, and hoist edges=.0985.

5. SEE TABLE 1 FOR PROPORTIONS OF DIMENSIONS**Table 1**

A	B	C	D
1.0	V	.44	.0985

6. EMBLEMS

All emblems are to be proportionally correct in all dimensions according to hoist size. Exception is made for 6 feet by 10 feet flags which may use the emblem for the 5 feet by 8 feet flags.

C. CONSTRUCTION

1. All flags must be single faced. That is, they must read correctly on the obverse side only. Emblems may be joined by seam or set into the field. Double emblem or double sided flags are not acceptable.

REQUIREMENTS—Continued

2. DETAILS

- (a) **Headings**—All flags shall have a finished heading 1½ inches minimum and 2 inches maximum. The bunting forming the field of the flag shall extend inside the full width of the heading to be secured by a minimum of 2 parallel rows of stitching. The heading on all flags shall be reinforced at each hoist end by extending it past the edge and either folding it over and securing it on the remaining 3 sides or tucking it under prior to grommeting.
- (b) **Grommets**—A single grommet shall be clinched at each end of the heading. The outer circumference of the grommet shall be a minimum of 1 inch and not more than 2 inches from the top or bottom of fly edge.
- (c) **Fly Edge**—The fly edge (the edge opposite the heading) shall be folded over a minimum of 2 times and stitched for reinforcement a minimum of 4 times along the entire fly edge.
- (d) **Edges**—The top and bottom fly edges must be in accordance with Federal Specification DDD-F-415e.
- (e) **Seams**—If necessary to create the field, bunting yardage may be joined by seams. All seams must conform to type LSc-2 seams of Federal Specification 751. No seam may pass through any part of the Star, Scroll, Wreaths, or Lettering of the emblem. All seams will have 12 stitches per inch minimum.

IV. WORKMANSHIP AND DELIVERY

- A. All flags must be free of defects that impair use or affect appearance. All stitching must be uniform with no pleats, twisted or puckered seams. There shall be no broken or skipped stitches. There shall be no holes, cuts, tears, or weaknesses in any of the fabric. There shall be no shade variations in any of the dyed colors. The grommets must not be affixed in a manner that will cut or tear the fabric.

B. TESTING

Any flag may be tested according to the Federal Test Method Standard 191.

C. MARKING

All flags must identify the manufacturer. The I.D. labels must be affixed to the heading. The label of the vendor or bidder may also be affixed but is not a requirement. The flags may also be marked on the heading as to size and type of bunting.

D. PACKAGING

Each flag shall be packaged individually so as to prevent soilage. Each package must accurately identify the contents as to size and type of fabric of the flag. When clear plastic is used, the flag may be folded so as to see all markings. All shipping cartons of individually packaged flags shall be in accordance with acceptable commercial practices. No carton shall be packed so as to cause the carton to burst, or to damage the individual flags. All excess space in cartons will be filled so as to allow stacking without crushing or carton distortion. All cartons will not exceed a shipping weight of 55 pounds. All cartons shall have flags of 1 size only. All cartons will be durable enough to allow for reshipment without repackaging or extra reinforcement. All cartons will comply with Rule 41, Corrugated or Solid Fiberboard Boxes of the Uniform Freight Classification, Rating, Rules and Regulations and shall be stamped with the Certificate of box marker, Section 4 of Rule 41. Gross shipping weight of carton must not exceed the weight of the certificate. Each carton shall be marked with, or contain, a packaging slip with the commodity, name of vendor, flag size, quantity and any applicable item numbers, P.O. numbers, and Sub. P.O. numbers.



Figure 1—Official Flag of the State of Nevada



Figure 2—Enlargement of Emblem

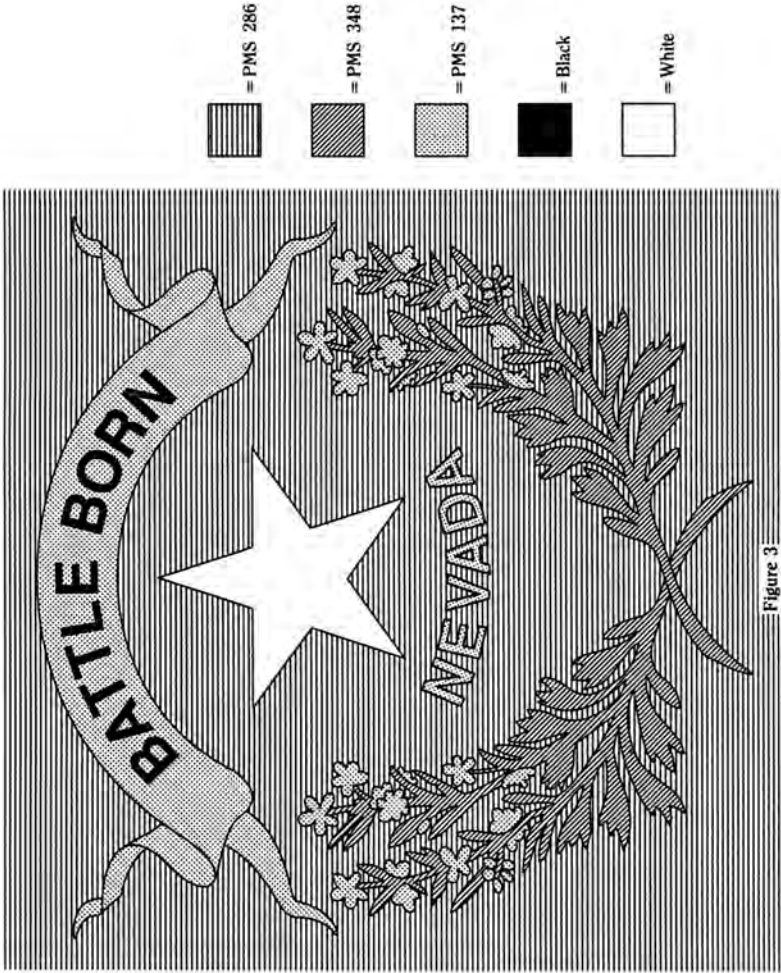


Figure 3

Assignment of Color

Acknowledgments

These specifications were formulated and issued under the authority of the Department of General Services as described in N.R.S. 235.020, a law enacted by the Nevada Legislature and enrolled in the Office of the Secretary of State.

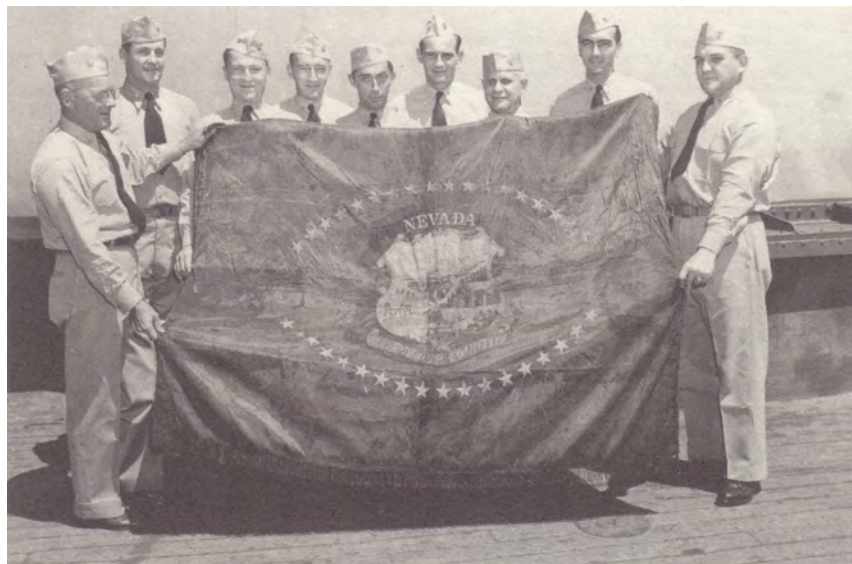
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Nevada State Museum
Nevada State Printing Division

Original design in 1926 by Don Louis Shellback.

Signed _____
TERRY SULLIVAN, *Director of Department of General Services*

Date _____



Courtesy Nevada State Museum

Ship's officers pose with the state flag aboard the *USS Nevada*, May 1945.

Appendix B: An Honored State Flag

The second pattern flag was in use from 1915 to 1929. This flag was designed by a Carson City school teacher, Miss Clara Crisler. This particular flag is one of two state flags presented to the *USS Nevada* and is believed to be the only surviving one.

The flag was presented to the new battleship upon her commissioning in 1916. It was made at the request of Nevada's Women's Relief Corps and presented to the ship, in their name, by Nevada's representative to the U.S. Congress, E. E. Roberts.

The flag was pure silk and the emblem was hand-loomed, embroidered with over forty colors. It was manufactured by M. C. Lilly and Company. Mr. Lilly wrote Miss Crisler that "this was the finest flag they had ever made."

The flag was aboard the *USS Nevada* on 7 December 1941. As a result of the attack and subsequent grounding, the flag became heavily soiled with fuel oil and was slightly damaged. It was almost lost, but an observant shipwright, Robert J. Raynor, salvaged it. He kept the flag in his possession until the *USS Nevada* returned to Hawaii.

In May 1945, Mr. Raynor requested and was granted an audience with

Captain Grosskoph to return the flag. The flag was later returned to the people of Nevada when Governor E. P. Carville accepted it back from the ship.

The flag is currently conserved in the Nevada State Museum and exhibited on special occasions only, such as the fiftieth anniversary of Pearl Harbor. Combined Gifted and Talented and Social Studies students from E. Otis Vaughn Middle School in Reno started a class project to have the flag publicly displayed, for the day, in the assembly chamber of the old capitol building in Carson City.

This was the centerpiece of the class’s observance of USS *Nevada* Day. Among the day’s events was the presentation of a commemorative USS *Nevada* medallion to a Pearl Harbor survivor, Robert Grogan of Dayton, Nevada.

The museum’s flags were in great demand for the fiftieth anniversary observance, as the group erecting a USS *Nevada* plaque in Hawaii also requested them.

Because of the students’ efforts to get these flags displayed for the people of Nevada on USS *Nevada* Day, the governor’s office recognized their efforts by presenting them with a new state flag.