

THE COLOURS OF THE FLEET

TCOF

BRITISH & BRITISH DERIVED ENSIGNS

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THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE WORLDWIDE LIST OF ALL FLAGS AND ENSIGNS, PAST AND PRESENT, WHICH BEAR THE UNION FLAG IN THE CANTON

“Build up the highway
clear it of stones
lift up an ensign over the peoples”

Isaiah 62 vv 10

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December 2011

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INTRODUCTION

The Colours of The Fleet 2010 attempts to fill a gap in the constitutional and historic records of the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth by seeking to list all British and British derived ensigns which have ever existed. Whilst primarily aimed to meet the needs and interests of vexillologists, historians, flag enthusiasts, educationalists, politicians and civic and government administrators, hopefully a wider readership may find it useful and informative too. This book (hereafter called TCOF 2K for convenience) is the latest edition of a modest publication first produced in 1994, and which has been updated progressively to reflect research carried out since then. Nevertheless many of the original entries have not been changed and some details may now be out of date. Two major omissions are the lack of a comprehensive bibliography and index, for which apologies are offered – time ran out. Attempts are made to keep the book up to date with recent or ongoing research, but this is not always achieved. Hopefully anybody discovering an error or a new ensign will let the author know.

It must be admitted that any list of over seven hundred flags, most of which are extremely obscure, could easily be sleep inducing. But this book is intended to be fun and quirky as well as a serious attempt at a formal record. No doubt readers will draw their own conclusions.

A word about vexillology

Vexillology is the study of flags, and TCOF 2K concerns an important strand of vexillology. Some years ago, whilst the author was investigating the background of one or two unusual maritime flags, it became apparent that a very large number of flags used at sea had been derived from the three original Red, White and Blue ensigns used by the Royal Navy since the 17th century. Furthermore the scope and usage of these flags, together with their geographic and historical extent, appeared to exceed by far that of any other flag design. At the same time attempts to acquire a definitive list of all these ensigns failed completely, and it became clear that no written record had been compiled, although Rudy Longueville of Belgium has produced an impressive compendium of flag badges, whilst Nick Weekes and David Prothero have done much detailed research into their origins. So thus began a long upwind haul - a task which has so far lasted for well over ten years. This is a dynamic area of study and the list of British ensigns and related flags requires continuous fine tuning to maintain accuracy, nevertheless the contents of this book should provide a sound baseline for reference to the subject. Such is the stuff of vexillology.

What does this book contain ?

TCOF 2K is therefore a worldwide muster of British and British derived ensigns and related flags, both current and obsolete. It seeks to list all the national colours authorised for use afloat by vessels in Her Majesty's Service or owned by the Queen's subjects. It also includes numerous ensigns primarily used ashore, together with land flags, distinguishing flags and house flags in the style of ensigns. It covers ensigns in the United Kingdom, the UK Overseas Territories, the Commonwealth and certain foreign countries too. The chapter on obsolete flags includes all known Colonial and Imperial ensigns - but almost certainly it is not complete. There is a vast amount of detail in this book drawn from innumerable sources, including the comprehensive range of Admiralty papers in the National Archives (formerly Public Record Office) at Kew so ably researched by David Prothero. Information is given not only about the flags themselves but also refers to customs, traditions, personalities, names and dates which surround them, so it would be most surprising

if expert readers do not find fault with several opinions or facts. The lack of reference footnotes is deliberate because of the huge number that would be needed, acknowledging that some readers may be disappointed at their absence. Nevertheless, throughout the book where reference is made to documents in the National Archives they are noted under the appropriate Admiralty (ADM), or Colonial Office (CO) reference. (NL) refers to Naval Law Division letters. Very many people helped gather information for this book, but if errors are discovered they are the author's fault entirely, and hopefully readers will advise him accordingly. But for those who only wish to dabble in the flag loft, your patience is requested whilst you are invited to skip the parts of this book that do not interest you.

Here is how to find what you want

This first chapter discusses background information about flags in general and ensigns in particular. It also provides a summary of the total numbers of flags in each category within the book, because there are very few sub-totals to be found within the text. This is deliberate because when changes are made, as new flags come or old ones go, the margin for error is much reduced if the places needing arithmetical correction are minimised. The meat comes in Chapter 2 which covers ensigns and related flags currently in use and includes (at a separate Annexe) yacht club ensigns authorised by warrant. Also at Annex are significant flags which are almost ensigns but not quite (just for the record) whilst Chapter 3 lists an amazing variety of obsolete ensigns and related flags. In one or two instances a technically obsolete ensign is actually still in use in particular circumstances, in which case an appropriate notation has been made. Some ensigns might be considered dormant rather than obsolete, but there is no dedicated list of these, which are in any case difficult to identify accurately.

Given unlimited time and space each and every flag mentioned (over six hundred and seventy) would deserve comprehensive remarks, but the resulting book would increase in length hugely and contain an even more indigestible amount of detail. For these reasons only the most significant or intriguing facts have been mentioned where appropriate, and footnotes have been avoided deliberately as already explained, whilst phrases in italics generally indicate a quotation from a reference source. Italics are also used for mottoes and words used as defacements. Like any flag book, a publication such as this will never remain up to date because circumstances change and new details emerge all the time, but hopefully readers will make their own adjustments to the text as flags come and go in the future. So much for an introduction: let us now tackle the subject.

Definition of an Ensign

Before the muster of ensigns could begin it was necessary to establish the clear extent of the topic, and this required a workable description of an ensign, because it would appear that no formal definition has ever been developed by any constitutional authority. The result is the author's own unofficial attempt. It seeks to distinguish ensigns within three related categories, but please note that these are not legal definitions in any sense at all. Although most ensigns fall quite neatly into one or other grouping, in a number of cases it is very difficult to categorise a particular flag with precision. So for better or for worse the following flags are considered to be British and British derived ensigns, and thus the subject of this book: -

British and British Derived Ensigns.

All flags in the following three groups comprise an ensign for the purposes of this book:

Group 1. British national colours

Flags worn by government service and civil vessels (at the stern, gaff or yardarm) and flown in appropriate shore installations to represent the sovereignty of the nation as follows:-

- Military ensigns worn by commissioned vessels (and their tenders) of Her Majesty's Armed Forces, together with Royal Navy, Royal Air Force, Army and Joint Service shore establishments. They include for example the White Ensign – as worn at the Battle of Trafalgar.
- Ensigns worn by vessels in the service of other government departments (OGDs) and non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs) in the United Kingdom, the Crown Dependencies and the United Kingdom Overseas Territories. They are mostly but not uniquely Blue Ensigns.
- Civil ensigns worn by vessels registered in the United Kingdom, the Crown Dependencies or the United Kingdom Overseas Territories, together with unregistered vessels which, if they were to be placed on a register, would be registered in those places. They are mostly but not uniquely Red Ensigns.

Group 2. Other British flags in the style of ensigns.

These are flags similar in design to those above, which have been authorised within the United Kingdom, the Crown Dependencies and United Kingdom Overseas Territories. These include some distinguishing flags, land flags and organisational or house flags, and they come in several colours.

Group 3. Commonwealth and foreign ensigns and flags.

These are ensigns and flags similar in design and purpose to those in Groups 1 and 2, flown both as national colours and for other reasons, and which have been authorised in certain Commonwealth and non-Commonwealth states, afloat and ashore. Several British derived ensigns pre-date the independence of the states in which they are used, and were originally authorised by imperial authorities in London. Others have been adopted since independence and reflect decisions to perpetuate historic links between the United Kingdom and the state concerned. They also come in several colours.

The Development of Modern Ensigns

Ensigns are symbols of national sovereignty and represent the State. Because of this individual designs must be properly authorised. Apart from those approved by the Sovereign, the majority of privileged ensigns were, and to a large extent still are, authorised under the long established system of warrants described later. The date (wherever known) of the warrant or other proper authority is given alongside the appropriate flag, usually in the format day/month/year (or sometimes just month/year).

The Squadron System

A good place to begin looking at this subject is the 17th century. In the year 1627 the British Fleet was divided into three squadrons under the Red, Blue and White Ensigns of that time, and in that order of seniority respectively. Then in 1653, for reasons unknown, the squadron seniority was changed to Red, White and Blue,

and this organisation of the Fleet lasted until 9 July 1864 when the arrangement was discontinued by Order in Council. No doubt this is why the colours of the Union Jack are always referred to as red, white and blue in that order, despite it being technically the wrong way to describe our national flag as we will see later on.

1864 Onwards

Since 1864 all Royal Navy ships have sailed under the White Ensign only, whilst other vessels in government service have worn a Blue Ensign and British civil craft have worn a Red Ensign. Until 1864, vessels in the service of certain United Kingdom public offices (for example the Victualling Office) defaced the Red Ensign in the fly with the badge or seal of their organisation. The Order in Council of 1864 further directed that such defacements were to be transferred to the Blue Ensign, and similar badges for other public offices were subsequently authorised by Admiralty warrant. Further afield, the use of defacements on the Blue Ensign in Overseas Territories, and in Commonwealth states that were former colonies, derives from the Colonial Defence Act of 1865 and from subsequent Admiralty instructions. These instructions stated that colonial public service vessels were to wear the Blue Ensign defaced with the seal or badge of the colony, and designs of the defacing flag badges were controlled by the Colonial Office in liaison with the Admiralty. It seems that warrants were not always issued to endorse the final choice of design, as there is extensive late 19th and early 20th century correspondence between the Admiralty to the Colonial Office exchanging information to assist updating the official flag book of the day. Since those days Blue Ensigns (and in one case Red) have also assumed official status as land flags in a number of territories.

Until 1964 most ensign warrants were granted by the Admiralty, and this tradition has continued under the authority of the Secretary of State for Defence. In a number of cases Royal authority has been (and still is) given for the use of an ensign or similar land flag. This is generally for civilian government departments, in which case the Sovereign signs the approved illustration of the ensign. Over the years several ensigns have been authorised by Orders in Council, Commonwealth government statutes or previous colonial legislation. A few have been accepted as legitimate by virtue of very long standing custom and practice over many years, whilst some continue to be used illegally. Some ensigns have been inherited by organisations descended from those originally privileged under different names. All ensigns were initially confined to use at sea, but many are now used in officially ashore as well.

The different parts of an ensign

Like other flags, an ensign is described using particular names for its various parts. The *hoist* is the part nearest the mast; the *fly* is the part farthest from the mast, and the *canton* is the upper quadrant near the mast (technically the first canton - of four). *Breadth* is the shortest measurement, and *length* the longest. In Royal Navy terminology a *breadth* is also the traditional unit for grading the size of flags, formerly equating to 9 inches but now expressed as 23 centimetres. For example a four-breadth ensign will measure 92cm (36in) by 184cm (72 in), because an ensign is currently in proportion 1:2. The word *defaced* is used frequently: it is an honourable term which describes placing the seal or badge of a territory or authority upon an otherwise plain flag, thus creating a new flag in its own right. In the case of an ensign the defacing badge is nearly always placed in the fly, although defacements of the canton are not unknown.

Flying ensigns or wearing ensigns

An ensign is worn *by* a vessel or flown *in* a vessel. Since the turn of the 20th Century ensigns have come to be used ashore as well as afloat and ensigns are always flown (never worn) when ashore. When used ashore an ensign should be flown from the gaff of a mast, and not from a pole, however there are an increasing number of recognised exceptions to this rule (which include the Ministry of Defence Main Building in London, the Citadel in Charleston South Carolina and the Northwood Joint Headquarters near London). The current Merchant Shipping Act governs the use of ensigns afloat, whilst their use ashore is not defined except in a military context. Ashore in England the use of flags (all of which are legally classed as advertisements) is governed by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). In the devolved authorities (Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland) separate regulations apply. This is a complex area and is not a subject for this book.

Use of the Blue Ensign afloat is also forbidden except by properly authorised bodies in possession of a warrant, such as privileged yacht clubs. In the modern context the use of the Red Ensign (or Bloody Ensign as it was once known) by members of the public, in an appropriate setting with maritime or inland waterway connections should not be considered improper. Indeed both at home and abroad the Red Ensign has sometimes been used in the manner of a national flag, in place of (or in addition to) the Union Flag. This was particularly the case in the early part of the 20th century when many private citizens were unclear of their right to fly the Union Flag at all. One instance concerned the Persian Gulf where ex-patriots were advised by the Political Secretary of the Government of India, on 22/9/1927, that they should fly the Red Ensign *for national festivals, visits of HMG representatives and HM Ships, and during disturbances involving danger to the protected person*. Sadly, the Red Ensign would probably not afford similar protection today

In 1931 the Admiralty felt the need to comment on the flying of ensigns and published memorandum No 397 which is transcribed below:-

Memorandum on the use of the White and Blue Ensigns on Shore

The White and Blue Ensigns of His Majesty's Fleet are purely maritime flags, and in general their use on shore is incorrect. There has, however, been a customary extension of the use of the White Ensign from the harbour ship used as a fleet establishment to barracks and other buildings on shore serving the same purpose. There has been a parallel extension of the use of special ensigns from yachts, customs vessels and the like to their headquarters on the coast - the club house or customs office. It is common also for the White and Blue Ensigns to be used on cenotaphs and other memorials to Naval personnel.

With these exceptions, the use of these ensigns on shore is improper. Special ensigns worn by yachts are worn under the authority of an Admiralty warrant issued to the yacht, not to the yacht owner: they are the national colours of the yacht, not the personal flag of the owner, and the owner has no shadow of right to fly the yacht's flag elsewhere than on board the yacht. Similarly, the White Ensign is nothing else but the national colours of a ship of war in commission and no past service in the Navy or other connection with the Navy can make it correct to hoist it on private buildings on shore. It is equally incorrect for either ensign to be carried in procession or marches on shore.

Admiralty S.W.1. 9 Sept 1931

Later on, and notwithstanding the military pre-occupations of the Admiralty in the closing months of World War II, the rules for using ensigns ashore were re-stated in early 1945. In a letter from the Naval Law Division (NL/M.1687/44 dated 3 Feb 1945) to the Secretary of the Girl Guides Association, then located at 17 Buckingham Palace Rd, London SW1, their Lordships almost contradicted themselves and said of the Red, White and Blue ensigns: -

" I am to explain that under the Merchant Shipping Acts, British Vessels other than HM Ships and vessels in the employment of certain public offices are required to fly the Red Ensign, that HM Ships fly the White Ensign and that vessels in the employment of certain public offices fly the Blue Ensign. All these flags are, therefore, clearly maritime flags and My Lords consider that it is in general, improper to be flown publicly ashore or to be carried in processions or parades. There is, however, no objection to any organisation such as the Sea Rangers displaying the White or Red Ensigns within their own club rooms. "

Named Vessels Mentioned

It will be seen that in some cases the names of individual vessels authorised to wear a special ensign are mentioned; but of course these are only valid whilst those particular ships or boats remain in commission. They were correct when researched, which in most cases was during the period between 1995 and 1998, although vessels known to have been de-commissioned since then have been removed from the current listing. Likewise the names of new vessels have been added when identified. Vessel names are in CAPITAL LETTERS following the Royal Naval custom.

Other Flags Flown In Her Majesty's Ships

In addition to the Ensign, Jack and Masthead Pennant (the suit of Colours) and any command flags, HM Ships are sometimes authorised to fly additional flags for traditional purposes. For example HMS MONMOUTH flies a plain black flag from a small gaff in memory of the Black Duke. This signifies that the Black Duke's allegiance to the Crown should not be taken for granted.

Flags That Are Left Out of the Book

TCOF 2K is restricted to those flags bearing the Union Flag in the canton, and this is the principle criteria. No attempt has been made to collate the many other Commonwealth or foreign ensigns which, although not incorporating the Union Flag itself, are of designs directly reflecting British influence (such as the ensigns of India since 1947). At the same time some flags bearing the Union Flag are listed but are not counted in the totals because they fall outside the chosen definitions, whilst others are not mentioned at all. The latter include Sovereign's Colours, Regimental Colours, Standards (but not flags) of military associations (such as the Royal British Legion), Trades Union Banners, and one or two other special categories mentioned later. This is for two reasons: -

- Colours, Standards and Banners are not generally flown as flags or ensigns in the normally accepted sense, and:-
- Further detailed research into a highly specialised area of vexillology would be required to list the multitude of flags in these groups.

UNION FLAGS, FLAGSTAFFS AND CROWNS

The de facto National Flag

The Union Flag is not an ensign, nor for that matter has it ever been declared formally to be the national flag of the United Kingdom (but that is another story). However it forms the fundamental ingredient of all British ensigns and thus requires attention. The colours of the Union Flag are always quoted as *red, white* and *blue* in the seniority order of the Squadrons between 1653 and 1864; whereas strictly speaking the flag is *blue, white* and *red* (or rather *azure, argent and gules*), because that is the order in which the colours are mentioned in its heraldic blazon or description (see box below). On the other hand the Stars and Stripes of the USA is correctly described as *red, white* and *blue* for the same reason. It is also worth noting that both names *Union Flag* and *Union Jack* may be considered equally correct, and this is supported by wide-ranging documentary evidence since the 17th century. For example in the Royal Proclamation of 1801, reproduced at the end of this book, King George III refers to *Our Jack, commonly called the Union Jack*. Whilst on 17/1/1887 Admiral Sir W M Dowell (President of the Committee for revising the General Signal Book) noted in a letter to the Secretary of the Admiralty*the committee notice that throughout the tables [of flag dimensions] the term Union Flag has been substituted for Union Jack, the latter being in the opinion of the committee the correct one* [ADM 116/300 and 7/900]. More recently the First Sea Lord in 1945 declared that “9,999 of 10,000 Britishers called it the Union Jack” [Dockets of the First Sea Lord 1939-1945]. However, because the word ‘jack’ commonly describes a small flag at flown at the bows of a vessel, and to avoid confusion, the term Union Flag is generally used within this book. There is of course another Union Jack too – namely the jack of USN vessels, which comprises the canton of the US national flag.

Heraldic Blazon of the Union Flag

In the box below is the official description (or heraldic blazon) of our national flag. However those versed in these matters will note that the flag is never made up in this exact manner, and if it was it would look most odd. The result would be the white elements of the diagonals being much thinner than is common practice, producing a much less attractive flag. In vexillological terms the fimbriation of St Patrick’s cross is now taken from the cross itself, which makes the red diagonal narrower than the white one. A very complex thing is our flag.

The Union Flag shall be azure, the Crosses Saltire of St Andrew and St Patrick quarterly per saltire counterchanged argent and gules: the latter fimbriated of the second surmounted by the Cross of St George of the third, fimbriated as the Saltire.
1 January 1801.

The First Union Flag.

The original flag (without St Patrick's Cross) was designed in 1606. It is a much simpler design of course and has the great benefit of not being able to be flown upside down. It is still in use today in several places, which include: -

- Australia. Since 29 Jan 1967 flown outside the former Customs House in Loftus Street, Sydney at the place where Captain Arthur Phillip RN (the first Governor of NSW) first raised the flag on 26 Jan 1788. On 13 Oct 1996 this flag was hoisted at Garden Island (Sydney Harbour), probably for the first time since 1800, in honour of the birthday of Captain Phillip (11 Oct 1738). It is also flown on the quay-side at Old Sydney Town near Gosford, NSW., and is also flown continuously at Cooks' Cottage, on the corner of Fitzroy Gardens and Wellington Parade, Melbourne, Victoria.

- Bermuda. Flown in the island's capital Hamilton.
- Canada. Quite widely flown by the public, especially in British Columbia.
- USA. As one of the officially recognised historic flags of the USA it is sold widely and is flown in many places including:-
 - Above the town hall (and throughout the town) at Williamsburg historic city in South Carolina
 - Outside the Capitol building in Oklahoma City
 - Outside the Sillars Building (State Capitol) in Jackson Mississippi
 - At all Welcome Centers (sic) on the interstate highways at the borders of Alabama.
- Scotland. As the canton of the Northern Lights Commissioners' distinguishing flag which is flown outside the offices in Edinburgh and when Commissioners are embarked in NL vessels.

The Second Union Flag - *Happy Birthday Jack !*

1st January 2001 was the 200th anniversary of the inauguration of the present Union Flag. That occasion went entirely unnoticed throughout the United Kingdom. The present flag (incorporating St Patrick's Cross) was created in 1800 and inaugurated on 1/1/1801. This flag can be seen all over the world representing wider British interests and historical connections. One of the more unusual places it is flown is at the southern (British) end of the site of the Battle of New Orleans in Chalmette, Louisiana USA, and is the only current foreign flag known to be flying in any US national park

The First Union Flag - *Happy Birthday Jack !*

12th April 2006 was the 400th anniversary of the creation of the first Union Jack in 1606. The nation did remember this and the media gave good coverage to the event.

Flagstuffs and Poles.

At sea the ensign and jack are flown from the appropriate staff at each end of a ship. The traditional ensign and jack staffs of Her Majesty's Ships were made of wood with a brass channel let into them to take the runners that keep the flag close into the staff when hoisted. These runners are small brass fittings sewn onto the hoist of the flag at intervals of a few inches. The last Royal Yacht (HMY BRITANNIA) was different and had her own unique method of achieving this end. Ensigns and jacks have headsticks sewn into the top part of the hoist, so as to avoid any gap appearing between the top of the flag and the head of the flagstaff when hoisted close up. Headsticks used to be made of wood but are now plastic, but they are entirely hidden from view within the fabric of the flag. Non-RN ships do not usually follow these two practices, which is why their flags often do not present such a taught appearance. In new warships the flagstuffs are made of anodised metal, which is coloured to represent varnished wood. Ensign and jack staffs are normally fitted with two halyards: this enables one flag to be lowered as another is hoisted when a changeover is needed, thus preventing the ship being without colours.

Crowns.

Both the jack and ensign staffs of all HM Ships bear a crown at the top painted in the appropriate regal colours. That on the jack staff is the naval crown, whilst the one on the ensign staff is the royal crown. The main difference between the naval and royal crowns is that royal crowns have a top formed by intersecting arches, whilst the naval crown does not. Indeed the heraldic purist might describe the naval crown as a crest coronet rather than a crown. The current design of royal crown is in the style of St Edward's Crown (with depressed arches at the point of intersection), however between 1876 and 1953 a royal crown with raised arches (in a more imperial shape) was used as the monarch's symbol. The imperial design of royal crown was adopted by Queen Victoria in 1876 to reflect her status as Empress of India, and thus takes the form of the Imperial State Crown. The sealed pattern for this crown was not agreed however until King Edward VII approved it on 4 May 1901, and this may explain why the imperial shaped crown is sometimes known as the King's Crown. In other countries with an imperial history, royal crowns usually had raised arches also. Both royal and naval crowns are made in three sizes (8 inch, 6 inch and 4 ½ inch diameter) to fit the jack and ensign staffs of different sized vessels. The case with civilian manned Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA) vessels is ambiguous. Most of them have no crowns but some (especially older ones) have naval crowns on their ensign staffs; and RFA ARGUS follows the RN pattern. The Royal Yacht was different in that she bore a royal crown on both staffs, as did the last two HM Army Vessels (HMAVs), whilst warships of the Commonwealth monarchies follow a similar pattern to RN ships. Boats belonging to naval vessels do not have crowns on their ensign staffs except for those that belonged to HMY BRITANNIA, to which specially made small crowns were fitted. BRITANNIA, now decommissioned and alongside at Leith, is presently in contention with the Admiralty Board over the flags she may display as an historic ship (White Ensign or Blue Ensign?). Uniquely for a commissioned ship Lord Nelson's historic flagship HMS VICTORY does not have a crown on either her ensign or jack staff because the practice had not been adopted at the time she served afloat.

The naval crown features in the coats of arms of Chatham and Devonport, and the present design (created by Mr Everard Green, Rouge Dragon Pursuivant) was approved by the King in 1903. The Merchant Service uses a similar crown on cap badges and elsewhere. Royal crowns in the imperial design were used by all succeeding monarchs after Queen Victoria until 1953, when Queen Elizabeth II reverted the design to the shape of St Edward's Crown. However the old style royal crown can be seen in many places, including the railings around the Palace of Westminster, pre-1953 letterboxes and telephone kiosks, and on royal coaches. ADM 1/11609.

A Brief Summary

Cataloguing the multitude of flags in the world-wide British ensign family with complete precision is well nigh impossible, especially as so many now belong to independent states and are no longer under the jurisdiction of the Admiralty or any UK government department. A summary of the flags bearing the Union Flag in the canton, and which are officially authorised or widely accepted as British and British derived ensigns, will be found at the end of this Chapter. Unless you know better dear reader, it may be reasonable to suppose that this reflects the number of those flags which have ever existed, given the degree of accuracy possible in this complex subject. However research continues and further obsolete ensigns are quite likely to be discovered, and new ones approved, from time to time.

TCOF 2K serves another purpose too, because flags represent people. This book is therefore a tribute to the countless millions of people of the Commonwealth and former British Empire, past, present and in the future, for whom these flags represented, and still do represent, a focus in their life and work. This of course includes all the many different peoples of the British Isles today. The unifying symbol of the Union Flag in all its manifestations is something every one of us can share together for the common good.

Reference Sources

A huge debt of gratitude is owed to many people all over the world who have gone out of their way to help. Reference has also been made to many publications both in and out of print and the lists below are by no means exhaustive: -

Correspondents, authors and researchers.

Fred Brownell (former State Herald of South Africa): Dr William Crampton (late Director of the Flag Institute): Dr Whitney Smith (Flag Research Center USA): Ralph Bartlett (Flag Society of Australia): David Prothero, Graham Bartram, Lieutenant Colonel Nick Weekes and Jos Poels (all of the Flag Institute): Jenny Wraight (Admiralty Library): James Liston: Peter Edwards: Neil Freeman: Lieutenant Commander Andrew Brown RANR: Clay Moss: Rudy Longueville: John Lanser: together with flag books by Captain EMC Barraclough CBE RN; Timothy Wilson; WJ Gordon; WG Perrin, and very many others.

Official Publications and authorities.

These include:- Merchant Shipping Acts (1894 to 1995): Shipping Registration Act Australia (1991): Australian Flags Act (1953): Canada Shipping Act (1985): Colonial Defence Act 1865: Flags of All Nations past and present (BR 20): Official flag books of several other nations including France: Queen's Regulations (QRRN, QRRNZN, QRRAF, and QR Army): Numerous MOD authorities together with many OGDs, and NDPBs in several Commonwealth countries: English Sea Fisheries Committees: The Scout Association: National Maritime Museum: Imperial War Museum: Register of Seamen and Shipping: Royal Yachting Association: Public Records Office (Admiralty records): Navy List: Members of the General Lighthouse Authority: Lloyds Registers of Yachts: Yacht Clubs (world-wide): UK Fire & Rescue Services: Port of London Authority: Fishery Agencies of the Scottish Executive: Metropolitan Police: Ocean Weather Service: Natural Environment Research Council: British Antarctic Survey: Falkland Islands Museum, and many other authorities too.

Chronology

The thread of history runs through all these pages so the reader may find a summary of important dates in our national flag development to be a useful guide: -

1606. (*James I / James VI*). On 26 March 1603, the throne of England passed to King James VI of Scotland, who became King James I of England, giving the two kingdoms a common monarch. Several efforts were made to combine the English cross of St George and the Scottish saltire of St Andrew. The first acceptable solution was declared by Royal Proclamation on 12 April 1606: previous attempts to create such a flag all having failed. This new flag, generally known as the British Flag, was for use only at sea. It was to be flown in the maintop by all vessels of Great Britain. Vessels of 'North Britain' were to fly the Scottish flag in the foretop, and those of 'South Britain' were to fly the English flag. It was intended to show common allegiance in the two countries to King James I / VI ~ the 'King of Great Britain'. However the design continued to cause disquiet north of the border, and Scottish attitudes to the Union Flag remain somewhat ambivalent even to this day; primarily because the cross of St Andrew is placed behind that of St George, and the colour blue is generally darker than is usual for the Saltire in Scotland.

1625. (*Charles I*). Fleet divided into *Red*, *Blue* and *White* squadrons in order of seniority, possibly because red was the distinctive colour of the English flag, blue the distinctive colour of the Scottish flag, while white was common to both (ensigns still bore English or Scottish flag in canton).

1634. (*Charles I*). The first (of many) Royal Proclamation restricting use of the Union Flag to the King's ships - a restriction which remains to this day. Around this time the large British or Union flag, previously flown at the masthead, gradually came to be flown at the bow, where it was necessarily smaller and thus came to be called a jack.

1653. (*Cromwell*). Order of seniority of squadrons changed to *Red*, *White* and *Blue*. It has been suggested that since the colour of the senior squadron was the colour of the cross on the English flag, the colour of the second squadron took the colour of the saltire on the Scottish flag.

1661. (*Charles II*). Proclamation (by Lord High Admiral following restoration of the monarchy and re-establishment of Union Flag) again restricting the use of the Union Flag to the King's ships. Union Flag now commonly also called Union Jack.

1674. (*Charles II*). Royal Proclamation, again restricting use of "His Majesties Jack (commonly called, The Union Jack)" to "his Majesties Ships".

1694. (*William & Mary*). Royal Proclamation repeating that of 1674 and introducing a Red Jack with a Union canton for privateers. The same flag with the appropriate badge in the fly was instituted for vessels of the Navy, Ordnance, Victualling, Customs and Transportation Offices.

1702. (*Anne*). Red cross placed upon the plain white field of the White Ensign to avoid confusion with the plain white field of the French ensign of the time.

1707. (*Anne*). Political union with Scotland, and from now on the three ensigns bear the Union Flag in the canton. Modern ensigns date from this period.

1801. (*George III*). Union with the Kingdom of Ireland (Ireland was elevated from a lordship to a kingdom by King Henry VIII). This was demonstrated by the addition of the so-called St Patrick's Cross to the flag on 1 January 1801 (but see Note below). The modern version of the Union Flag was thus created, and for the first time it became possible to fly the flag upside down. This is a depressingly common phenomenon which is due to the complex arrangement of offset saltires (diagonal crosses) which were very cleverly positioned to ensure that St Andrew's Cross takes primacy over St Patrick's Cross. It so happens that when the Union Flag is flown upside down the insult is to Scotland rather than to England or Ireland, but these matters are not well understood.

Note: St Patrick was not a martyr and therefore had no cross. The red saltire was taken from the coat of arms of the Geraldines, an important Irish family whose influence rested on their support for successive English monarchs. In the 18th century it was adopted as the badge of St Patrick's Societies. This saltire has never enjoyed a serious following in Ireland and is never used as a flag anywhere in the island, although it does appear in the achievement of arms of Trinity College Dublin, and a charmingly defaced version is used as the distinguishing flag by the Commissioners for Irish Lights.

1805. (*George III*). Battle of Trafalgar fought under the White Ensign because Nelson was Vice Admiral of the White Squadron and decreed that all his ships wore the White Colours.

1842. (*Victoria*). Yacht club use of the White Ensign restricted to the RYS

1864. (*Victoria*). Squadron system discontinued. White Ensign assigned to Royal Navy, Blue Ensign to Government Service and Red Ensign to Merchant Marine.

1873. The earliest (?) official reference to the Union Jack as the national flag is in Queen's Regulations 1873. Section 3. Honours and Salutes. "The following is a list of stations at which the national flag (Union Jack) is authorised....."

1901. (*Edward VII*). Sealed pattern of royal cipher approved by the King on 4 May. The dome shaped crown, called 'Imperial' or 'Tudor', was now used on all official badges. Since the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953, 'St Edwards' crown with a central depression has been the official crown on badges.

1902. (*Edward VII*). In a Minute about the question, "What is the correct Flag to be flown on land by Civilians?" which was to be asked in the House of Commons on 22 October 1902, Sir Arthur W.Woods, Garter, King of Arms wrote, "The Union Flag, being the National Flag, appertains to the Nation as a whole, ..."

1908. (*Edward VII*). In the House of Lords on 14 July 1908 in response to a question to His Majesty's Government by Earl Howe, the Earl of Crewe replied "*My Lords..... I think it may fairly be stated, in reply to the noble Earl, that the Union Jack should be regarded as the national flag, and it undoubtedly may be flown on land by all His Majesty's subjects*". The Earl of Meath then went on to observe "*My Lords ... It is rather curious that a British citizen is about the only one who is not quite certain under what flag he stands as a private citizen ...*" (Hansard Fourth Series Volume CXCII (192) page 579).

1912. (*George V*). A dispatch dated 21 May 1912 from Mr L Harcourt, Secretary of State for the Colonies, to HRH the Duke of Connaught & Strathern, Governor General of Canada concerning the flag which should be used by British subjects, contained the words “...*the Union Flag is the national Flag of Canada as of all other parts of His Majesty’s Dominions and may be flown on land by all British subjects...*”. The wording bears marked similarity to that used by the Earl of Crewe in 1908, albeit without the conditional clauses ‘*may be fairly stated*’ and ‘*should be regarded*’.

1922. (*George V*) Following some discussion at ministerial level as to whether the Union Flag should revert to its pre-1801 design in consequence of the formation of the Irish Free State, the Provisional Government of Ireland Committee concluded “*given the opinion that the Union Jack is the flag of the British Empire, and even if not accepted and used by the new Irish government, no alteration should be made in it by the rest of the Empire.....the committee think that their opinion should be brought to the notice of the Cabinet*”. Winston Churchill subsequently informed the Committee that it had plenary authority and their decision could be regarded as definite.

1927. (*George V*). General yacht club warrants revoked.

1933. (*George V*). In reply to a parliamentary question from Mr Wills on Tuesday 27 June 1933 about whether private citizens were prevented from flying the Union Flag, the Home Secretary (Sir J Gilmour) said “*No Sir, the Union Flag is the national flag and may properly be flown by any British subject on land*” (Hansard Fifth Series Volume 279 (1932-33) page 1324). These two parliamentary answers of 1908 and 1933 are the only statements of any real authority ever made about the existence of a national flag for the United Kingdom and the constitutional status of the Union Flag.

1945. (*George VI*). The First Sea Lord supports the use of the term Union Jack as the name of the national flag

1952. (*Elizabeth II*). Privileged ensign list (more or less) closed, although a number of ensigns have been granted since then.

1953. Royal crown reverted to the traditional shape of St Edward's Crown, resulting in a progressive change to most (but not all) flags and ensigns bearing a crown.

1985. General yacht club warrants re-issued.

2001. 1st January 2001 (01/01/01) was the bicentenary of the Union Flag in its present design. It was not recorded nor celebrated officially by the nation, except by those of us who flew the flag privately on that day and drank its health.

2002. This year saw both the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother and the Golden Jubilee of Her Majesty the Queen. It also saw the Commonwealth Games in Manchester and the football World Cup (in Japan). On all occasions a huge number of national flags were flown all over the country. Sales of Union Jacks exceeded all expectations and several weeks after the main events the number of flags still flying remained greatly increased from previous years. It may indeed be said that the Union Jack has regained its rightful place at last, along with the sub-national flags, as the icons of the nation.

2006. 12th April – 400th anniversary of the birth of the first Union Flag. An occasion commemorated by the national media in an appropriate fashion.

2008. 25th March – publication of the *Governance of Britain – Constitutional Renewal* White Paper, in which the Union Flag and its greater use and recognition received significant mention.

2010. 6th January. Union Flag on the Victoria Tower of the Palace of Westminster now flown permanently, day and night, except when replaced by the Royal Standard during the opening of Parliament. Previously flown only when either House of Parliament was in session.

NUMERICAL SUMMARY OF ENSIGNS

Hopefully this page won't put you off reading the rest of the book, but you will know much more about British ensigns than most people if you get no further. This is the only place where comprehensive totals are given – for simplicity of amendment as frequent changes are made. This page is hopefully correct up to May 2011 – but there are undoubtedly omissions.

Current Ensigns (Sections 2 and 2A)

Total of current ensigns and closely related flags **196**

Made up as follows: -

White Ensign and derivatives	4
Blue Ensign and derivatives	128
Red Ensign and derivatives	39
RAF Ensign and derivatives	10
Other Colours & multi-colours	15

	Blue Ensigns	Red Ensigns
Undefaced	1	1
Crown Dependencies	3	3
Overseas Territories	12	6
Commonwealth	11	3
MOD, OGDs, NDPBs	26	10
Land Flags	20	4
Yacht Clubs	54	12
Rowing Clubs	1	--

Obsolete Ensigns (Section 3)

Total of obsolete ensigns and related flags is at least **469**

Made up as follows: -	British Isles	108
	Yacht Clubs (world-wide)	50
	Colonial/Commonwealth	311

Grand Total

Grand total of current and obsolete ensigns **665**

CHAPTER 2

British Ensigns and Related Flags in current use

This chapter contains details of every British and British derived ensign and related flag known to be in use under proper authorisation at the time of writing. At the end, Annex A deals with the specific category of privileged ensigns granted to yacht clubs, whilst Annex B covers flags which are very similar to ensigns, but which fall just outside the criteria for inclusion. In line with the definitions outlined earlier, the flags under consideration belong to one of five distinct but closely related groups namely: -

- White Ensign and derivatives
- Blue Ensign and derivatives
- Red Ensign and derivatives
- Royal Air Force Ensign and derivatives
- Ensigns of other colours

NAVAL WHITE ENSIGNS (4)

The Royal Navy.

The current design of naval ensign dates from the year 1702, when the large red cross was added to the plain white English ensign (as it then was), but this new ensign was originally only for ships serving outside home waters. In 1707 the Union Flag replaced the Scottish or English flags in the canton, and both the plain ensign and the red cross ensign then existed side by side until the plain one was discontinued in 1744. The ensign was again modified on 1/1/1801, when the so-called St Patrick's Cross was added to the Union Flag, and today only the Royal Navy version has a large red cross upon it. The White Ensign is now authorised for use by warships and ship's boats of the Royal Navy, Royal Marines and Royal Naval Reserve, as well as respective shore establishments. Some other authorities are permitted to fly the White Ensign in special circumstances and they are listed later on. It is of interest to note that the modern White Ensign was also once the flag of HM Coastguard – from about 1865 or '66 until 1923.

The Royal Australian Navy.

Following a decision by Prime Minister Harold Holt on 23/12/66 to create a special RAN ensign, the design was authorised 16/2/67. The public announcement was on 1/3/67, when it was first hoisted at 0900 local time in RAN vessels, craft and shore establishments; thus replacing the RN White Ensign which had been worn by warships of the Australia Station, and subsequently RAN vessels, since 23/9/11. Also worn by government owned, civilian manned marine service support craft.

The Royal New Zealand Navy.

This ensign, which was authorised in 1968 is for RNZN vessels and craft, and shore establishments; and also for yachts skippered by serving flag officers of the RNZ Yacht Squadron.

The Fijian Navy.

Authorised in 1970 for Fijian naval craft, which were organised as the Fijian navy in 1975. Fiji left the Commonwealth in 1987 but retained British derived flags and ensigns adopted on achieving independence in 1970. Fiji was re-admitted to the Commonwealth in 1997, but was suspended on 1st September 2009.

Other Navies and Naval Forces that have flown the White Ensign.

In general the White Ensign could be flown only by those forces granted the title 'Royal'. This rule was relaxed in war time when it was considered more important that all warships of the Empire should fly the same ensign. Other factors considered before granting a force the privilege of wearing the White Ensign were its efficiency, the status of the Officer-in-Command and by whom he had been commissioned, whether personnel were regular or volunteer, full-time or part-time, and whether vessels could serve anywhere, or were restricted to a local area.

In 1940 the Board of Admiralty approved, for the duration of the war only, that ships manned by the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve for local defence in Burma, Hong Kong, Kenya, Straits Settlements and as a special case Tanganyika might fly the White Ensign. 1941 legislation making Naval Volunteer Forces liable for service outside the colony extended the privilege to Ceylon, Fiji, Gambia, Gold Coast, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and Trinidad & Tobago.

The dates in some cases are approximate.

Royal Australian Navy	1911 - 1967
Royal Canadian Navy	1911 - 1965
Royal Ceylon Navy	1950 - 1955
Royal East African Navy	1957 - 1962
Royal Indian Navy	1934 - 1950
Royal Malayan Navy	1952 - 1957
Royal New Zealand Navy	1941 - 1968
(1913 - 1941 was the New Zealand Division of the Royal Navy)	
Royal Nigerian Navy	1959 - 1963
Royal Pakistan Navy	1947 - 1956

It is difficult to be sure about the use of the White Ensign by overseas RNVR units as some had no vessels but helped to man vessels of the RN or other RNVR units.

Burma RNVR	1940
Ceylon RNVR	1942 - ?
Hong Kong RNVR	1952 - 1967
Malayan RNVR (Singapore)	1957(?) - 1963(?)
Mauritius NVF	1948 - 1963
Nigeria Naval Force	1956 - 1959
Palestine Police, Port & Marine Section	1939 - 1945
South African Naval Service	1922 - 1942
South African Naval Force	1942 - 1946
Straits Settlements RNVR	1934 - 1942 renamed Malayan RNVR in 1941
Tanganyika NVR	1941 - 1942(?)
Trinidad RNVR	1941 - ? included personnel from other Caribbean islands.

Use of the White Ensign outside the Royal Navy.

Several authorities and locations have the special privilege of using the White Ensign of the Royal Navy on appropriate occasions. One place, the Naval Club in London, was granted special permission to fly the White Ensign on the day of Her Majesty's 50th Jubilee in 2002, the other places are: -

- **Trinity House Vessels.** By authority of an Admiralty letter dated 21 June 1894

Sir

With reference to your letter of the 18th instant, No 2387, I am commanded by My Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to convey to you their permission for the Elder Brethren of the Trinity House to fly the White Ensign of HM Fleet on board their Steam and Sailing Vessels on all occasions upon which ships are dressed, and while escorting Her Majesty in company with Royal Yachts and Ships of War. A copy of this letter may be produced as authority for the use of the White Ensign on the occasions referred to.

*I am, Sir
Your obedient Servant
Evan MacGregor.*

The comma in the fourth line has long caused debate when interpreting the exact circumstances to which this authority applies. Does it for instance apply whenever THVs are dressed, wherever they are and for whatever reason, in addition to the escorting role?

- **The Cenotaph in Whitehall.** At the Cenotaph the Blue, Red and (since 1943) RAF Ensigns are flown, together with the Union Flag and White Ensign. From the Trafalgar Square end of the memorial (where the Unknown Warrior's feet are said to be) the flags are in order Blue/Union/White on the eastern side (the right side of his body), and RAF/Union/Red on the other. Thus the White Ensign takes the senior position at the Warrior's right shoulder.
- **Admiralty Arch by Trafalgar Square.** Several White Ensigns are flown over Admiralty Arch when London is 'dressed overall' for state occasions.
- **Ministry of Defence Main Building in Whitehall.** Flown daily on the roof in company with the RAF Ensign, Army flag, Union Flag and Joint Service Flag.
- **Fleet Air Arm Memorial Chapel.** Former parish church of St Bartholomew, which is adjacent to HMS Heron, the Royal Naval Air Station, at Yeovilton in Somerset.
- **St Martin in the Fields Church in Trafalgar Square.** Authorised due to its status as the designated Admiralty church, and the flag is provided at public expense. ADM 1/8618/B.
- **Military Careers Offices nation-wide.** Military careers offices are now tri-Service, however relevant Service ensigns may be displayed at them as appropriate.
- **The Citadel in Charleston, South Carolina USA.** A memorial to the submarine HMS SERAPH lies within the grounds of the Citadel military college in Charleston. In 1942 General Mark Clark was landed in Algeria by SERAPH (Lt Cdr Bill Jewell RN of 'The man who never was' fame) to make contact with the Free French before Operation Torch. The boat's next task was to smuggle General Giraud out of France so he could lead the Free French in Torch. However Giraud demanded an American submarine which was unavailable, so SERAPH sailed under the Stars and Stripes with a USN officer in apparent command and Jewell disguised as a member of his own

crew. In 1962 when Mark Clark was Commanding General of the Citadel he heard that SERAPH was to be paid off. He asked for her to be transported to the USA as a permanent memorial to her allied wartime role, but a compromise was reached that the periscope and steering and plane wheels would be dismantled and sent over instead. A monument was designed to house them and the Admiralty agreed that the White Ensign could fly in perpetuity alongside the Stars and Stripes, provided it was hoisted and lowered ceremonially each day. This is done, and replacement ensigns are provided by the RN attaché in Washington.

- **Royal Yacht Squadron vessels and RYS premises in Cowes, Isle of Wight.** This was authorised by Admiralty warrant dated 1829 for designated vessels belonging to members of the Royal Yacht Squadron together with the Squadron Headquarters in Cowes Isle of Wight. Possibly up to five clubs used to use the White Ensign but an Admiralty minute of 1842 restricted this to the RYS, however the minute never reached the Royal Western Yacht Club of Ireland, which continued to use the White Ensign until the mistake was discovered in 1857 and the privilege was withdrawn.
- **HMS BELFAST.** The World War II cruiser is moored close to Tower Bridge. In addition to being a tourist attraction she is also the Headquarters of the White Ensign Association.
- **HMS CAVALIER.** The historic WWII destroyer now preserved at Chatham, once the fastest ship in the RN.
- **HMCS HAIDA.** This Tribal class RCN destroyer is berthed at Toronto. Her most famous commanding officer was Captain (later Vice Admiral) Harry de Wolf RCN who died in 2000 aged 97. The ship's exploits during a series of night actions in WWII under his command are the stuff of naval history, and she was selected from over 500 ships to be preserved at Toronto.
- **HMCS SACKVILLE.** This historic Flower class RCN corvette is berthed at Halifax, Nova Scotia. Both ex-RCN ships wear the Canadian Blue Ensign as their jack.
- **St Werburgh's Church at Hoo near Chatham.** Authorised by Commander in Chief the Nore in respect of the church being marked on Admiralty charts and used by HM ships as a navigation mark for the Medway. At nearby Gillingham, St Mary Magdalene church was *required* to fly the ensign daily for the same reason, until the 1940s when a purpose built leading mark was erected and the practice ceased.
- **St Anne's Church at Limehouse in London.** The White Ensign was traditionally flown from the church but the practice ceased for a period, however since the recent arrival of the present incumbent the White Ensign has once again been flown from Trafalgar Day until the next royal birthday. St George's Cross is then flown until the next Trafalgar Day. These flags are not lowered at night. The church mace (dated 1730) bears an ensign in the design of that time, giving provenance to the flag's use.
- **SS Great Britain at Bristol.** She wears the White Ensign and Union Jack (together with a range of other historic flags) as these were the Colours worn at her launch in 1843.

- **The National Maritime Museum.** In Greenwich. All three ensigns fly outside the main door together with the Union Flag.
- **Nelson's Dockyard in Antigua.** On 21 July 2000 the Royal Naval Tot Club of Antigua and Barbuda received authority to fly a White Ensign in the dockyard in continuation of the authority previously granted to the government of Antigua on independence. It is flown from the gaff, with the flag of Antigua and Barbuda at the masthead, on the following days:-
 - 16 January – Battle of St Vincent 1780: (Moonlight Battle)
 - 14 February – Battle of Cape St Vincent 1797:
 - 2 April – Battle of Copenhagen:
 - 12 April – Battle of The Saintes:
 - 21 April – Birthday of Queen Elizabeth II:
 - 1 June – Glorious 1st of June:
 - 2 June - Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II:
 - 1 August – Battle of the Nile:
 - 11 October – Battle of Camperdown:
 - 21 October – Battle of Trafalgar.

The club adopted a swallow-tailed version of the pre-1801 White Ensign as its burgee (not ensign), to which the Ministry of Defence does not object.

And once upon a time just for historical interest:- During WWII the Palestine Police, Port & Marine Section came under the control of the Senior Naval Officer at Haifa, its personnel became members of the RNVR, and their launches wore the White Ensign. This was the only time the ensign has been flown on the Sea of Galilee

RN Ships sailing under different Colours

There is one special case when Her Majesty's Ships wear a different ensign. From the year 2000 warships wear the Government Service Blue Ensign (GSBE) rather than the White Ensign, whilst undertaking contractor's sea trials and until taken over formally by the Royal Navy in accordance with Defence Council Instruction (RN) 15/00. However the White Ensign is worn during the actual launching ceremony (together with the Union Jack and Lord High Admiral's Flag). The first ship to wear the GSBE was the Type 23 frigate HMS KENT, which entered Portsmouth for the first time in February 2000. Until 2000 warships undergoing contractor's trials wore the Red Ensign as their proper Colours and the last ship so to do was HMS BANGOR. The change was made for purposes of insurance, because a Red Ensign vessel must be registered and covered by an internationally recognised insurer, and MOD owned vessels are neither registered nor insured. Thus it is that at the turn of the new century HM Ships have sailed again under the ensigns of all three original squadrons – Red, White and Blue !

Summary.

One or two other flags, which closely resemble a White Ensign, are also in use and will be found later in the book. Some other authorities fly (or have been known to fly) the White Ensign unofficially. For instance the Royal Naval Club in Portsmouth used to do so. Some other churches claim the right but have not substantiated their claims. The San Francisco Yacht Club flies the ensign alongside the Stars and Stripes when HM Ships come into the bay, and the Port Manager's office in Brest flew it during the sailing festival 'Brest 2000' superior to the EU flag and on the same pole. Lastly (and somewhat unfortunately) White Ensigns defaced with the names of football teams are common sights on the terraces when England (but not of course Scotland) is playing.

OTHER WHITE ENSIGNS. (4)

British Antarctic Territory. *Shield with Yellow Torch on Red Triangle, on Heraldic Sea over White; Lion on Grass, and Penguin on Ice, Supporters; Helm with RRS Discovery Crest, Mantling; RESEARCH AND DISCOVERY in Red on Yellow scroll.*

Authorised by the Queen in 1998 as the official land flag for the British Antarctic Territory. The arms has been granted in 1963. It is for use at each of the UK's five research stations in BAT together with the British Antarctic Survey's headquarters outside Cambridge. It may be flown as a courtesy flag by vessels visiting BAT as well. A defaced Union Flag for the Commissioner of the Territory was also approved by the Queen at the same time.

New South Wales Ambulance Service. *Red Maltese Cross on White within Blue Ring inscribed NEW SOUTH WALES AMBULANCE in Yellow.* Authorised

9 October 1984. The NSWAS flag is in the style of the Royal Hamilton Amateur Dinghy Club flag (see below). A rare example of a defaced (plain) White Ensign.

Northern Lights Commissioners Flag. *Blue Lighthouse.* Dates from 1786, but is based on the pre-1742 home service White Ensign. Continued to be used with the original Union Jack after 1801 in order to use up old stock, and the design then became traditional. It is flown at the masthead when Commissioners are embarked. The Commissioner's pennant resembles the Icelandic flag (blue field with white bordered red cross) and bears a white lighthouse in the hoist.

Royal Hamilton Amateur Dinghy Club, Bermuda. *Crown above R.H.A.D.C. in Red.*

A special Warrant was issued 24 December 1980 for its use as a clubhouse flag. Re-hoisted in 1980 *following a period of controversy* (to quote local sources). ADM 1/26283.

BLUE ENSIGNS

(L) indicates those ensigns that are also used on land.

Undefaced. (1)

The Blue Ensign of Her Majesty's Fleet is authorised for vessels of the following authorities:-

Merchant Marine. Vessels whose masters hold a warrant from the Secretary of State for Defence in accordance with Queen's Regulations for the Royal Navy (QRRN). At one time, for example, the former MV QUEEN ELIZABETH 2.

Yacht Clubs. Authorised craft belonging to members of designated privileged yacht clubs. These are all listed at Annex A to this chapter.

Royal Research Ships. Authorised in 1969, possibly on 30 May 1969, for Royal Research Ships (RRS) of the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC). Uniquely for government vessels each RRS has an individual warrant from the Secretary of State for Defence, and one of the earliest was granted to the JANE (long since sold) in 1972. The title 'Royal Research Ship' was granted by the Queen to NERC vessels (JANE and FREDERICK RUSSELL were the first ones) on 5 May 1983. At the time of research warrant holders were RRS DISCOVERY and CHALLENGER. Until 1902 ships that were the property of HM Government wore the plain Blue Ensign when proceeding to foreign stations. [MT 23/145]

Blue Ensigns

Defaced

Crown Dependencies (3)

Jersey. *Three Yellow Lions on a Red Shield.* The Blue Ensign of the States of Jersey public departments was designed by Captain Renouf, the Harbourmaster at St Helier, and originally authorised by Admiralty warrant on 2 March 1907 for the tug DUKE OF NORMANDY. However on 14 Aug 1997 the Home Office issued a warrant permitting all vessels employed by the States of Jersey to wear this ensign. At the time of research it was worn by the new DUKE OF NORMANDY, DUCHESS OF NORMANDY and NORMAN LE BROCCQ. A point to note is that the Queen is the 'Duke of Normandy', and thus there is currently no living Duchess of Normandy. The Home Office letter further implies that all Crown Dependencies may adopt Blue Ensigns, however the Isle of Man (which has only one government vessel - MV ENBARR) does not intend to take the matter forward.

Guernsey. *Yellow Cross, Ends of Arms Flared.* The defaced Blue Ensign of Guernsey is a recent, rare and little known flag. The warrant was signed by Dr Lewis Moonie (Under Secretary of State at the Ministry of Defence) on 11 July 2000. It is worn by the SARNIA (a harbour workboat), LEOPARDESS (sea fisheries protection craft). The defacement is the same as for the red ensign of Guernsey.

Alderney. *Yellow Lion on Green Disc in ornate Yellow Frame.* Granted by Her Majesty the Queen in 2007. Application for a Red Ensign is expected.

Overseas Territories (12)

Blue Ensigns defaced with the appropriate badge or device are authorised for vessels belonging to, or in the service of, the governments of the UK Overseas Territories listed below. Despite the hand-over of Hong Kong to China in 1997 there still remain several flags within this group.

Anguilla. *White Shield with Blue Base; Three Circling Orange Dolphins on the White.* Royal approval 30 May 1990. Anguilla also has a land flag with a similar design introduced in October 1967.

Bermuda. *White Shield with Green Base on which a Seated Red Lion holds a Shield bearing a Wrecked Ship.* New design 4 October 1910 authorised by the Colonial Office. Uniquely, Bermuda uses her Red Ensign as the land flag.

British Virgin Islands. (L) *White Figure and Twelve Lamps on Green Shield; VIGILATE on Yellow Scroll below.* Established by local authority in 1960 (or possibly 1956).

Cayman Islands. (L) *Shield with Yellow Lion on Red above Three Green Stars on Heraldic Sea; Turtle Crest, Motto on Yellow Scroll.* Established by local authority in 1959.

Falkland Islands. (L) *Shield with White Ram on Blue, above Sailing Ship on Heraldic Sea; Motto on Yellow Scroll below.* Design of 29 September 1948, modified in 2007.

Blue Ensigns

Gibraltar. *Grey Gateway and Key on Red Panel; Motto on Yellow Scroll below.* The defacing badge (based on the city arms) was authorised by the Colonial Office in 1875: it is the oldest colonial ensign still in use, but the badge was on a white disc until 1923. The much better known Gibraltar city flag was established in 1966 (but not formally authorised until 8 Nov 1982). It is a white over red horizontal bicolour centrally defaced with the arms of a red castle above a gold key. The arms were granted to Gibraltar by King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Castille and Leon in 1502. The Ensign is used only by the Port Authority.

Montserrat. (L) *Blue Shield with Brown Base, Green-Clad Female holding a Cross and a Harp.* Established 1 January 1960. The island was largely evacuated in 1997 following a major volcanic eruption, although reconstruction began in 1998.

Pitcairn Island and Dependencies. (L) *Yellow Chevron on Shield, Blue above, Bible above White Anchor on Green below, Helm with Wheelbarrow Crest and Mantling.* Includes Henderson, Ducie and Oeno islands. Established by Royal authority 2 April 1984. There were just over 50 inhabitants in 1997.

St Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha. (L) *Shield with a Bird in Panel above Ship near Cliffs.* Shield of Arms granted 4 October 1985.

Tristan da Cunha. (L) *Four Albatrosses on Blue over White Shield; Boat and Naval Crown above Helm, Lobster Supporters and Motto.* A Blue Ensign Land Flag for Tristan da Cunha was designed by Jimmy Glass, the Chief Islander, and after adjustment and approval by the College of Arms was granted by Proclamation of the Governor of St Helena on 20 October 2002. Ascension Island is seeking to adopt an island flag.

South Georgia & South Sandwich Islands. (L) *Blue and White Lozenge Shield with Yellow Lion holding a Torch, on a Green Triangle; Seal and Penguin Supporters, Helm with Reindeer Crest, and Motto.* Arms granted by the Queen 14 February 1992. Officially replaced just the shield of the Arms in 2007, although some unofficial versions were made as early as 1999. Also in use as a land flag but its date of authorisation (possibly in 2006) is uncertain. A Union Flag defaced with the arms is used as required by the Commissioner when he visits. As with the British Antarctic Territories and the British Indian Ocean Territories (since the airfield was leased to the USA), there are no indigenous inhabitants.

Turks and Caicos Islands. (L) *Yellow Shield with a Conch Shell and Lobster above a Turk's Head Cactus.* Established 7 November 1958.

Other UK Overseas Territories.

There are thirteen Overseas Territories remaining (in 2011), and they have a total population of about 217,000 (2008), of whom some 66,000 live in Bermuda. Altogether about 112,000 people hold British Dependent Territory Citizenship and for whom the government has authorised full UK passports. There are no special flags relating to the Sovereign Base Areas in Cyprus, which are administered by the Ministry of Defence. The remaining Territories without Blue Ensigns are mentioned below to complete the picture.

Blue Ensigns

British Indian Ocean Territory. Listed under Other Colours section..

British Antarctic Territory. The white flag of this territory has been counted under the White Ensign section earlier.

UK MOD, OGDs and NDPBs. (26)

Blue Ensigns defaced with the appropriate badge or device are authorised by the Queen for non-military vessels owned by or in the service of the Ministry of Defence (MOD), together with those operated by other government departments (OGDs) and certain non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs) in the United Kingdom. The authority is granted to the parent department and not to individual vessels, which is why Commanding Officers or Masters of such vessels do not carry a warrant on board their ships (as do yachts flying privileged ensigns). The following examples are known to be in use:-

Aberdeen Harbour Board. (L?) *Broad White Curved Chevron in Lower Fly.* Designed by Albert Brebner of Edinburgh and granted 4 July 1974. The AHB ensign is worn at shore offices and by pilot boats and harbour craft, but no longer by any named vessels. The ensign is also part of the AHB's achievement of arms (held by the dexter supporter) matriculated by the Lord Lyon King of Arms in 1985.

Army Department Vessels. *Yellow Crossed Swords.* Added to the Admiralty Flag Book in October 1890. The Army Department Ensign is the original War Office Fleet ensign, and is now worn by vessels commanded by non-commissioned officers and operated by the Royal Logistic Corps (RLC) ~ which is the successor to the Royal Corps of Transport (RCT), and the previous Royal Army Service Corps (RASC). The crossed swords pictured in the 1908 'Flags of All Nations' were wrongly shown in the form of cutlasses rather than the customary swords. Her Majesty's Army Vessels (which were also operated by the RLC and commanded by a commissioned officer) wore a modified ensign (now dormant) described later. During World War II some 1400 vessels of the RASC sailed under the Army Department ensign, which was worn by all Army vessels until 1968. It is also flown at appropriate shore offices and worn as a uniform shoulder badge by members of the Port Maritime Regiment.

British Antarctic Survey. (L) *Shield, Yellow Torch on Red Triangle on Heraldic Sea above White.* The BAS ensign was granted 1 August 1963. It is defaced with the escutcheon of the British Antarctic Territory arms, and at the time of research was worn only by the Natural Environment Research Council owned vessels RRS ERNEST SHACKLETON (the new BAS flagship, replacing the recently decommissioned BRANSFIELD) and RRS JAMES CLARK ROSS. RRSs wear the merchant jack (Union Flag within white border) as their jack, rather than the square version of the ensign to which they are entitled. The warrant does not make it clear whether this ensign should be worn by Royal Research Ships whilst on passage, or only when the ships are actually engaged on BAS work.

Combined Cadet Force (Naval Sections). (L) *White Foul Anchor on Blue, within Pale Blue Ring inscribed NAVAL SECTION COMBINED CADET FORCE, surmounted by a Yellow Naval Crown.* Warrant dated 31 Dec 1959. Replaced previously used Red Ensign. First batch issued had CORPS instead of FORCE. {Worn by training vessels employed by the CCF and flown at CCF shore units and parades.} ADM 1/27126.

Blue Ensigns

Consular Officer (afloat). *Complete Royal Arms.* Not an ensign. Flown at the bow or on a mast. Authorised in 1869. Current but rare – the author has never seen one used in over thirty years of naval service, however in 1979 when R.J. Jacques, Esq. was British Consul in Venice he invariably flew this ensign in his launch when afloat on the canals.

Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform. *Circular Picture of Three Masted Ship at Sea.* The old Board of Trade ensign. It is available for use on land, and on any vessels that the department might operate.

Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. *Yellow Ring around Full Colour Crown above White Fish.* Formerly the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food. Currently worn by Motor Vessels CIROLANA and CORYSTES. Authorisation about 1913, but the records appear to have been lost. NL 13905/13.

Department for Transport. *White Anchor on Red Spoked Wheel, Full Colour Crown above.* The old Ministry of Transport ensign which is available for use on land, and on any vessels that the department might operate.

Devon & Cornwall Police. *EiiR within Ring inscribed DEVON & CORNWALL CONSTABULARY on Eight-point Star, Surmounted by a Crown, all in shades of grey.* Granted by Ministry of Defence warrant, dated 8 September 2011, for vessels owned, chartered or hired by Devon & Cornwall Constabulary. The force was re-named Devon & Cornwall Police in March 2010 but 'Constabulary' is likely to remain on the badge until the royal cypher is changed.

Global Marine Systems Ltd. *White Seated Figure of Old Father Time.* Granted 22 January 1877. Previously used by Cable and Wireless Marine (C&W) who inherited it in 1994 from the General Post Office (GPO) via British Telecom (BT). It was first flown in March or April 1877. Currently only those GMS vessels originally bought from BT wear this ensign Cable Ships (CS) SOVEREIGN, IRIS, and MONARCH), whilst all other British registered GMS ships wear the Red Ensign. A few years ago C&W negotiated for authorisation to use the special ensign in all their vessels without success. CS CABLE INNOVATOR, commissioned in 1995, wears the Red Ensign as does the new flagship CS BOLD ENDEAVOUR commissioned in 1999. Perhaps the Father Time badge should now be authorised for the Red Ensign.

Government Service Blue Ensign (GSBE). *Horizontal Yellow Anchor.* Introduced in 1864 for all naval auxiliaries and known as the Admiralty Ensign. In 1969 Royal Fleet Auxiliaries were assigned a vertical anchor, and in 1970 two yellow wavy lines were added below the anchor for vessels of the Royal Maritime Auxiliary Service (RMAS). Thus the 'Admiralty Ensign' was used only by Naval and Joint Service sail training craft and certain Government operated vessels for which no other ensign was appropriate, and in 1974 it was renamed the Government Service Ensign. However in 1996 the majority of the RMAS fleet was transferred to Serco-Denholm Ltd and once again flew the GSBE. The RMAS ensign became obsolete in 2008 (see Obsolete British Isles). The GSBE is now worn by the many ex-RMAS craft under the management of Serco-Denholm Ltd., sail training craft (STCs), Britannia Royal Naval College DARTMOUTH training vessels and certain vessels under charter (i.e. at one time including Motor Vessels NORTHELLA and COLONEL TEMPLER). Also tenders to establishments (i.e. the now de-commissioned SULTAN VENTURER) and diving tenders (i.e. IXWORTH). Since January 2000, this ensign has replaced the

Red Ensign which used to be worn by all HM Ships undergoing contractors sea trials. The first ship so to do was HMS KENT.

Blue Ensigns

HMS TRINCOMALEE. *'Fully Rigged Frigate surrounded by a Double Circle of Rope, in Gold.'* On 20 Sep 2005 the Secretary of State for Defence, Dr John Reid, signed a warrant for a special blue ensign to be worn by HMS TRINCOMALEE, a frigate built in 1817 and now preserved in Hartlepool as the central attraction in the maritime heritage area. The occasion marked the completion of a lengthy restoration programme following a period of over 100 years as a training ship for young people. Throughout that period TRINCOMALEE had been known by the name of the ship she had replaced, FOUUDROYANT, and from 1950 had worn a special ensign approved for her under that name. This was a blue ensign with a badge consisting of the letter F in red over a flash of lightning, on a white oblong background. The badge on the new ensign consists of a modified version of the HMS TRINCOMALEE Trust's seal. The frigate is sailing 'downwind' i.e. to the right on the obverse side of the flag and to the left on the reverse. The President of the Trust, Captain David Smith, OBE, RN (the inspiration behind the restoration), sought the assistance of Commander Bruce Nicolls OBE, RN in the design and manufacture of the flag. The new ensign was hoisted for the first time at a ceremony onboard on 14 December 2005.

Irish Lights. *Lighthouse in Coastal Scene within White Circular Belt inscribed COMMISSIONERS OF IRISH LIGHTS.* Possibly granted in 1867 when the Commissioners of Irish lights were constituted. Flown (at least until recently) on special occasions (Commissioner's visits etc) at three lighthouses in Northern Ireland (Mew Island, Rathlin East and Donaghadee). Used to be flown at Ferris Point also until the flagpole was removed to build a helicopter landing pad. The Irish Lights Vessel – ILV GRANUAILE - wears the ensign of the Republic of Ireland, and tends lights throughout the island of Ireland, both north and south. Granuaile is the Irish form of Grace O'Malley, an heroic Irish princess during the time of Elizabeth I, and it has long been a traditional name for Irish vessels. This fine ship visited Portsmouth for the International Festival of the Sea in 2001.

Kent Police Marine Unit. *White Horse of Kent on a Red Disc within a Blue Border inscribed KENT POLICE on Crowned Eight-Point Star.* Warrant issued on 28 May 2007 by Secretary of State for Defence authorising the Blue Ensign with the badge of Kent Police in the fly to be worn by vessels owned, chartered or hired by Kent Police Marine Unit. It is understood that the ensign was brought into use when PRINCESS ALEXANDRA III was commissioned on 14 May 2008 at a ceremony attended by warships of the Royal Navy and French Navy.

Marine Society. (L) *Britannia and a Boy on Marine background within White Ring inscribed MARINE SOCIETY 1756.* Granted in 1876. The Marine Society was founded in 1756 and is the world's oldest maritime charity. The ensign is currently worn by the Training Ship EARL OF ROMNEY, and is also flown at the society's headquarters at Vauxhall in London. Early warrants were vessel specific but a general departmental warrant was issued on 7 Dec 1984. TS JONAS HANWAY (sister ship to EARL OF ROMNEY) was returned to the Ministry of Defence in 1998.

Blue Ensigns

Mersey Docks and Harbour Company. *MDHB within Wreath all White.* Retains the badge original authorised in 1912 for the Mersey Docks & Harbour Board although the Board was reconstituted as a Company in 1972. The original Red Ensign defaced *MDHB* was replaced by this defaced Blue Ensign, to which more prestige was attached, probably because, in 1911, one of the members of the Board of Admiralty had an interest in the MD&HB. No port authority had been hitherto been granted a defaced Blue Ensign so a warrant for a Blue Ensign defaced with its badge was first issued to the Port of London Authority. The following year the MD&HB warrant was changed, and the new Blue Ensign was first hoisted in a ship named PRINCE LOUIS OF BATTENBERG. The real Prince Louis of Battenberg, Vice Admiral and C-in-C of the Atlantic Fleet, was married to a grand-daughter of Queen Victoria.

Metropolitan Police. *EiiR within Ring inscribed METROPOLITAN POLICE on Eight-point Star all in Blue and White, Surmounted by a Full Colour Crown.* Granted 5 Nov 1952. Despite the date of the warrant, the ensign was not permitted for use until 1 July 1953 (following the Coronation). A range of senior officers' distinguishing flags is also employed.

Ministry of Defence Police and Guarding Agency. *EiiR within Ring inscribed MINISTRY OF DEFENCE POLICE on shaded Eight-point Star surmounted by a Crown all in Black and White.* Originally granted to the Ministry of Defence Police in 1971 and worn by all named and unnamed vessels. At one time the MDP ran about 15 patrol craft. New boats acquired in 1994 were named on 5th June after the Normandy beaches (JUNO, GOLD, SWORD and OMAHA), although by 2000 these craft were being phased out. On 1 April 2004 merged with the Ministry of Defence Guard Service.

Northern Lighthouse Board. *White Lighthouse.* Granted 8 December 1885. At the time of research worn by Motor Vessels PHAROS and FINGAL. A smaller rectangular version of the NLB ensign is worn as a jack.

Port of Dover Police. *Simplified Shield of Arms of Dover within Blue Ring inscribed PORT OF DOVER POLICE on Grey Eight-point Star surmounted by a Crown* Established in 1933, but the Marine Section which operates one Rigid Inflatable Boat, was formed (as of 2011) only recently. A Ministry of Defence Warrant for the ensign was arranged by Lord Boyce, former First Sea Lord, now Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports and Constable Dover Castle.

Port of London Authority. *Yellow Sea-Lion (lion head and upper body with fish-tail) holding a Trident.* Granted in 1911. The PLA flotilla comprises about a dozen named vessels (together with numerous unnamed ones). The PLA ceremonial barge is the ROYAL NORE, originally named NORE after the lightship, but the Queen agreed to the change of name in 1978, and the Duchess of Gloucester conducted the re-naming ceremony on 4 May of that year. Other flags unique to the PLA and used afloat are the Board Flag, the Chairman's Pennant, the Vice Chairman's Pennant and the Statutory Harbour Master's Flag.

Blue Ensigns

Royal Engineers. *Arm rising from Mural Crown, Winged at Wrist, holding Thunderbolt with Flashes of Lightning, in Yellow and Grey.* The badge on a Blue Ensign is similar to the obsolete badge of the Submarine Mining Service but differs in some details and reappeared in the Admiralty Flag Book of 1907 as "War Office : Royal Engineers". It was flown at the RE Diving unit Gunwharf (Portsmouth) until all Service diving moved to the Joint Service Defence Diving School on Horsea Island (Portsmouth) in 1996. The ensign became dormant with the formation of Royal Logistics Corps, but has been revived for the Royal Engineers Boat Squadron.

Royal Fleet Auxiliary. *Vertical Yellow Anchor.* Current design approved by HM Queen Elizabeth II in 1968 and introduced from 16 June 1969. Before then the RFA used the Government Service Blue Ensign (then known as the Admiralty Ensign) with a horizontal anchor (see above). The RFA flotilla comprises about twenty major vessels. A square version is used as the jack, and the Commodore RFA has a distinguishing pennant.

Royal Gibraltar Police. *POLICE in White.* The RGP is the second oldest police force in the Commonwealth (after the Metropolitan Police). The ensign is also used by the Ministry of Defence funded Gibraltar Services Police (GSP).

Royal Hospital School. (L) *St George Cross Shield with Crown at Centre and Anchors in each Quarter, Yellow Naval Crown above and Motto below.* First hoisted 25 July 1953. Currently only used ashore, but permission is believed to have been sought to use afloat in school yachts and craft.

Sea Cadet Corps. *White Foul Anchor on Blue, within Pale Blue Ring inscribed SEA CADET CORPS, surmounted by a Yellow Naval Crown, Motto on Pale Blue Scroll below.* Designed by Commander H Gresham Carr MSNR and granted on 3 Oct 1942 after the Admiralty took control of SCC units (previously run by the Navy League). Minor alteration to design of badge in 1948. Conditions for use laid down in ACRO 28 of 1 Dec 1999. Motto 'Ready aye ready' taken from the motto of Captain Robert Falcon Scott. Flown as the ensign in vessels run by the SCC and the defacing badge is also used as the cadets' beret badge. SCC craft wear the merchant jack as their jack. On 7 Nov 1951 the Admiralty approved the use of this ensign by recognised SCC units in Australia also. A version with a revised badge and the Australian White Ensign in the canton replaced it in, or soon after, 1973.

Scottish Executive Rural Affairs Department. *S F flanking a Foul Anchor surmounted by Scottish Crown within a Thistle Garland incorporating D A F S at the top; All in Yellow except Full Colour Crown.* This Department of the Scottish Executive runs two maritime agencies, the Scottish Fisheries Protection Agency (SFPA) and the Fisheries Research Service (FRS). The ensign, which is used by both agencies, was granted to the former Scottish Fisheries Board (established 16 Oct 1882) on 26 Mar 1885. "However the badge was not matriculated by the Lord Lyon until 1988. For reasons unknown the achievement describes an imperial crown (with raised arches) as the royal cipher, although the drawing depicts a St Edward's crown (with depressed arches). Thus, until replaced by the Scottish crown, c2002, the Scottish Fisheries ensign bore a royal crown in the imperial shape long after it should have been replaced by St Edward's crown." At the time of research worn by Fishery Protection Vessels NORNA, SULISKER, WESTRA and VIGILANT (and inshore craft MOIDART and MORVEN) of the SFPA, as well as by the government owned contract operated FRS vessels (comprising the recently commissioned replacement

Blue Ensigns

Fishery Research Vessel SCOTIA, together with FRV CLUPEA). FPVs are painted greenish grey whilst FRVs, which used to be black and buff like RMAS vessels, are now painted in a more Scottish livery of blue and white. Vessels wearing this ensign fought in World War II as far afield as the Mediterranean.

UK Border Agency. *Crown above Shield of Royal Arms overlying Circular Blue Band inscribed UNITED KINGDOM BORDER AGENCY on a Sixteen-Point Star.* The department was formed on 1 April 2008 by a merger of the port of entry functions of HM Revenue and Customs, the Border and Immigration Agency and UK visas. Now worn by HM Cutters, of which in 2010 there were at least seven, namely VIGILANT, VALIANT, VENTUROUS, VINCENT, SENTINEL, SEARCHER and SEEKER; and numerous other small patrol craft.

Public Service Jacks.

Although Jacks are not discussed in this paper it should be noted that public service departments are authorised to use a square version of their Blue Ensign as a Jack. Currently only the Royal Fleet Auxiliary, RMAS, Marine Society and Northern Lighthouse Board vessels are believed to do this. These privileged jacks are not included in the totals because they are only variants of existing ensigns. HMAVs wore the Union Flag as their jack, as did HM Air Force Vessels when they existed. The British Antarctic Survey and the Sea Cadet Corps use the merchant jack (also known as the pilot jack).

Privileged Yacht Clubs and Rowing Clubs.

Yacht Clubs. The many different Blue Ensigns currently authorised for Yacht Clubs world-wide, all of which are listed in Annex A together with descriptive notes about many of them.

Rowing Clubs. Only one privileged rowing club is known to exist. The Royal Chester Rowing Club was established in 1838 and granted royal patronage at the end of June 1840 (announced in the Chester Chronicle on June 26th). The Blue Ensign defaced RCRC dates from the mid 1850s, but no warrant details are known to exist.

Australia (7)

Australia is a rich source of ensigns of all kinds, especially defaced Blue Ensigns. They are authorised for vessels belonging to, or in the service of, national and state governments, and are also official land flags in several cases. Before the mid-1950s these flags were authorised by Admiralty warrant, but since then they have been approved by Australian government departments or NDPBs, and they are recognised by the Australian Flags Act. The following examples currently exist.

The National Flag (L) *Five Star Southern Cross on Fly, Seven-Point Star in Lower Hoist, all White.* The Australian National Flag (ANF) was chosen after a competition in 1901 which had over 30,000 entries. Five were chosen as having equal merit and shared the £200 prize. The winning design was approved by King Edward VII in 1903, amended in 1908 when a seventh point was added to the Commonwealth Star, and published in the Australian Gazette on 22 May 1909. It is worn as the jack by Royal Australian Navy vessels and its wider use is governed by the Flags Act of 1953 (Act No 1 of 1954). Very minor design alterations were made in 1954. There are additional defaced Blue Ensigns used in Australia as flags (and as ensigns) by the states and maritime authorities listed below. It is however likely that changes may occur in the use of these flags and readers with more up to date knowledge are

encouraged to inform the author. Aside from the well known state flags themselves, Australian ensigns are based on either a defaced ANF; a defaced state flag; or a defaced 'plain' Blue Ensign; and examples of each are given.

Australian Customs Service Ensign. (L?) *Australian National Flag with CUSTOMS in White between the Commonwealth Star and the Southern Cross.* Possibly introduced in 1955, although legislation published 17 Dec 1987 gave 1 Jan 1988 as the commencement date. It replaced the 1904 defacement *HMC* in the lower corner of the fly.

Maritime Services Board of New South Wales. (L?) *Yellow Two-Masted Sailing Ship and Four Stars on Red Disc within Pale Blue and Yellow Ring, Scroll below inscribed THE MARITIME SERVICES BOARD OF N.S.W.* Probably authorised in 1995 when an Act established "the corporatisation of the three former Maritime Services Board port authorities (Sydney Newcastle and Port Kembla Ports Corporations)".

Port of Launceston. (L?) *City Arms on White Disc; Shield has Three Waratah Flowers on Green, above Blue Inverted Y on Yellow; Tasmanian Tiger Supporters, Helm, Mantling, Compartment and Motto.* Authorised 1967. Until 30 July 1997 was Port of Launceston Authority.

Port of Melbourne Corporation Flag. (L?) *Crossed White Anchors.* Originally Melbourne Harbour Trust and later Port of Melbourne Authority and Melbourne Port Corporation. Adopted in 1906, however an ensign was first employed in 1880, but by 1906 had been altered to its present form, although this was not confirmed by the Commissioners until 1960.

Fremantle Port Authority Flag. (L?) *F.P.A. beneath Swan of State Flag.*

Port Headland Port Authority Flag. (L?) *P.H.P.A. beneath Swan of State Flag.* Adopted 15 June 1971.

New Zealand. (2)

In Australia we have seen how Blue Ensigns proliferate, but this is not so in New Zealand. All NZ flags are authorised by the New Zealand Flags, Emblems and Names Protection Act of 1981.

The National Flag. (L) *Southern Cross of Four White Edged Red Stars.* The above mentioned Act declared the New Zealand Blue Ensign (current design 1902) was to be known as the 'New Zealand Flag' (NZF). The NZF is also worn as a jack by Royal New Zealand Navy vessels. The NZF was designed by Lieutenant (later Admiral) Albert Markham of HMS BLANCHE in 1869.

Customs Flag. (L?) *NZ CUSTOMS SERVICE in White between Hoist and Lowest Star.* "The Customs flag shall be the New Zealand Ensign with the addition in the fly of the words 'NZ Customs Service' in bold characters." New Zealand Customs and Excise Act 1996.

Cook Islands. (L) *Circle of Fifteen White Stars .* Approved by Royal Warrant signed by the Queen, and introduced on 4 August 1979. The circle of white stars represents the islands. Not to be confused with the illegal Euro Ensign bearing twelve gold stars. This flag is also used as an ensign by vessels in local waters.

Blue Ensigns

Fiji. *Shield with Yellow Lion on Red above Cross of St George with Emblems in Each Quarter.* Vessels authorised by the Fijian government to wear the Fijian Blue Ensign (1970). Fiji left the Commonwealth in Sept 1987 but retained British derived flags. Fiji rejoined the Commonwealth in 1997 at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Edinburgh that year, but was suspended 1 September 2009.

LAND FLAGS **Sub-National (6)**

State of New South Wales Flag. *On a White Disc a Yellow Lion between Four Yellow Eight-Point Stars on a Red Cross.* Adopted in 1876 and also worn as the ensign by vessels of the Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol; a privilege accorded in respect of services during World War II.

State of Queensland Flag. *Crown in centre of Pale Blue Maltese Cross on White Disc.* Adopted 29 November 1876 but crown changed in 1953. Maltese Cross originally Navy Blue.

State of South Australia Flag. *On Yellow Disc, Front of Black and White Shrike with Raised Wings.* Adopted 13 November 1904 and officially proclaimed the State Flag 30 October 1980. The badge may have been designed by Robert Craig, though this is disputed.

State of Tasmania Flag. *Red Passant Lion on White Disc.* Adopted 29 November 1875 with very minor alterations in 1975, when on 3 December the ensign was officially proclaimed the distinguishing flag of the State of Tasmania.

State of Victoria Flag. *Crown above White Southern Cross.* Adopted in 1877 with minor alterations in 1953.

State of Western Australia Flag. *Black Swan on Yellow Disc.* Current design adopted in 1953 when the black swan was turned to face the hoist.

Flags of Office (6)

Australia

Chief of Army. *Australian National Flag, with Sun Rising behind Crown and Scroll inscribed THE AUSTRALIAN ARMY, between the Commonwealth Star and Southern Cross.* Authorised 1 October 1992 when the Australian Army badge replaced the traditional British Army crown and lion device. Until 1997 the appointment was known as Chief of the General Staff.

Governors of Australian States. *Crown above Badge on State Flag.*

New South Wales. Authorised 19 Jan 1981

South Australia. Authorised in 1976.

Tasmania. Authorised in 1977. Possibly two versions exist but counted as one.

Western Australia. Authorised 27 May 1988.

Note. Governor of Queensland has retained the original defaced Union Jack. Governor of Victoria has a yellow flag.

Blue Ensigns

Australian Police and Emergency Services (3)

Fire and Rescue NSW. *Two Fire-Axes and Flaming Red Torch on Blue Shield Shape behind Arms of NSW on Red Disc, Surrounding Scroll inscribed FIRE AND RESCUE to the Left and NEW SOUTH WALES to the Right. Was New South Wales Fire Brigades until 1 January 2011. Date of authorisation unknown.*

South Australia Police Department. *Wattle Garland with Crown, around Blue Ring inscribed SOUTH AUSTRALIA POLICE, enclosing Shrike of State Badge on White. In some case the badge is on a white disc.*

Victoria Police Force. *Five White Stars on Blue Cross on Red Disc within Blue Ring inscribed VICTORIA POLIC above Scroll inscribed UPHOLD THE RIGHT; both superimposed on Inverted Five-Point Star below Crown; all superimposed on Green Wreath. Authorised 20 October 1974. The VPF flag was designed in 1955 by Major General Porter (using the badge & motto designed in 1946 by R K Knox & Chief Commissioner Duncan). First flown in 1956 but not formally dedicated until 1974. St Edward's crown replaced Imperial design of royal crown in 1972 as with many Australian ensigns. The original motto, 'Tenez le Droit' was replaced in 1985.*

Other UK (5)

HM Coastguard. *Crown above Yellow Octagon around Yellow initials CG on Blue. Introduced 28 Oct 1974. Formed in 1822 as the Coast Guard, and formalised by the Coast Guard Act of 1856, when control passed from Customs to the Admiralty. Transferred to the Board of Trade in 1923 (when the two words were combined into 'Coastguard'), the Ministry of Transport in 1945, Department of Trade in 1964, and incorporated into the Coastguard Agency in 1994. Her Majesty's Coastguard has over 20 general purpose boats but they do not normally wear an ensign (by default) which is now limited to shore installations such as the Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centres (MRCCs) and several other smaller Rescue Centres around the British coast. The Coastguard Agency combined with the Marine Safety Agency on 1 April 1998 to form the Marine Safety and Coastguard Agency (MSA).*

HM Customs and Excise. *Full Colour Crown above Yellow Portcullis with Chains. No longer used by former Customs Cutters which are now operated by the UK Border Agency, but is available for use on land by HM Revenue & Customs. Current design authorised 16 August 1948 but not introduced until 6 August 1949 at the request of HMC (reason unknown). This ensign is used by the (quite separate) Gibraltar Customs Service.*

Lloyd's of London. *Shield of City of London above Angled Yellow Foul Anchor on Blue all within a Yellow Ornamental Frame. Granted 9 September 1882. Only used ashore at Lloyd's offices, and, until it closed down, on appropriate occasions at Gibraltar signal station (RN manned but partly funded by Lloyd's). The defacement is the same as Lloyd's Yacht Club privileged Red Ensign. The Lloyd's defaced White Ensign (granted in 1896) became obsolete in 1914.*

Pangbourne College Ensign. *Red Hulled Three Masted Ship, Black Sky, White Sea within Ring of White Rope. Founded in 1917 to produce better educated officers for the Merchant Navy. A public School since 1969. Ensign permitted by Admiralty in the 1920s but paper work lost. [ADM 1/8760/221]*

Blue Ensigns

Seamen's Hospital Society. *SEAMEN'S HOSPITAL SOCIETY in White*. Established afloat at Greenwich in 1821 in the ex-HMS DREADNOUGHT. RN Colours were granted to the vessel in 1822, later changing to the Blue Ensign and pennant. The Hospital came ashore in 1870 and continued to fly the ensign (probably adopting the distinctive defacement at this time), firstly on Founder's Day (8 March), and since 1993 on a daily basis. No current warrant exists (most probably lost as a result of enemy action during World War II).

Doubtful.

Queen Victoria Seaman's Rest. *Blue: White Lighthouse in Lower Hoist, QV over SR in the Fly*. Located in Poplar (east London) this charity started in 1843 as the Seaman's Mission of the Methodist Church. Flag appeared in an advertisement in Lloyd's Calendar of 1962, and is on the organisations website, but may be only a logo ?

RED ENSIGNS

Undefaced. (1)

Correctly known as the Red Ensign of Her Majesty's Fleet, it is authorised for all vessels and craft belonging to Her Majesty's subjects resident in the UK, Crown Dependencies and Overseas Territories which are not entitled by warrant or other legal authority to wear other national colours. Until the end of 1999 it was also worn by HM Ships undergoing contractors' sea trials, and it is also worn by the historic HMS WARRIOR in Portsmouth (which also flies the red masthead pennant of the Red Squadron). In August 2000 an announcement by the Deputy Prime Minister (John Prescott – ex merchant naval steward) invited all citizens to fly the Red Ensign on 3rd September - a worthy idea, which hopefully will catch on widely. 3rd September was chosen because on that date in 1939, a few hours after war had been declared against Germany, the first shipping casualty occurred with the sinking of the Donaldson Line passenger ship, Athenia, and the loss of 112 passengers and crew. For almost six years barely a day went by without the loss of merchant ships and their crews.

Defaced

Crown Dependencies. (3)

Isle of Man Civil Ensign. *Three Armoured Legs Radiating from the centre*. Defaced with the Arms of Man (remember that the Arms of Man are legs!) and authorised by Royal Warrant 27 August 1971 for use by local people, and for vessels registered in Douglas. The red land flag authorised 9 July 1968 also has the famous gold triskelion as its defacement.

Bailiwick of Guernsey Civil Ensign. *Yellow cross flared at tips*. Designed by Commander Bruce Nicholls OBE RN and authorised by Royal Warrant 30 April 1985. No reference to registration but restricts use by companies "to vessels operating in waters adjacent to the Channel Islands" as stated on the warrant: however 'adjacent' is not defined further. The land flag (a St George's Flag defaced with same yellow cross) was authorised the same day.

Red Ensigns

Bailiwick of Jersey Civil Ensign. *Three Lions on a Red Shield topped with an Ancient Crown.* On 23 June 2010 the States Assembly approved an optional Red Ensign authorised under Art.4(1)(b)(ii) of Shipping (Jersey) Law 2002 as an alternative to the plain Red Ensign for vessels register at the Port of Jersey. The defacement is the Arms of the Royal House of Plantagenet.

U.K. Overseas Territories. (6)

Although most Overseas Territories have Blue Ensign land flags, not all boast an equivalent Red Ensign for use afloat, nevertheless this is slowly being addressed by the government departments concerned. The following Red Ensigns are in current use: -

Bermuda. *White Shield with Green Base on which a Seated Red Lion holds a Shield bearing a Wrecked Ship.* National colours for vessels registered on the Bermuda Register by virtue of section 17(1)(b) of The Merchant Shipping Act 2002 (No. 35 of 2002). Alternative use of the plain Red Ensign is permitted. A Red Ensign with the Arms of Bermuda has been the de facto land flag for Bermuda since about 1915, which is an exception to the general rule of using the defaced Blue Ensign for that purpose. Bermuda's unique use of the Red Ensign as a land flag may stem from Canadian influence. The defacing arms were adopted 4 October 1910.

British Virgin Islands. *White Figure and Twelve Lamps on Green Shield; VIGILATE on Yellow Scroll below.* Authorized by s. 70(1) of the British Virgin Islands Merchant Shipping Act, 2001. Alternative use of the plain Red Ensign is permitted. An earlier unofficial ensign had been adopted in 1956. It is possible that some versions of this ensign, which was known as the Merchant Jack, did not have the motto and scroll.

Cayman Islands. *Shield with Yellow Lion on Red above Three Green Stars on Heraldic Sea; Turtle Crest, Motto on Yellow Scroll, all on White Disc.* Widely used since 1959 especially by yachts, and as a flag of convenience for merchant vessels since 1987. The Cayman Islands is a Category I Register of the Red Ensign Group (British Register). The Cayman Island Red Ensign was first authorised by Order In Council, 1988, for vessels registered in Cayman; the flag was subsequently (and is currently) authorised by section 69 (1) of The Merchant Shipping Law (Cayman Is.) (2008 rev.).)

Falkland Islands. *Shield with White Ram on Blue, above Sailing Ship on Heraldic Sea; Motto on Yellow Scroll below.* An unofficial Red Ensign was long used illegally, but in 1996 the Department of Transport (DoT) decided to establish an official civil ensign, and two proposals were submitted by Dr Crampton. A change of staff at the subsequently formed Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR) delayed further action, and it was not until 16 December 1998 that the ensign was eventually approved by Her Majesty, coming into effect on 25 January 1999 Merchant Shipping (Falkland Islands Colours) Order 1998 (UK Statutory Instrument 1998 No 3147). The design had the Falkland Island arms on a white disc in the fly. Her Majesty subsequently (9 May 2007) approved a modified version with a larger defacement and no white disc.

Red Ensigns

Gibraltar. *Grey Gateway and Key on Red Panel; Motto on Yellow Scroll below.* Gibraltar Red Ensigns have been manufactured unofficially in the past but not authorised for use until 1996 when the Gibraltar Shipping Register was established by Order in Council. A newly designed version of the Gibraltar Red Ensign was authorised by the Merchant Shipping (Gibraltar Colours) Ordinance on 14 February 1996 (effective from 19 March 1996) for civil craft registered in Gibraltar. The city shield is placed directly on the field and the motto *MONTIS INSIGNIA CALPE* lies in a scroll lies beneath it. The defacing badge is quite different from the much older blue ensign badge mentioned earlier. Use is restricted to registered vessels with apparently no plain Red Ensign option. Unregistered vessels use plain Red Ensign.

Turks and Caicos Islands. *Yellow Shield with a Conch Shell, Lobster and a Turk's Head Cactus in the corners.* Adopted 7 November 1968, albeit without official sanction. This ensign is also technically illegal. In recent decades (i.e., since the 1960's) there has been a strong custom of using a local version of the Red Ensign, both by some locally registered craft, and by visiting craft, especially U.S., as a courtesy flag. The Shipping Ordinance 2002 (T&C) allows for an Order in Council to proclaim a local Red Ensign, but so far, this has not happened.

Of the territories with indigenous inhabitants, this leaves only Anguilla, Montserrat, Pitcairn and St Helena without their own Red Ensigns.

U.K. Non Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs). (10)

Eastern Sea Fisheries. *Quartered Shield on White Sky and Blue Sea within Circular Border inscribed EASTERN SEA FISHERIES JOINT COMMITTEE 1894.* Warrant issued 9 August 1900. The ESF Committee is believed to be seeking to change its badge (dated 1894) to reflect more accurately its present area of authority. At the time of research worn by ESF PROTECTOR III, THREE COUNTIES and PICES III.

North West Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authority. *Enigmatic Yellow Monogram which includes letters S F.* Formerly North Wales & North West Sea Fisheries until 1 April 2010 when fisheries functions in Wales were transferred to the Welsh Assembly, and North West Sea Fisheries until 1 April 2011 when it merged with Cumbria Sea Fisheries Committee. Authorised by Warrant 22 June 1901, when the authority was called the Lancashire & Western Sea Fisheries. At the time of research was worn by Motor Vessel L & W PROTECTOR. Unusually (perhaps uniquely?) the LWSF warrant is edged in black, in mourning for Queen Victoria who died on 22 January 1901, exactly five months before the warrant date.

Welsh Assembly Government Fisheries. *Daffodil and Two Fish on a White Shield with Red Dragon Crest on large Yellow Bordered Green Disc.* Was South Wales Sea Fisheries until 1 April 2010 when North Wales Fisheries was transferred from North West Fisheries. A new defacement was adopted (without official sanction) in 1994 to replace the 1979 version. At the time of research worn by Motor Vessel CRANOGWEN.

Note that there are twelve English and Welsh Sea Fisheries Committees, only three of which enjoy the privilege of a special ensign. The remainder are assumed to use the undefaced Red Ensign.

Red Ensigns

The Maritime Volunteer Service. *Naval Crown above Yellow Bordered Blue Disc on which V is superimposed on an Anchor, both Yellow.* The MVS gained formal approval and a warrant for its defaced Red Ensign (designed by Commander Bruce Nicholls OBE RN) in mid 1998, bearing the MVS badge in the fly. Following the demise of the Royal Naval Auxiliary Service (the obsolete RNXS ensign is listed in Chapter 3), the MVS seeks to encourage people to take part in maritime activities and has recently commissioned the ex-Sea Cadet Corps tender Motor Vessel APPLEBY in which the ensign will be worn.

The Royal National Lifeboat Institution. *St George's Flag with Crown above Yellow Foul Anchor on Vertical Arm, and Red Initials RNLI arranged in the Quarters.* Authorised in 1964. The defacement is the RNLI house flag, which is flown at shore installations. The RNLI was founded in 1824. The familiar RNLI house flag is based on St George's cross and is much older than the ensign. It was designed by Miss Leonora Preston in 1884, formally adopted in 1908, and has been painted on lifeboats since 1920. The RNLI currently operates about 280 named lifeboats in the UK and Ireland.

The Scout Association. *White Fleur-de-Lis on Purple Disc, Naval Crown above, BE PREPARED in White below.* Authorised 15 April 1952, when the ensign was shown with a yellow fleur-de-lis on a green disc. Only permitted for those Scout troops (maximum of 100 nation-wide) classified as Royal Navy Recognised. These troops are also granted a special pennant. The defacing badge includes a fleur-de-lys and a naval crown. In 1937 the Sea Scouts were refused a Blue Ensign following withdrawal of recognition in 1933. [ADM 1/23993]

The Corporation of Trinity House. *St George's Flag with similar Three-Masted Ships in each Quarter.* Possibly dating from 1771. This is the only original defaced Red Ensign surviving in public service following the general change to Blue Ensigns in 1864; currently worn by Trinity House Vessels PATRICIA and MERMAID. The other Red Ensigns mentioned in this section are much more recent. The Trinity House Lighthouse Service (THLS), the Northern Lighthouse Board (NLB) and the Commissioners of Irish Lights (CIL) together form the General Lighthouse Authority (GLA) and between them run five named vessels covering the entire British Isles.

The Corporation of Trinity House for Hull. *Three White Stars on a Black Bar across an Inverted Yellow Anchor on a Blue Shield.* Hull Trinity House has always been separate from Trinity House.

Company of Thames Watermen and Lightermen. *Shield with Crossed Oars and Tasselled Cushions on Blue Panel above Brown Boat on Heraldic Sea.* This ensign was granted in 2003 and unveiled by Admiral Sir Alan West, First Sea Lord in early 2004. It bears the shield of arms of the Company in the fly.

National Historic Ships. *Circular Badge depicting White Ship's Bow with Blue Bow-Wave.* Introduced in 2010(?) for ships (over one thousand) on the National Register of Historic Vessels. Those of particular interest or significance form The National Historic Fleet and are entitled to an ensign with a *Yellow Naval Crown above the Badge.*

Red Ensigns

Privileged Yacht Clubs.

There are several different examples of defaced Red Ensigns granted to Yacht Clubs world-wide, and these are listed at Annex A.

The Commonwealth. (3)

Australian Civil Ensign. *Five Star Southern Cross on Fly, Seven-Point Star in Lower Hoist, all White.* Authorised 15 April 1954, and is virtually identical to the flag gazetted in 1908, with minor alterations to the stars similar to the National Flag.

New Zealand Civil Ensign. *Southern Cross of Four White Stars.* Original ensign authorised 7 February 1899 replaced by current version in 1903.

Fijian Civil Ensign. *Shield with Yellow Lion on Red above Cross of St George with Emblems in Each Quarter.* Authorised in 1970. Retained when Fiji left the Commonwealth in 1987 and continued in use on rejoining in 1997. Nevertheless this ensign seem to be gradually being replaced by the national flag for use as a civilian ensign.

LAND FLAGS (4)

Hull City Council. *Three Yellow Coronets set Vertically on a Blue Shield.* This flag requires further research but when the council is sitting a red ensign with this defacement is flown above the city hall.

Manitoba Provincial Flag. *Shield Cross of St George above Buffalo standing on a Rock, Green background.* Land flag authorised by Royal warrant on 12 May 1966. The same comment applies as for Ontario.

Ontario Provincial Flag. *Shield with Cross of St George above Three Yellow Joined Maple Leaves on Green.* Land flag authorised by the Queen on 21 May 1965. Also used on inland waters as the provincial civil ensign, although strictly speaking this contravenes Section 91 of the Canada Shipping Act (1985).

Norfolk Island (Islander's Flag). *Red: Norfolk Pine on White Disc.* Authorised 26 November 1985. The flag reflects islanders descent from the HMS BOUNTY mutineers. Adopted by the Society of the Descendants of the Pitcairn Settlers in 1985. Apparently not well known and little used.

Some Red Ensigns that never were

It is interesting to note how things might have been different. On 17 January 1918, King George V expressed a desire that the Merchant Marine's war service should be recognised by the award of a white fimbriated red cross upon the Red Ensign – just for merchant ships and not for yachts. The King also proposed a similar idea for the Blue Ensign, and he wished to announce his plan on the 4th August – the fourth anniversary of the declaration of war. However at Admiralty Board meetings on 18th and 25th July Their Lordships advised against this. Their reasons were that the Red and Blue ensigns were well known and loved and had served in many glorious actions. Also the proposed changes had no historical significance and furthermore such a change would require an alteration to the Merchant Shipping Act. They also wisely realised that the addition of a red (St George's) cross would only symbolise

England, and they went on to point out the difficulty of addressing those civil ensigns already bearing defacements in the UK, Dominions and Colonies. Meanwhile the Board of Trade suggested a white cross instead of a red cross might be added to the ensigns. Other ideas included a red bordered and blue bordered Jack. These proposals were discussed again on 2 January 1919, but in the end all were dismissed and the King was persuaded to drop the plan. ADM 1/8530/203.

SKY BLUE ENSIGNS (10)

RAF Ensign. *Three Roundels superimposed Red upon White upon Blue.* Authorised 26 July 1920. Used ashore at all RAF stations, and at one time by RAF vessels (large vessels were prefixed HMAFV and/or RAFV - whilst small RAF marine craft were prefixed RAFMC).. ADM 1/12493. Other than official RAF locations, the RAF ensign is flown on special occasions at the Battle of Britain memorial at Biggin Hill, and at Canterbury's Westgate during Battle of Britain week each September. In addition the following UK derivatives exist

RAF Ensign variants

RAF Sailing Association Ensign. *Yellow Crown and Eagle superimposed on RAF Roundel.* Authorised in 1986 (and also mentioned at Annex A).

Air Training Corps Ensign. *Yellow Falcon with raised wings within Red Ring, inscribed AIR TRAINING CORPS and surmounted by an Astral Crown with VENTURE : ADVENTURE on Yellow Scroll below.* Authorised June 1941.

Royal Air Forces Association. *Three-Quarter view of Silver Eagle with Raised Wings perched on a Globe superimposed on a Blue Ring inscribed ROYAL AIR FORCES ASSOCIATION.* The land flag of the Royal Air Forces Association (note the plural to include Commonwealth forces). It is flown ashore on appropriate commemorative occasions, often alongside the RAF Ensign.

It should be noted that the Royal Naval Association does not have an equivalent flag (only standards) although the Royal British Legion does have a flag (as well as numerous standards). Date of authorisation unknown.

RAF Ensigns - Commonwealth Versions.

Royal Australian Air Force Ensign. *Light Blue version of Australian National Flag with Southern Cross tilted to accommodate Red Kangaroo on White Circle within Blue Ring in Corner of Lower Fly.* Current design authorised 6 May 1982.

Royal New Zealand Air Force Ensign. *Royal Air Force Ensign with White NZ on Red Circle.* Conferred on the RNZAF by King George VI on 29 August 1939, and posted in the New Zealand Gazette on 14 September 1939.

Sky Blue Ensigns

Commonwealth Civil Air Ensigns

Australia. *Sky Blue version of Australian National Flag with Overall White Edged Blue Cross, and Southern Cross tilted Forty-Five Degrees Anti-Clockwise.* Gazetted 4 March 1948 when the yellow stars of the original 1935 design were replaced by white stars.

Fiji. *Sky Blue version of Fiji Light Blue Flag with the Shield superimposed on Overall White edged Blue Cross.* Probably dormant.

New Zealand. *UK Civil Air Ensign with addition of Four Red Star Southern Cross in Lower Fly.* Adopted 16 November 1938 but now little used.

United Kingdom. *Sky Blue Ensign with Overall White edged Blue Cross.* The UK Civil Air Ensign was introduced by Order in Council on 23 September 1931, superseded by another Order in Council, dated 18 March 1937, which extended its use. Provisions for its use are covered in relevant Air Navigation Acts, but sadly this ensign is effectively dormant although efforts are being made to encourage its use once again.

ENSIGNS OF OTHER COLOURS (16)

National Flags (3)

Fiji. **Light Blue:** *Shield with Yellow Lion on Red above Cross of St George with Emblems in Each Quarter.* First flown on Independence Day 10 October 1970. Retained on becoming a republic and departing from the Commonwealth on 15 October 1987. Fiji rejoined the Commonwealth in 1997, but has been 'fully suspended' since 1 September 2009.

Niue. **Yellow:** *Yellow Star on Blue Disc at Centre of Union, Yellow Star on Each Arm of St George's Cross.* Authorised by the Niue Flag Act of 15 October 1975. The Union Flag signifies that Niue had become a British Protectorate in 1900.

Tuvalu. **Light Blue:** *Nine Yellow Stars.* On 1 October 1995 (or possibly 1 January 1996) Tuvalu adopted a national flag without the Union Flag in the canton to celebrate 17 years of self-rule, however Tuvalu reverted to the original (1978) flag bearing the Union Flag on 17 April 1997 following popular demand.

Sub-National (2)

British Indian Ocean Territory. **Heraldic Sea:** *Crown and Palm Tree.* Granted by Royal authority 4 October 1990. It is flown outside the office of the resident Commander RN who is both military and civil representative in the territory of H.M. Government.

Hawaii State Flag. **Horizontally Striped White/Red/Blue: White/Red/Blue: White/Red.** Formally adopted as the state flag by the Hawaiian Constitution of 1845. Its use is governed by Hawaiian State Statutes in which the Canton is described merely by its design without any reference to the name Union Flag or the British historical connection.

Ensigns of Other Colours

Flags of Office. (5)

UK Joint Service Command Flags. *Blue, over Red, over Sky Blue.*

Ministry of Defence Emblem (Blue Foul Anchor, Red Crossed Swords, Sky Blue Eagle) in the fly.

Chief of Defence Staff. *Emblem on White within Oval Garter surmounted by a Crown.* 16 July 1965.

Unified Commander-in-Chief. *Emblem on White within Circular Yellow Garland surmounted by a Crown.* 9 November 1965.

Unified Commander (3 Star). *Emblem on White Disc surmounted by a Crown.* 19 December 1967.

Unified Commander (2 Star). *Emblem on White Disc.* 19 December 1967

A one star Joint Commander uses a triangular pennant with a very ugly and misshapen Union Flag in the hoist.

Governor of Australian State of Victoria. *Yellow: Crown above Red Southern Cross.* Authorised 18 April 1984.

Other Flags (6)

Royal British Legion. *Blue over Yellow over Blue; Blue inscription in Yellow Band.* The flag follows a similar pattern to the better known Standards which were adopted without authority in 1921. [HO 290/46] In some cases the Union is reduced in height to match the upper blue band, but in others the Union has the usual proportions and the bands are in the proportion 2:1:1. Date of authorisation unknown.

Fire Service College. *Red with Blue 4th Quarter; Badge, EiiR within Red Ring inscribed FIRE SERVICE COLLEGE on Eight-point Star, Surmounted by a Full Colour Crown in 4th Quarter.* The current version is similar to that authorised for the National Fire Service on 22 January 1944 (now obsolete), except for the defacing badge in the lower fly.

Fire & Rescue Service of Western Australia. Was Western Australian Fire Brigades until 1995. *Blue with Red 4th Quarter: Black Swan on Yellow Disc in Centre of Fly.* Royal Warrant dated 7 October 1979. The WA Fire Brigades Board flag was designed by Acting Chief Officer Stephens to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the WA Fire Service. According to one account Stephens intended to combine the flag of Western Australia with the flag of the UK World War II National Fire Service (Red Ensign with blue 4th quarter), but was misled by, possibly, Campbell & Evans' 'The Book of Flags', in which the Nation Fire Service flag is incorrectly described as being blue with a red 4th quarter

Ensigns of Other Colours

Blood Indian Nation of Alberta. **Buff:** *BLOOD TRIBE beneath the Union Flag canton, and symbols for the Sun, Two Tepees and Crossed Pipes of Peace in the Fly.* On their website the design is on a pale blue background. It commemorates the treaties signed in the name of Queen Victoria in 1876, 1877 and 1899.

Siksika Nation Reserve. **White.** *Black buffalo on a yellow circle, with feathers, medicine pipe and tomohawk.* In about 1990 the Siksika Nation Reserve (90 miles south of Calgary in Alberta) adopted (without warrant authorisation) a white flag having a small Union Jack in the upper hoist and the tribal symbol, which is registered as a Coat of Arms, in the centre. It is carried in parades and flown within the reserve on public buildings. Since 28 June 1989 'Siksika Nation' has been the official name of the Blackfoot federation of tribes. Siksika is the Blackfoot word for moccasin.

Ocean Yacht Company Ltd House Flag. **Black:** *Overall White Cross with Triangle of Fifteen Yellow Discs in Lower fly.* Registered as a trade mark in 1993. The flag has St Piran's Cross (the flag of Cornwall) with the bezants from the arms of the Duchy of Cornwall. Examples are frequently made without the bezants. Designed by Brian Pope and registered as his company house flag in 1993. Although it is marketed with the caveat that it is not a legal ensign, it is nevertheless popular both as a house flag in Cornish vessels (although the Cornish flag is more commonly used in this regard) and also as an (illegal) ensign itself. Known locally in Cornwall as The Cornish Ensign and is used widely both ashore and afloat. See also in Chapter 2B the Devon Ensign.

Old Flags in Current Use

Air Force Association of Canada Ensign. **Sky Blue:** *Royal Air Force Roundel with Central Disc replaced by a Red Maple Leaf.* The Royal Canadian Air Force Ensign (authorised by King George VI in June 1940) was not retired until three years after the introduction of the present Canadian Flag, when the Canadian Forces were unified, and even then the flag continued to be used by the Royal Canadian Air Force Association. This was officially sanctioned by the Queen in September 1973. The maple leaf in the roundel was changed to the 1965 version at the same time. The flag was made copyright as the Association's trademark on 1 January 1997 and published in the Canadian Trade-Marks Journal Volume 44 No 2201.

Australian Federation Flag. **White:** *Overall Blue Cross.* First recorded in a flag chart by Sydney Harbour Master, Captain John Nicholson (the son of a Bermondsey baker), on 31 December 1831. Two versions existed – one with stars on the cross arms, and one without (page 76). Now used as the house flag of the Sydney Maritime Museum, and occasionally by yachts of the Sydney Amateur Sailing Club who used the ensign unofficially as far back as the 19th century. A good example of an historic (and strictly obsolete) flag still in use.

Canadian Blue Ensign. **Blue:** *Shield, British Royal Arms with lions of 4th Quarter replaced by Three Yellow Fleur-de-lis on Blue, above Three Red Maple leaves on White.* The Royal Victoria Yacht Club uses the former Canadian Blue Ensign (page 92) as a house flag both afloat (sometimes as an ensign) and also ashore. In addition the Royal Canadian Yacht Club successfully petitioned the Canadian Heraldic Authority in 1996 to use the ensign as a Club House flag. This flag is also worn as the Jack by the RCN historic ships in Toronto and Halifax.

Old Flags in Current Use

Humber Conservancy Commissioners. **Red:** *Circular Picture of a River God and the Humber within a Girdle inscribed HUMBER CONSERVANCY COMMISSIONERS.* In 1907 the Commissioners were replaced by a Board, which in 1968 became part of British Transport Docks Board, and it was assumed that the ensign had become obsolete. However it is still flown, from the historic Spurn Light Vessel alongside in Hull Marina.

Murray River Flag of South Australia. *Five White Stars on Red Cross on Blue Upper Fly, Four Blue and Three White Stripes in Lower Hoist and Fly.* This flag (for Bottom Enders) is arguably obsolete, but is still used both ashore and afloat. See also Top Enders flag on page 76.

Pre-1801 Red Ensign. **Red Ensign without St Patrick's Saltire in the Union Canton.** This ensign is flown in front of the Sillers Building (the main government facility which houses the State Governor's office) in Jackson Mississippi, and at each State Line Visitor Center at the borders of the State of Alabama.

Pre-1801 White Ensign. **White Ensign without St Patrick's Saltire in the Union Canton.** All Saints Church at Burnham Thorpe in Norfolk. The 1707 White Ensign is authorised to be flown from the tower of All Saint's Church at Burnham Thorpe in Norfolk in memory of Lord Nelson and is provided at public expense; one was made in 1994 by United Flag Traders Ltd. Although obsolete for maritime use it is therefore still a current flag and commemorates the Battle of the Nile in 1798 (rather than Trafalgar) because the modern ensign was in use by 1805. Nelson, although Rear Admiral of the Blue at the Nile, ordered the wearing of the White Ensign to minimise risk of confusion with the French ensign.

Royal Niger Company's defaced White Ensign. **White:** *Overall St George's Cross with a Black Y on White within Red Ring in the Fly.* Listed later on as obsolete, is believed to have been revived ~ to fly at a memorial to the company outside an hotel in Nigeria. If a travelling reader comes across it the author will be glad to hear from them.

Annex A to Chapter 2

Yacht Clubs and Sailing Associations authorised to use a special ensign

Introduction.

All yacht clubs mentioned in this Annex are in the United Kingdom unless otherwise indicated. Warrants for privileged ensigns were originally issued to each club listed; a practice which began in the early 19th century. In May 1894 authorised clubs received new (and more explicit) warrants, necessitated by unspecified circumstances purported to be of a *diplomatic character*. Since 1927, clubs enjoying the privilege of a special ensign have been listed in the Navy List thus replacing the previous general warrants as the authority for the privilege. General warrants were revoked by the Admiralty with effect from 1 Nov 1927, from which date individual club members had to apply for their own warrants, however on 8 Feb 1985 the Secretary of State for Defence re-issued general warrants to all the privileged UK clubs (with effect from 1 Apr 1985), and since that date they in turn have issued permits to qualifying members. The privileged club list (which continues to be published in the Navy List quinquennially) was closed in 1952, however in the late 1960s it was agreed to include additional clubs in special circumstances. The list was finally closed in 1983, although there have been one or two additions made since then. Where reference is made to Admiralty records in the National Archives (formerly Public Records Office) they are listed under the appropriate ADM number. ADM 1/8752/200, ADM 116/2500, ADM 116/2501 refer generally to the issue and management of warrants.

Warrants and permits.

Since 1/4/1985 the Royal Yachting Association (RYA) has administered the UK warrant system on behalf of the Ministry of Defence, providing permits for the clubs to issue to authorised members. All UK clubs therefore grant permits under the 1985 warrant authorisation, so the dates given below are those of the original Admiralty warrants, indicated (AW =), together with dates of gaining the title "Royal", shown (= R) where appropriate. The title "Royal" is a separate privilege outside the warrant system and was granted by the reigning monarch based upon the recommendations of the Home Office which dealt with such applications. Royal patronage is a completely separate matter and it is possible for a club to have royal patronage without having the title "Royal". Members of non-UK clubs continue to apply for individual warrants, which are issued by the Secretary of State for Defence (it used to be by the Second Sea Lord), although such a grant is now a most infrequent occurrence. Finally, a small number of clubs and Service sailing associations administer their own warrants.

Australia and New Zealand

Special ensigns in Australia are now being authorised locally. UK ensigns originally authorised by warrant are permitted to be worn by Australian yachts under Section 30(4) of the Shipping Registration Act 1981, thus preserving UK symbology within Australia. New Zealand has taken an alternative approach and created specific NZ symbology for yachts. A special Yacht Ensign was recently authorised under the Ship Registration Amendment Act 1999 by Royal Licence. The ensign comprises the NZ flag in the canton of a blue flag with an overall white cross – sometimes defaced in the lower fly with a Pahi Tere surmounted by a naval crown. The design was created by the Queen's Herald for NZ and was inspired by an ensign used by the Auckland Sailing Club in the 19th century. Thus are rendered obsolete the previous special ensigns accorded to NZ clubs

Authorisation.

All yacht clubs privileged to authorise a special ensign used to be listed in the Navy List annually, however this ceased in 1989, after which it was decided that largely static data would only be reprinted every five years. Although the list did not reappear in the 1994 edition, it did so in 1995. Many clubs were founded before they were granted a special ensign, which was generally dependent on achieving the required net total tonnage of all the club's yachts. Some gained the title Royal before, and some after, the grant of the ensign. Some changed defacements or even ensigns (from Red to Blue). Although there are exceptions, undefaced Blue Ensigns were usually granted to clubs which could demonstrate some naval or public service connection, whilst defaced Ensigns were normally granted to those which could not. Undefaced Blue Ensigns were generally not granted after 1927 (a plain Blue Ensign is 'senior' to a defaced version). There are exceptions to all these provisions, but space does not allow for detailed analysis of each individual case.

Control of special ensigns.

On 8 Sept 1868 the Admiralty sent a circular to yacht clubs complaining that *some Yacht Owners are in the habit of flying the Colours of the Clubs to which they belong without having obtained the proper Warrants from this Office* and an annual return listing club yachts was requested from then on. On 29 Sept 1930, following widespread unauthorised use of privileged ensigns (*... particularly common at South Coast towns and on the Upper Thames...*), the Admiralty sought the assistance of all yacht clubs and other appropriate civil and military authorities in reporting abuses. There may be scope for repeating this endeavour, and thereby enforcing the provisions of the current Merchant Shipping Act.

Future developments.

With the emergence of new legislation concerning the nationality of citizens and the registration of vessels (both in the United Kingdom and Commonwealth and in foreign countries), the future of the many privileged ensigns granted to non-UK clubs is in some doubt. Ideally there should be a rationalisation of the current rules to enable these ensigns to continue to be used as the Sovereign of the day (and/or Admiralty) intended. It is most unlikely however that any effort will be made to achieve international agreement about these flags, and thus it is likely that in due course a proud and colourful part of our maritime heritage and culture may be lost.

The Red Ensign.

All United Kingdom yacht clubs not mentioned here use the Red Ensign undefaced.

WHITE ENSIGN

Royal Yacht Squadron. AW in 1829. Awarded to the Royal YC as it was then called. The RYS was originally one of eight clubs authorised to use the White Ensign (Royal YC, Royal Irish, Royal Western of Ireland, Royal Western of England, Royal Thames, Gibraltar, Royal Southampton (later renamed Royal Southern), and Wharnccliffe SC). The RWYC of I began as part of the RWYC – see below - but separated in 1831. In 1842, when the Admiralty restricted the privilege to the RYS, they forgot to tell the RWYC of I until this came to notice in 1853. After protests the Admiralty relented and granted individual warrants to RWYC of I boats for a White Ensign, but in 1857 withdrew the privilege entirely, leaving the RYS the only club so entitled.

NEW ZEALAND WHITE ENSIGN

Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron. Flag Officers of the RNZYS (only) were authorised to use the NZ White Ensign in 1976. The RNZYS (R = 7 Aug 1902) was previously styled the Auckland Yacht (or Sailing) Club, formed in 1876. It was also granted an AW for a plain Blue Ensign 15 Aug 1902 but this became obsolete when the NZ yacht ensign came into being.

BLUE ENSIGN - UNDEFACED (29)

Can be flown only in conjunction with the club burgee

Royal Albert YC. AW = 12 Feb 1885: R = 26 Dec 1885.

Royal Brighton YC. Australia. AW = 27 Mar 1924: R = 9 Apr 1924.

Royal Cinque Ports YC. AW = 6 May 1872: R = 1872. In common with other clubs, the RCPYC warrant of 1872 was replaced (but was not withdrawn) by an amended version dated 15 May 1894. Many of the club records were destroyed by fire during WWII.

Royal Cruising Club. AW = 8 Jan 1902: R = Apr 1902.

Royal Dorset YC. AW = 19 Apr 1875: R = 3 Apr 1875.

Royal Engineer YC. AW = 1872. The Royal Engineer YC is often called the Royal Engineers YC mistakenly. The correct name is singular.

Royal Geelong YC. Melbourne, Australia. AW = 27 Mar 1924: R = possibly in 1924.

Royal Gourock YC. AW = 1910: R=1907.

Royal Highland YC. AW = 1881: R = 24 Nov 1881.

Royal Marines Sailing Club. AW = 1965.

Royal Melbourne Yacht Squadron. Originally known as the St Kilda Yacht Club, it gained the title Royal during the 1924/25 season. The warrant was granted at about this time. The name was changed to RMYC in 1961. The Squadron is currently updating its regulations for using the ensign and researching the design of its distinctive burgee.

Royal Motor YC. AW = 10 Jan 1906: R = 30 Sep 1910. The HQ of the RMYC is housed in RMYCS ENCHANTRESS. Although now a building, this is a unique use of the title RMYCS (Royal Motor Yacht Club Ship).

Royal Naval Sailing Association. AW = 1936.

Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve YC. AW = 1958. The RNVR YC was formed as the RNVR Sailing Club in 1947, first sailing under the Red Ensign. World-wide membership also includes those who served in the RN and RNR.

Royal Northern and Clyde YC. AW = 10 May 1831: R = 1828. The Northern YC was founded on 5 Nov 1824 at Belfast. The Clyde Model YC was founded in 1856, receiving a Blue Ensign warrant 27 Jan 1857, dropping 'Model' in 1863, and becoming 'Royal' 15 Dec 1871. The clubs merged to become the Royal Northern and Clyde in 1978.

Royal Perth YC. Western Australia. AW = 28 Mar 1903: R = 19 May 1890.

Royal Queensland Yacht Squadron. Brisbane. AW = 21 Jly 1894: R = 13 Mar 1902. The Royal Queensland Yacht Club was granted the title Royal Queensland Yacht Squadron by Her Majesty The Queen on 12 Jly 1961. The Squadron became incorporated as a limited company on 14 Oct 1991.

Royal Scottish Motor YC. AW = 1922: R = 1922.

Royal Solent YC. AW = 12 May 1902: R = 22 May 1947.

Royal South Australian Yacht Squadron. AW = 13 Nov 1890: R = Oct 1890. The RSAYS was founded on 5 Nov 1869 and known as the South Australian YC until 1890. Black ties are still worn as part of official Squadron dress in memory of Lord Nelson.

Royal Southern YC. AW = 1847: R = 1840. Royal Southampton YC was established in 1837 with Queen Victoria as patron; and granted the White Ensign defaced with a crown and the city arms 15 Jly 1840. A warrant for the Blue Ensign with the same badge was issued 22 Jly 1842 as a result of the White Ensign being restricted to the RYS. The name was changed to Royal Southern YC in 1843, and the undefaced Blue Ensign was granted in 1847.

Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron. Australia. AW & R = 17 Oct 1863.

Royal Temple YC. AW = 27 Apr 1898: R = 18 May 1897. Temple YC established 4 Mar 1857 (RP in 1897 was Jubilee gift from the Queen ~ Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee was 20 Jun 1897). Used unofficial defaced Blue Ensign until 1872 when it was changed to plain Red.

Royal Thames YC. AW = 24 Jly 1848: R = 1830. The Thames YC used the White Ensign until disallowed in 1842 (by which time it was the RTYC). The Red crown defacement of the Blue Ensign, which had been originally granted, was removed in 1848. ADM 1/8744/139.

Royal Western YC. England. AW = 1 Jan 1843: R = Dec 1837.

Royal Western YC. Scotland. AW = 6 Mar 1886: R = Sep 1885.

Royal YC of Tasmania. AW = 10 Jan 1910: R = 24 Jan 1910.

Royal YC of Victoria. Melbourne, Australia. AW = 16 Aug 1886.

Sussex Motor Yacht Club. AW = 1909. Although previously defunct and bankrupt, this club has been resurrected and has regained the right to fly the undefaced ensign. In 2001 it had 33 active members and is trying to rediscover its history and origins. It has already recovered its trophies including the 1931 Britannia Trophy presented by the then Prince of Wales (subsequently Edward VIII).

BLUE ENSIGN DEFACED BY A BADGE (56 clubs : 54 ensigns)

Each one is different except where indicated by the annotation (*1) for three clubs R.Anglesey, R.Southampton and R.Torbay sharing one ensign.

Aldeburgh YC. AW = 13 Jly 1974.

Army Sailing Association. AW = 1974. The exact date in 1974 of the ASA's original warrant is unknown. The current warrant dates from 1985, as with all reissued warrants.

Bar YC. AW = 1956.

City Livery YC. AW = Nov 1977. The CLYC was informed of the award of its warrant at their laying-up dinner in Sion College on 22 Nov 1977. The warrant may perhaps have been dated some days earlier.

Conway Club Cruising Association. AW = 1977.

Cruising Association. AW = 1950. The club was established in 1908.

Cruising YC of Australia. AW = 1954.

Household Division YC. AW = 1934 as Household Brigade YC.

House of Lords YC. AW = 2 Jun 1950, following much debate over a long period, initiated by the request for a White Ensign on 15 Jun 1949. ADM 1/21976.

Little Ship Club. AW = 15 Dec 1937. The club was founded in 1926 and was not a yacht club in the accepted sense. During an after dinner speech at the club in 1937 the First Sea Lord personally invited the club to apply for a privileged ensign in recognition of its work with the Royal Naval Volunteer Supplementary Reserve training programmes. Perhaps this is the only occasion on which a club was directly invited to apply for a warrant by the authority empowered to grant it. The club applied to patent the ensign on 23 Mar 1938, but was refused, however it was granted on appeal one year later on 7 Mar 1939. Perhaps this was the first YC ensign (and even the first ensign) to receive a patent, although others have since.

Little Ship Club (Queensland Squadron). AW = 12 Nov 1956. An individual warrant was granted to a member of the LSC in about 1950 but withdrawn when the boat was sold in 1952. Application was made for an AW in 1955 and the warrant was actually received 'on board' on 18 Dec 1956.

Medway Cruising Club. AW = 13 Jly 1971.

Medway YC. AW = 7 Oct 1953.

Old Worcesters YC. AW = 31 Jan 1975. The training ship(s) 'HMS' WORCESTER wore the Red Ensign from 1862 until the 1920s when she was granted a defaced Blue Ensign. The unit closed in 1968, but the Old Worcesters association formed a yacht club in 1975 and approval was given to transfer the ensign to the club.

Parkstone YC. AW = probably June or July 1947. It was suggested in April 1947 (by the Royal Singapore YC), that the PYC should apply for a Warrant. This was successful and the announcement was made at the committee meeting on 25 Jly 1947. The original Warrant has been lost.

Poole Harbour YC. AW = 1950. There is currently some debate as to the continued entitlement of the PHYC to qualify for its ensign because of recent constitutional changes in the management of the club.

Poole YC. AW = 1948. The original Poole YC, founded in 1865 and dissolved in 1939(?) did not have a special ensign. In 1948 the Hamworthy & Bournemouth YC which had been granted a special ensign in 1938, changed its name to Poole YC.

Rochester Cruising Club. AW = 11 May 2005. Unusually the RCC obtained their authority for their warrant from The Queen having asked her directly, and not via the Secretary of State for Defence. S of S simply signed the warrant. Their defacement is a red lion passant guardant on a yellow disc.

Royal Air Force YC. AW = 1936.

Royal Anglesey YC. AW = 1887: R = 18 Jun 1885. (*1). The Beaumaris Book Society formed in 1826, becoming RAYC in 1885, and still occupies same building. No records of original warrant exist.

Royal Armoured Corps YC. AW = 1949. Warrant was reviewed in 1959 due to low tonnage. ADM 1/24013.

Royal Artillery YC. AW = 22 May 1936. Ensign bears the RA badge without the two mottoes. Ensign first granted to the yacht CYGNET.

Royal Australian Navy Sailing Association. AW = 1980. Established in 1966 having been the Australian Squadron of the Royal Naval Sailing Association since 1949.

Royal Bermuda YC. AW = 22 Nov 1847: R = 18 Dec 1845.

Royal Bombay YC. AW = 1881: R 1 Jly 1876. ADM 1/21260.

Royal Burnham YC. AW = 7 May 1928: R = 15 Dec 1927. RBYC was refused a Blue Ensign 13 Feb 1928 (total tonnage deemed insufficient) but re-applied 3 Mar 1928, and on 19 Apr 1928 the Admiralty relented. However plain Blue Ensign refused (on grounds that no more would be authorised), but defaced Blue approved if badge suitable. Badge submitted 25 Apr 1928.

Royal Channel Islands YC. Jersey. AW = 1 Jan 1863: R = 4 Dec 1862.

Royal Corinthian YC. Burnham, Essex. AW = 4 Jly 1894: R = 17 Jun 1892.

Royal Cornwall YC. AW = 12 Jun 1872: R = 3 Nov 1871. RCYC formed in 1871 with the Prince of Wales as patron, although Royal patronage was not confirmed until 1872. HRH the Prince of Wales remains the club's patron today.

Royal Dee YC. AW and R = 21 Oct 1847 (Trafalgar Day). Founded as the Dee YC in 1815 and membership was initially limited to 50, but this has now been increased to 150 ~ by invitation only. Warrant withdrawn in 1928 due to lack of applications. The club was reissued with its warrant in 1997 after a successful campaign which included an appeal to HRH The Duke of Edinburgh in 1996 and research by the author of this book.

Royal Forth YC. AW = 1882/3: R = 1882. The best known vessel in this club is the former Royal Yacht, HMY BRITANNIA. Since her decommissioning and subsequent move to Leith for public display she is no longer able to wear the White Ensign.

Royal Freshwater Bay YC. Western Australia. AW = 1936. Currently seeking to update its burgee.

Royal Gibraltar YC. AW = 22 Jly 1842: R = 13 Oct 1933. GYC was formed in 1829 (the first in the British Colonies) and originally used the White Ensign authorised by warrant dated 27 Oct 1837. This was revoked in 1842 and replaced by a warrant for the Blue Ensign defaced by the badge of the club. A new warrant was issued in 1927 when the badge was changed. The flag of the Commodore of the RGYC is the only personal flag in the territory allowed to bear the territory's shield un-ornamented.

Royal Harwich YC. AW = 1 Apr 1845: R = by 9/1845.

Royal Irish YC. Republic of Ireland. AW = 10 Aug 1846: R = 23 Jly 1846. Original warrant for White Ensign defaced with Arms of Ireland in lower hoist, 17 Oct 1831.

Royal London YC. AW = 17 Oct 1849: R = 20 Sep 1849. Formed as the Arundel YC in 1838 (named after Arundel Stairs near the Strand in London) with a red house flag bearing AYC in white, it became the London YC in 1845, adopting a White Ensign with a blue cross and a gold star in the lower fly. The gold star was replaced on 25 Feb 1846 by a shield of the arms of the City of London, and in 1849 the White Ensign was relinquished for the present blue one. The original membership restriction of 50 was increased to 500 by 1850. The RLYC now occupies premises adjacent to the RYS in Cowes IoW. HRH the Duke of Edinburgh became Commodore in 1988 but has since resigned.

Royal Malta YC. Malta GC. AW = Aug 1935: R = before 1881. The original Blue Ensign warrant of 1873 was cancelled in 1928 as there had been no applications for yacht warrants since 1882. The club was inactive in 1978 but the privileged status of this club was re-instituted on 13 Nov 1990.

Royal Mersey YC. AW = 24 Sep 1844: R = 23 Sep 1844. The Mersey YC formed on 26 Jly 1844, and quickly gained both a privileged ensign and the title Royal.

Royal Motor YC of New South Wales. AW = 12 Jly 1927: R = 1927.

Royal Nassau Sailing Club. AW = 12 Aug 1925: R = 30 Jun 1925. The warrant was withdrawn 26 Jun 1931 but restored 23 Aug 1935. Original circular badge bearing sun, sea, sand and a palm tree has been replaced by a crown and initials.

Royal Natal YC. AW = 189: R = 10 Feb 1891 (letter dated 17 Feb 1891). RNYC was instituted in 1858 and is the only club in the Republic of South Africa that continued using its privileged ensign during the period RSA was outside the Commonwealth (and thus not listed in the Navy List). However this fell into disuse but is now (in 2006) being formalised once again, and is thus left in the 'current' ensigns chapter. Uniquely for non-UK clubs RNYC warrants are not regulated by 2SL but by the club itself. Two other clubs in RSA used to fly a privileged ensign: the Royal Cape YC (until 1966), and the Point YC at Durban (until 1973).

Royal North of Ireland YC. AW = 1903: R = 2 Sep 1902.

Royal Northumberland YC. AW = 10 Aug 1934: R = 29 May 1935.

Royal Ocean Racing Club. AW = 1931: R = 1931.

Royal Plymouth Corinthian YC. AW = 9/6/1893: RP = 1886. The RPCYC was established in 1877. Duke of York granted Royal patronage in 1886. 1893 warrant withdrawn in 1930 but re-awarded in December 1976 with the support of (the now) Lord Owen. The four forts on the defacing shield depict the castles built by Henry IV to protect the Barbican from attack by sea.

Royal Prince Alfred YC. Australia. AW = 21 Oct 1868: R = Aug 1911. Ducal coronet. Not the same as the Royal Burnham ensign which has a royal crown. The PAYC was founded on 15 Oct 1867 at McGrath's and Punch's Hotel in King Street, Sydney, and granted Royal patronage by King George V in August 1911. The original ensign was identical to the RN White Ensign but with a blue cross. In 1868 application for a defaced Blue Ensign was made, together with a request that it should be called the Prince Alfred Ensign to commemorate the escape of the Duke of Edinburgh from an assassin during a visit to Australia. The new ensign was authorised by letter of 21 Oct 1868 and this was confirmed by a second letter dated 21 Jly 1869, and requesting details of the burgee which were duly supplied in October of that year.

Royal Prince Edward YC. Australia. AW = 20 May 1937: R = Aug 1935. The club began seeking Royal patronage in 1932, and formal application was made in 1934 to London via the State Governor and Governor General. The approval was announced to the club at a committee meeting on 21 Aug 1935.

Royal Southampton YC. AW = 14 Nov 1877: R = 6 Sep 1877 (*1).

Royal Suva YC. Fiji. AW & R = 10 May 1950.

Royal Torbay YC. AW = 25 Aug 1875: R = 15 Oct 1875. (*1). Granted to Torquay YC but name changed to Royal Torbay in 1885 and warrant amended. On 27 Sep 1901 Royal patronage re-confirmed by King Edward VII.

Royal Ulster YC. Club established 1866: R = 20 Aug 1869: AW = 19 Feb 1870. This was communicated by letter from the Home Department to "*the Lord Dufferin, &c, &c*" who was Commodore from 1867 to 1902.

Royal Welsh YC. AW = 5 Nov 1847: R = 1847. The Welsh YC was founded in 1847. Royal patronage was granted in 1847 by the dowager Queen Adelaide, and was continued after her death by the Prince of Wales (letter dated 26 Nov 1859). The club assumed that royal patronage entitled them to adopt the title "Royal". King Edward VII continued the privilege on 5 May 1901. The title was questioned by the Home Office in 1909, who subsequently confirmed the title 4 Dec 1909. King George V became the club's patron in 1911.

Royal Yorkshire YC. AW = 7 Nov 1929: R = 18 Jun 1847. The RYYC was founded by shipmen of Hull and Whitby in 1847. A warrant issued 18 Jun 1847 was probably to permit the use of a crown on the burgee. Another warrant for a defaced Red Ensign was issued 8 Mar 1879. Continuation of the privilege of using the prefix 'Royal' was confirmed by the King on 1 Dec 1909. Club members gained two DSOs and seven DSCs in WW II; two members became Commanders in the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve.

Severn Motor YC. AW = 13 Oct 1969. The '7MYC' warrant points out that the club did not indicate whether a defaced Red or defaced Blue was requested (and surprisingly mentions that both are equal privileges). It implies that the club was free to choose - it chose Blue. The 7MYC is one of very few inland clubs ~ being based at Worcester.

Sussex YC. AW = 1955. The SYC was founded in 1892, and formed into a Company in 1925. The Duke of Norfolk became 'The Admiral of the Sussex YC' in 1958, being succeeded by the present Duke in 1976.

Thames Motor YC. AW = 1951. TMYC was formed in 1930, and received the warrant on its 21st birthday. Defacement was awarded in recognition of services during WWII and especially Dunkirk in 1940 (see also Red Ensign of St Helier YC).

RED ENSIGN DEFACED BY A BADGE (13 clubs : 12 ensigns)

Each is different apart from Royal St George and Royal Windermere indicated by (*2). Except for St Helier, Lloyds and West Mersea, all Red Ensign defacements include a crown or coronet.

Brixham YC. AW = 1937.

House of Commons YC. AW = 1968.

Lloyd's YC. AW = 1950.

Royal Dart YC. AW = 1870: R = 12 Mar 1872. The DYC was formed in 1866 by Henry Studdy, becoming RDYC in 1872.

Royal Fowey YC. AW = 31 Oct 1905: R = 10 May 1907. The Fowey YC was formally constituted in 1894. A new warrant was later issued on 1 Nov 1927. The insignia granted by the Prince of Wales on 29 Aug 1905 included the coronet of the Duke of Cornwall. On 14 Nov 1952 the Rouge Croix Pursuivant of Arms confirmed that the proper device for defacing the ensign was the coronet of the Prince of Wales.

Royal Hamilton Amateur Dinghy Club. Bermuda. AW = 25 May 1973: R = 1953. RHADC was founded in 1882: styled Royal in 1883: but club records were destroyed by fire in 1916: Royal style was dropped in 1927: but reinstated in 1953. Following the August 1995 referendum to maintain colonial status, the position of this ensign (and all other Bermudan flags) should be assured for the future.

Royal Lymington YC. AW = 21 Dec 1925: R = 1938. A naval crown was added to the badge in 1939.

Royal Norfolk and Suffolk YC. AW = Feb 1898: R = 1898. Title 'Royal' was an error on the Admiralty warrant but allowed to stand when queried in May 1909.

Royal St George YC. Republic of Ireland. AW = 1895: R = 3 May 1845 and 21 May 1847 on change of name. (*2). In 1845 the Kingstown Boat Club was granted Royal patronage and the a Red Ensign defaced on the Union was authorised. The club's name was later changed to Royal St George's YC and then to the present (singular) name. The 1895 warrant was issued when the crown was moved from the Union to the fly. ADM 1/21260.

Royal Victoria YC. Isle of Wight. AW = 3 Mar 1898: R = 4 Jun 1845. The RVYC was founded as a Royal club and given a warrant for The Red Ensign of HM Fleet in 1845 (on June 4 or possibly June 29). The RVYC was known locally as the Red Squadron, as opposed to the White Squadron (or should it have been Wight Squadron) which the RYS at Cowes was colloquially termed. Warrant for defaced Red Ensign (crown on Union) subsequently granted 8 Oct 1872. Request then made to Admiralty on 16 Aug 1897 to move defacement to fly (because of confusion with undefaced Red Ensign of Merchant Service following dis-establishment of squadronal system in 1864), and to include the letters VR. Admiralty allowed crown but not letters on 24 Aug 1897. Osborne House approached about the letters on 7 Jan 1898. On 27 Jan 1898 Queen Victoria gave her consent for inclusion of VR beneath the crown in the fly and the Admiralty (not surprisingly !) issued the new warrant on 3 Mar 1898.

Royal Windermere YC. R = 5 Jly 1887. (*2). Adopted a Red Ensign with a crown in the fly as a Club Flag in 1902. Because of its location on a lake it is probable that no warrant has ever been issued, and yet RWYC was included in the Navy List of clubs having a special ensign in 2001.

Royal Yachting Association. AW = Nov 1992. The RYA ensign is the most recently authorised, (signed by The Viscount Cranborne). It differs from all the others in that the RYA is not a yacht 'club' in any sense, and the ensign generally only flies at the shore offices in Southampton. However if a vessel is acting in an official RYA capacity (as committee boat during a race for instance) the RYA ensign may be worn afloat as the proper Colours of that vessel.

St Helier YC. Jersey Channel Islands. AW = 12 May 1952. Application for royal patronage refused 17 Jly 1948. SHYC defacement by an Admiralty pattern anchor *uniquely warranted as a Battle Honour* was awarded in recognition of services by members' yachts in the evacuation of crew of HMS Wild Swan from St Malo on 17 June 1940 (see also Thames Motor YC Blue Ensign). The Warrant was issued by the Lieutenant Governor after Admiralty approval. Following enemy occupation, Jersey was liberated on 9 May 1945. The original request for foul anchor on the defacement was turned down and a plain anchor was insisted upon by the Admiralty. The crossed axes represent Parish of St Helier. In 1948 a Blue Ensign was requested but was refused because of the close proximity to Royal Channel Islands YC, which is located just across St Aubin's bay on the south coast of Jersey and already has a Blue Ensign.

West Mersea YC. AW = 4 Mar 1953. Admiralty letter NL 386/53 of 4 Mar 1953 authorised defacement of three seaxes in gold.

ROYAL AIR FORCE ENSIGN DEFACED BY A BADGE

RAF Sailing Association. AW = 11 Jun 1986. The RAFSA administers its own ensign permits.

DEFACED BLUE ENSIGNS NOW USED AS CLUB HOUSE FLAGS (6)

Holdfast Bay AW = 1890. Removed from Navy List 1928. Used by Adelaide Sailing Club formed when Holdfast Bay amalgamated with Glenelg YC.

Royal Canadian 1952-65 Canadian Blue Ensign flown at Toronto Island Station from outer halyard of starboard yardarm.

Royal Hamilton Ontario. AW = 10 Feb 1891. The RHYC ensign became obsolete afloat in 1937 but is still used as a clubhouse flag.

Royal Hong Kong AW = 15 May 1894: R = 3 Feb 1894. Dragon re-drawn. Still in Navy List 2006.

Royal Jamaica AW = 1897: R = Nov 1889. The RJYC was formed in 1884. This privileged ensign is currently only used ashore, at the clubhouse, where it is flown in conjunction with the Jamaican national flag. The most recent yacht to have worn it being the COCOBAN whose owner (Alastair Wilson) received his warrant on 9 Feb 1977, but the yacht struck a reef in bad weather in about 1980. Mr Wilson died in 1997.

Royal Lake of the Woods AW = 17 Mar 1925: R = 8 Mar 1924. Apart from the Royal Windermere, this was the only other yacht club with no access to the sea. ADM 1/8537/242. Ensign re-instituted in 2002 as a land flag.

Royal Natal AW = 1891: R = 17 Feb 1891. Last entry in Navy List 1973. Used ashore in 2002.

Ensign Totals

White Ensign	1
New Zealand White Ensign	1
Blue Ensign	29
Blue Ensign (defaced)	53(*1)
Red Ensign (defaced)	12(*2)
RAF Ensign (defaced)	1
Club House Blue Ensigns (defaced)	6

	103

Notes:

1. White Ensign. There are no defaced White Ensigns authorised for yacht clubs.
2. Blue Ensigns defaced. Three clubs share one ensign (*1). Thus the total of *different* defaced Blue Ensigns is 55.
3. Red Ensigns defaced. Two clubs share the same ensign (*2). Thus the total of *different* defaced Red Ensigns (including the RYA) is 13.
4. Grand Total. The total number of *different* defaced Yacht Club ensigns is therefore 69.
5. New Zealand. Since 1999 the new NZ yacht ensign has been authorised for the RNYS (undefaced) and the Royal Akarana (defaced), but not it seems for the Royal Port Nicholson (reasons unknown). The NZ yacht ensign is blue with a white cross and the NZ flag in the canton (and ensign within and ensign). The defacement is in the lower fly and comprises a Pahi Tere surmounted by a naval crown

National Totals (Defaced and Undefaced)

Australia	16	
Bahamas	1	
Bermuda	2	
Channel Islands	2	
Fiji	1	
Gibraltar	1	
Hong Kong	1	
India	1	
Jamaica	1	
Malta	1	
New Zealand	1	
Republic of Ireland	2 (the only non-Commonwealth ensigns)	
Republic of South Africa	1	
United Kingdom	72	

14 Territories	and	103 Privileged Ensigns

YACHT CLUB OBSOLETE ENSIGNS

Includes, ensigns of clubs which no longer exist, ensigns of existing clubs that no longer have a special ensign and former ensigns of existing clubs that have adopted a new design. Yacht clubs now defunct which bore a plain Red Ensign are not mentioned.

WHITE ENSIGN DEFACED WITH BADGE (6)

Irish AW = 17 Oct 1831: R = 23 Jly 1846. Defaced Blue Ensign 10 Aug 1846.

Royal Southampton AW = 15 Jly 1840: R = 1840. Defaced Blue Ensign 22 Jly 1842.

Royal Thames AW = 19 Feb 1835: R = 1830. Defaced Blue Ensign 22 Jly 1842.

Western YC of England AW = 15 May 1834. New badge Dec 1837.

Royal WYC of E AW = Dec 1837: R = Dec 1837. Blue Ensign 1 Jan 1843.

Western of Ireland AW = 7 Feb 1832: R = 1833. Defaced Blue Ensign 26 Jun 1858.

WHITE ENSIGN WITH NO OVERALL CROSS

Wharnccliffe SC AW = 9 Jun 1840. Defaced Blue Ensign 22 Jly 1842.

BLUE ENSIGN - UNDEFACED (19)

Birkenhead Model AW = c1855. Obsolete by 1875.

British Motor Boat Club AW = 1905. Club dissolved 1933.

Glenelg AW = 1879. Warrant withdrawn 1928. Amalgamated with Holdfast Bay YC in 1998 to become Adelaide SC.

Liverpool AW = 1853. 'blue ensign with the distinctive marks of the club in the Burgee'. Obsolete by 1875

Lough Erne AW = 1881. Not in Lloyd's Yacht Register after 1922.

Royal Barrow AW = 1880: R = 7 Mar 1881. Obsolete by 1891. Ashburner brothers were members.

Royal Boston AW = 1854. Obsolete by 1875.

Royal Cape Breton AW = 18 Jan 1901: R = 18 Apr 1902. Canadian Blue Ensign 1937.

Royal Clyde AW = 27 Jan 1857: R = 15 Dec 1871. Merged with R.Northern 1978.

Royal Eastern AW = 30 Jun 1836: R = 2 May 1836. Warrant withdrawn 24 Mar 1928. Amalgamated with Royal Forth YC 1969.

Royal Kennebecasis AW=19 Jan 1899: R=5 Jly 1898. Canadian Blue Ensign 1937

Royal Largs AW = 1885: R = 1885. Club dissolved 1975.

Royal Malta AW = 1873: R = before 1881. Warrant withdrawn 5 May 1928.

Royal New Zealand YS AW = 15 Aug 1902: R = by 25 Jun 1902. New Zealand Yacht Ensign 1999.

Royal Northern AW = 10 May 1831: R = 20 Sep 1830. Merged with Royal Clyde in 1978 to form Royal Northern & Clyde.

Royal Nova Scotia YS AW = 14 Apr 1862 for Halifax YC which became RNSYS in 1880 with new AW = 9 Nov 1880: R = 14 Aug 1880. Canadian Blue Ensign 1937.

Royal Port Nicholson New Zealand. AW = 1896: R = 1921. Rendered obsolete by NZ yacht ensign in 1999.

Royal St.Lawrence AW = 1894?: R = 1894. Canadian Blue Ensign 1937.

Royal Singapore AW = 1924: R = 27 Jun 1922. Became Republic of Singapore YC in 1967, but remained in Navy List until 1975.

Royal Vancouver AW = 18 Dec 1905: R = 1906. Canadian Blue Ensign 1937.

BLUE ENSIGN DEFACED WITH BADGE (19)

British Boat Club Alexandria, Egypt. AW = 1938. Not listed 1948.

Dar es Salaam AW = 1936. Obsolete 1950.

Gibraltar AW = 22 Jly 1842. Badge changed 1927.

New Thames Gravesend. Established 1867. AW = Apr 1868 for Blue Ensign with phoenix in gold. Burgee: Blue, with phoenix in gold in centre. No longer in Lloyd's Yacht Register 1908.

Portsmouth AW = Apr 1936. Last entry in Navy List 1939.

Royal Akarana New Zealand. AW & R = 22 Feb 1937. NZ Yacht Ensign 1999.

Royal Canadian AW =10 Jly 1878; R = 4 Aug 1854. Canadian Blue Ensign 1937.

Royal Cape. South Africa. Royal patronage granted by the King and warrant approved for a plain Blue Ensign by Governor General (Viscount Gladstone) on 26 Jun 1914. Defaced ensign granted after WWI and lasted until 22 Sep 1966 when Warrant returned to Admiralty following RSA leaving the Commonwealth.

Royal Holyhead AW =c1859: R = 1858. Obsolete by 1875.

Royal Nassau SC AW = 12 Aug 1925: R = 30 Jun 1925. New badge unknown date.

Royal Southampton AW = 22 Jly 1842: R = 1840. Re-issued in name of Royal Southern = 5 Aug 1843. Replaced by Blue Ensign warrant 1847.

Royal South Western AW = 1891: R = 22 Mar 1891. Merged with Royal Western YC of England 1961.

Royal Thames AW = 22 Jly 1842: R = 1830. Blue Ensign warrant 24 Jly 1848.

Royal Victoria (BC) AW = 1911: R = 1911. Canadian Blue Ensign 1937.

Royal Western of Ireland AW = 26 Jun 1858. Club dissolved by 1884.

Shanghai AW = 1909. Not in Navy List 1952.

Thames Motor Cruising Club AW = 1951. Badge changed 1969 when name changed to Thames Motor YC.

Wharnccliffe SC AW = 22 Jly 1842. Club dissolved by 1850.

RED ENSIGN DEFACED WITH A BADGE (5)

Point Durban in the Republic of South Africa. Club formed in 1837 and Warrant granted on 19 Apr 1937. Club ceased to be listed in Navy List in 1973. There is however some discussion as to whether the Point Yacht Club may seek to have its ensign re-instated following South Africa's return to the Commonwealth.

Queenstown. Cork, Ireland. AW = 14 Jan 1860. End ?

Royal Cork AW = 2 Nov 1831: R = 1830. Club was a revival of the Water Club established in 1720. Warrant cancelled 1926.

Crown on Union

Royal Portsmouth Corinthian AW = 1880: R = 25 Nov 1880. Cancelled 1930.

Royal St. George AW = 28 May 1847(?); R = 3 May 1845. 1895 crown moved to fly.

Royal Victoria AW = 8 Oct 1872: R = 4 Jun 1845. 3 Mar 1898 crown moved to fly.

Royal Yorkshire AW = 8 Mar 1879: R = 18 Jun 1847. Defaced Blue Ensign 7 Nov 1929

ENSIGNS PROBABLY NOT WARRANTED (18 different)

White Ensigns (4 different)

Junior Thames 1875. Blue cross

London 1845. Blue cross, gold star in lower fly.

London 1846. Blue cross, shield of Arms of City of London in lower fly.

Royal Prince Alfred 1867. Blue cross.

Sydney Amateur SC 1868. Blue cross.

Royal Thames 1830. No overall cross. R T Y C in red.

Yacht Squadron 1815. No overall cross.

Blue Ensign (2)

Colne Colchester, Essex. 1880. Blue burgee : red shield with three yellow crowns, two above one, on yellow ragged cross. Used until 1920 ?

Temple 1857. Blue burgee : TYC in white.

Defaced Blue Ensigns (6)

Auckland. 1890. Overall white cross, five white stars in lower hoist.

Corinthian 1875. White pegasus

Ranelagh 1875. White letters R Y C

Royal Anglesey 1886. Prince of Wales' feathers, above man's head, above scroll, MON MAM CYMRU

Royal Perth Western Australia. 1898. Circle of five white stars.

South Australian 1877? White cross patty.

Defaced Red Ensigns (8)

Brighton SC 1875. Two yellow and red fish on white shield.

Eniskillen 1910. EYC in gold in the fly.

Liverpool New Ferry. 1896. Formerly Liverpool Bay YC. 1908 Liver Bird.

Montego Bay Club established in 1936 and still operating. This ensign should perhaps be classed as 'dormant'. There is no intrinsic reason why the ensign should not be employed as a house flag in the manner of the Royal Jamaica YC ensign.

Royal Plymouth Corinthian 1887. Crown above white shield bearing a green saltire, U shaped yellow garland

Windermere. c1873. Shield bearing three lions within fleur-de-lys border.

Royal Windermere 1889. Crown.

Royal Yacht Club 1824. Letters R Y C

Yarmouth Norfolk. 1884. Arms of Great Yarmouth : three gold lions dimidiated with three silver herrings. Used until 1890 ?

Summary of Obsolete Special Ensigns.

White Ensigns Defaced With Badge.	6
White Ensign No Overall Cross.	1
Blue Ensigns Defaced With Badge.	20
Red Ensigns Defaced With Badge.	5
Different Unwarrant Ensigns.	<u>18</u>
	50

Annex B to Chapter 2

Exclusions

Flags similar to Ensigns & Unofficial Ensigns

It could be argued that this Annex is superfluous. Why include flags that are excluded! However, because the line between exclusion and inclusion is so difficult to define it seemed appropriate to mention those which nearly made it to the flag locker – but not quite, if only to stop the reader saying “*why didn't he include such and such a flag*”. This wide-ranging group includes territorial, organisational and commemorative flags as well as standards that closely resemble ensigns, both official and unofficial. All of them bear the Union Flag in the canton but are generally different in style and/or purpose from traditional ensigns and are therefore not counted in the grand muster.

Military Standards and Colours.

Four groups have been identified, with examples given below of each: -

1. Standards of British and Commonwealth military associations. These include Royal British Legion Standards.
2. Colours (Queen's and Regimental) of British and Commonwealth armed forces regiments and commands. These include Queen's Colours for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines.
3. Colours of Commonwealth Reserve and Cadet forces. These include for example the Australian Reserve Cadets Colour.
4. Ensigns within ensigns. This group (mainly within New Zealand, and some quite recent) places a complete ensign within the canton and a defacing badge in the fly (NZ Police, both the Wellington and Auckland Harbour Boards, NZ Ministry of Transport, NZ Yacht Ensign, NZ Fire Service flag).

Unofficial Ensigns.

Although some unofficial ensigns have been counted in the totals (on the basis of well established custom, practice and general acceptance) there are some noteworthy examples that, by any reasonable guidelines, fail to meet the criteria.

The Euro-Ensign. Dates from the mid 1980s. Blue defaced with 12 gold stars; i.e. the EU flag with a Union Flag in the canton. It is illegal as an ensign for British vessels but is often seen as a house flag. Not to be confused with the Cook Islands flag. A version has also been seen with 15 stars ! Maybe this was a mistaken to the 15 member states at the time or a wrongly produced Cook Islands flag – we will never know.

Eton College boat ensigns. Several traditional flags are used as boat ensigns by Eton College during the annual 4th of June procession of boats. These include about ten richly embroidered red, white and blue banners with the Union Flag in the canton.

Manitoba maritime ensign. A Red Ensign defaced with a large water buffalo. This flag was designed on request by Dr Whitney Smith following the extensive flooding near Winnipeg during May 1997, for use in rescue boats. It reflects the official provincial flag which bears a bison.

The Cornwall and Devon Ensigns . Both the Cornwall and Devon county flags are sometimes seen in ensign form (especially Cornwall) and used afloat illegally (see also Chapter 2 and below).

Unofficial Land Flags in Ensign Form.

There are quite a number of flags in this very broad category, and by their nature they are difficult to specify with any real accuracy. For example, in addition to the official flag of the Fire Service College, most of the fifty-eight British Fire and Rescue Services use a plain flag defaced with their badge (instead of or in addition to a Union Flag). However some Brigades have adopted unofficially a flag or standard in the form of a defaced Red Ensign for use at Fire Stations and Headquarters and on ceremonial occasions both indoors and out of doors. Fire Brigade flags have only recently been codified. Many other authorities and organisations use similar flags too, and the following flags are known to exist within this group: -

Devon Ensign. Comprising the Devon county flag (green with a white cross fimbriated black) bearing the Union in the canton. Flown at the Burgh Island hotel off the Devon coast. First hoisted by Commodore Harris of BRNC Dartmouth in summer 2006 during the HMS Ganges Association reunion at the hotel. See also the widely used but unofficial ensign of Cornwall in Chapter 2.

Ulster 'White Ensign'. The Northern Ireland version of St George's Cross (with the Red Hand in the centre) is sometimes flown bearing a Union Flag in the canton, often with a white fimbriation. The resulting flag is effectively a defaced White Ensign, and although not uncommon, has no official standing and is both improper and illegal.

Western Isles Ensign. Believed to have been inaugurated (unofficially) on 9 September 1976. It is understood to be a Blue Ensign which bears a black galley with furled sail in a white roundel. Nothing else is known about this flag.

County of Avon Fire Brigade. Defaced Red Ensign

County of Clywd Fire Brigade. Clywd and Gwynedd Fire Brigades combined in April 1996. Authorisation may be sought for an ensign type flag for the new authority.

East Sussex Fire Brigade. Defaced Red Ensign

Kent Fire Brigade. Defaced Red Ensign

Oxford Fire Brigade. Defaced Red Ensign. Apparently obsolete since the Brigade was reorganized as the Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service.

Surrey Fire and Rescue Service. SF & RS is believed to be replacing its existing flags and is considering making an application for a Warrant.

Wiltshire Fire Brigade. Defaced Red Ensign

Christ's Hospital School - House Flags. Christ's Hospital School at Horsham in Sussex comprises 8 Houses each divided in two sections. Each section has a House Flag (1 foot by 2 feet) which is a Blue Ensign defaced in white with the name of the House and section. These 16 'ensigns' have existed at least since the 1880s or 1890s and may have been properly authorised although no records exist. They are paraded each day at meal times, and were also paraded when the whole school exercised an ancient right by marching through the City of London in September 1997.

The International Police Association. The IPA formed in 1950 and now has branches in over fifty countries, each one having its own flag. The original flag of the British Section was a pale blue ensign bearing the IPA badge. The colour was changed to white, because it made the flags cheaper to procure! The defacing badge comprises a globe within a police star, surrounded by a form of wreath surmounting a motto.

The Royal Cinque Ports Golf Club Flag. An unofficial Red Ensign defaced with the club's shield of arms is flown daily at the clubhouse in Deal. No records exist relating to its provenance, despite its handsome design.

Christian Outreach Centre of Australia. Although the organisation often uses a plain flag with their globe 'logo' upon it, it is also known to fly an unofficial Blue Ensign defaced with the globe. It is believed to be flown at the organisation's offices in Brisbane and Hove (England).

The Flag of British California. A Blue Ensign displaying the California bear on a white roundel, displayed in the Edinburgh Castle pub in San Francisco. It has reputedly been used at sea (once) as a yacht ensign too. It reflects the possibility of California having been British if only Sir Francis Drake had landed there and formed a colony.

Loyal Orange Institution - Canada. An orange ensign with the maple leaf in the fly. There is an Australian version too which has St George's Cross in the canton and the Southern Cross in the fly.

Gibraltar Sea Scouts. The troop was founded on 4 July 1944, and at the time of research used the motor boat ROCK ROVER. They use as a Colour (but probably only as a Colour) a Blue Ensign defaced with the scout emblem in gold. It is not known what ensign they fly in their boat.

New Zealand Air Training Corps. *Yellow Sparrowhawk clutching a Spear on White, within a Light Blue Ring and Yellow Garland with Yellow inscription AIR TRAINING CORPS and NEW ZEALAND CADET FORCES, Crown above and WE TRAIN TO SERVE on Yellow Scroll below.* Ceremonial Flag in custody of the Commandant of New Zealand Cadet Forces and used only with his permission.

Commemorative Ensigns.

This group comprises current or historic flags uniquely defaced to record special events: -

The Newfoundland Red Ensign. A Newfoundland colonial flag defaced beneath the Union in gold with the words *I.A.F. AEROPLANE. SHEFFIELD* and the place & date *Sheffield 29/9/1917*, to record the funding of an RE 8 aircraft by the city for the colony in 1917. (IAF standing for Imperial Air Fleet). Lost soon afterwards, the flag was re-discovered in 1934 stuck in a hole in the sea wall on the beach at Ilfracombe in Devon. It has been kept at the Imperial War Museum since 1936.

The Armilla Red Ensign. Presented to the Commander-in-Chief Fleet (then Admiral Sir Jock Slater KCB LVO) by the President of the General Council of British Shipping (Sir Jeffrey Sterling CBE) on 24/10/1990, embroidered in gold with 112 names of merchant ships (from 23 companies) escorted by the RN in the Persian Gulf during the 1980s. This flag hangs on display in the RN Fleet Headquarters at Northwood near London.

The Zeebrugge Association Flag. Designed in 1918. A very handsome White Ensign defaced with a large winged dragon in gold. Presented to the Imperial War Museum in 1979.

SS GREAT BRITAIN Atlantic Flag. Designed in 1845. Flown at the foremast on arrival in the USA after her first Atlantic crossing and now displayed by the historic ship in Bristol docks. It comprises a White Ensign with the 1845 (27 star) version of the Stars and Stripes in the 4th quarter - a most unusual and not wholly attractive flag.

Previously Counted.

Siksika Nation Reserve. No sign of it on website, and some reports that in the canton is a tepee made from a Union Jack.

White. *Black buffalo on a yellow circle, with feathers, medicine pipe and tomohawk.* In about 1990 the Siksika Nation Reserve (90 miles south of Calgary in Alberta) adopted (without warrant authorisation) a white flag having a small Union Jack in the upper hoist and the tribal symbol, which is registered as a Coat of Arms, in the centre. It is carried in parades and flown within the reserve on public buildings. Since 28 June 1989 'Siksika Nation' has been the official name of the Blackfoot federation of tribes. Siksika is the Blackfoot word for moccasin.

Flags of the Fante Asafo.

One of the tribes of the Akan people of West Africa is called the Fante. The warrior groups of the Fante living in the coastal areas of Ghana are known as the Asafo, and they have a great love of flags of all sorts. During the past two hundred years the Asafo have developed a striking range of ceremonial flags to identify individual warrior companies. Many of these flags take the format of British ensigns, with the Union Flag in the canton and scenes from their own rich and exuberant cultural heritage in the field. Defacements include figures, animals, plants and tribal scenes, in a huge variety of colours; some also bear names or identity numbers of warrior companies. Some of the Union Flags thus depicted are rather liberally interpreted, however many are correct in all details. Modern Asafo flags generally show the Ghanaian tricolour in the canton but some are still made in the old British style. Well over one hundred Fante Asafo flags bear the Union Flag in the canton, and although many of these cantons are rather smaller than is European practice, several of them would pass for an ensign if used as such. A few would be indistinguishable even at close quarters. See also the catalogue produced by Peter Sadler and Nicholas Barnard (ISBN 0-500-27684-6 published by Thames and Hudson in 1992). Perhaps there are more 'British ensigns' in Ghana than in Britain!

Bogus fantasy Flags.

These relate to imaginary nations created as a joke or to satisfy personal ambition. There are over thirty such places but they have no legal standing whatever although all of them have flags, some of which are based on British Ensigns:-

Bumbunga. The self declared Province of Bumbunga (1979) in South Australia (a Blue Ensign defaced with an outline map of Australia).

British Arctic Territory. On 12 March 1995 the northeast tip of Ellesmere Island was declared to be the British Arctic Territory by certain flag enthusiasts in the United States. The announcement was accompanied by a defaced Union Flag and a Red, White and Blue Ensign ~ the badge being formed by a shield bearing a Polar Bear above three blue wavy lines. The Air Force variant bears a roundel with a red polar bear in the centre. These very handsome flags were designed by Clay Moss, a former Christian missionary in Romania, since returned home to the USA.

Federal Republic of Corterra. Established in 1974 in the Line Islands group in the Pacific Ocean and given a Blue Ensign defaced with 13 white stars. Not to be confused with the official flag of Cook Islands which has 15 white stars, nor the unofficial Euro Ensign which has 12 gold stars.

The Sultanate of M'Simbati. In the 1960s an elderly Englishman called Latham Leslie-Moore attempted to declare independence for a square mile of territory on the coast of Tanganyika which he had purchased in 1924. A flag was raised comprising a vertical tricolour of red, blue and yellow with a small Union Flag in the canton.

CHAPTER 3

OBSOLETE ENSIGNS AND RELATED FLAGS

Introduction

This chapter contains a bewildering number of British and British derived ensigns and related flags which have become obsolete over the years. One contributory factor to their huge number is that in 1905 all colonies without an Achievement of Arms were encouraged to apply for one, and gradually new flag badges based on the Arms replaced most of those based on the Seal of the Colony. But, as you will see, anybody who was anybody throughout the British Empire sooner or later became the proud owner of an ensign of one sort or another.

Sometimes obsolescence occurred because a territory became independent and sometimes because an organisation was disbanded or taken over, but often a flag's final retirement from active service resulted from a variety of other causes such as changing from a white disc for the badge to no white disc. There are so many of these ensigns, some very obscure or little used, and some differing only marginally from another version, that no guarantee is given for the completeness of the list. Some jacks are included too, but only if they differed significantly from contemporary ensigns. Where flag defacements differed only in very minor ways, such as the style of crown used by subsequent Sovereigns, the alternative flag has not generally been counted separately. This list changes continually, and it is to be expected that readers will have their own amendments or additional to suggest. The author will be delighted to hear from them if this is the case.

Not included

Similar exclusions have been made from the lists of obsolete flags as already made for current ones. One example for instance is the Tin Plate Worker's Society Trade Union Banner of 1838, which bore a Union Flag in the canton, but has not been counted here. Another is the 'The Empire White Ensign', which was widely made but for festive decoration only. It comprised a White Ensign defaced with the arms of South Africa, Australia and Canada (quarterly), the Star of India at the centre, and a white star in each arm of the red cross (New Zealand ?). It was commonly used as a hand flag and street bunting in the early 1900s. Concerning the Port of London Health Authority (B) - this one may not have existed but an application was made to the Admiralty on 6/9/1955, and the response on 10/10/55 indicated a formal request should be made. ADM 1/26610.

Warrants refused

Several organisations applied unsuccessfully for warrants over the years, amongst which are:- TS CONWAY for plain Blue Ensign (1903); Navy League of Canada (1918); North Irish Central Association of Sea Cadet Corps (1922); RNLI Blue Ensign (1923); Upper Mersey Navigation Commission (in 1924, 26, 27 and 33); TS FORMIDABLE, Portishead 1927; BRITISH EXHIBITOR floating trade fair (1933); Ketch TAI MO SHAN (1933); Isle of Man Harbour Commission and Tees Conservancy Commission (1936); Messers Chadburn (Liverpool) (1952); Falmouth Docks and Energy Company (1950s); South Shields Council Fire Brigade Fire Boat – for a visit by the Queen (1954); Maldon River Baliff (1955); Falmouth Harbour Commission and Southampton HC (1956); ADM 1/8529/187, ADM 1/8772/169, ADM 1/26610, and no doubt several more.

Obsolete British Isles (108)

Arranged alphabetically under the following headings.

Army (10)

Blue Ensigns (2)

Government Departments, Public Offices and Organisations (29)

Ireland (11)

Miscellaneous: Guernsey, Hospital Ship, Manx Karran Fleet (3)

Nautical Schools, Training Ships and Cadets (22)

Port and River Authorities (5)

Red Ensigns (1)

Royal Air Force (6)

Royal Navy (12)

White Ensigns (7)

Army (10)

HM Army Vessels. In October 1966 (Army Order 53/66?) a Royal Warrant was published. "HM the Queen has graciously permitted operational vessels of the Army flying the Army Ensign commanded by Army Officers and manned by military personnel in uniform to be titled 'Her Majesty's Army Vessels' ..." An Army Ensign had then to be created as the only ensign in use was the corps ensign of the Royal Corps of Transport. A Blue Ensign bearing crossed swords superimposed by the royal crest was approved by the Queen and announced in Defence Council Instruction (General) 62/67. On 28 June 1977 HMAV AUDEMER (Captain P J Robyns RCT) had the distinction of being the oldest of the 174 vessels in the Queen's Jubilee review of the Fleet at Spithead. This ensign was worn most recently by HMAVs ARACAN and ARDENNES, and it only became obsolete (or perhaps more correctly 'dormant') upon their de-commissioning in 1998.

Ordnance Ensigns. Shield shaped Seal having three cannon balls above three field-guns facing right. Introduced as a Red Jack defacement by Royal Proclamation of 12 July 1694 but also on Red Ensign **(1)** after 1731. When the shield was incorporated into the Arms of the Board the colours were settled; black cannon balls on white, yellow guns on blue. After 1801 the Union canton was changed **(2)** and it became the ensign of the War Department in 1855 when the Board of Ordnance was dissolved. After 1864 the Ensign was blue and a red border was added to the shield **(3)** The Army Service Corps took over the WD Fleet in 1888. The badge in the Admiralty Flag Book was amended in 1891 to read "War Office : Ordnance and Royal Artillery. The badge was amended 30 Oct 1944 when the field-guns were reversed to point to the hoist and the blue background may have been changed from dark to light **(4)**. In 1947 yellow became an optional colour for the border **(5)** It was used up until 1995 when it was by a large margin the oldest defaced British ensign in use (over 300 years). Although long obsolete afloat (and never authorised for shore use!) the ensign was flown at the Proof and Experimental Establishment (P & EE) at Eskmeals in Cumbria, now belonging to the Defence Evaluation and Research Agency (DERA). Although the flag dated from 1694, it was not patternised until 14 Apr 1896, over two hundred years later.

Royal Army Ordnance Corps flag. Blue Ensign land flag.

Royal Ulster Rifles. Green regimental flag on land bearing the cap badge in the fly - until 1968.

Seventh Army Division Flag (WWII). A most unusual red bordered plain 'white ensign' bearing the 7th Army Div badge in blue in the fly. An example is in the possession of Rev John Hall (former Chairman of the Flag Institute).

War Office Submarine Mining Service. 25 Oct 1886. Blue Ensign with badge based on the crest of the Board of Ordnance Arms, an arm grasping a thunderbolt issuing from a mural crown. Formed in 1871 to maintain underwater defences in the approaches to dockyard ports. Taken over by the Admiralty in 1904 and the badge was endorsed obsolete in 1909. Also used in Canada where the flag of the 48th Submarine Company, Royal Canadian Engineers is preserved at CFB Esquimalt.

Blue Ensigns (2)

Blue Ensign. 1707-1801 version, in which the Union had no St Patrick's Cross.

Blue Ensign with red border. This ensign was permitted as an alternative to the White Ensign with a red border. See "White Ensigns".

Government Departments, Public Offices and Organisations (29)

Central Electricity Generating Board. Blue Ensign defaced with the initials *CEGB*.

Civil Defence. Designed by Sir Gerald Wollaston, Garter King of Arms, approved by King George VI, 11 Aug 1943, first flown on Battle of Britain Day, 26 September 1943. The official flag was 3:5 quarterly blue and yellow with the Union in the first quarter and a crown above C D in the fourth blue quarter. Also a 1:2 version with no crown or letters. The only known example in the public domain of the latest version is laid up in Bath Abbey. At least one other is in private hands.

Colonial Development Corporation. Admiralty warrant issued 23 Feb 1951 for a defaced Blue Ensign for vessels of the CDC fishing scheme. All registered in UK except for the AFRICAN QUEEN, registered in Gibraltar. Design of defacement badge not known. ADM 1/26610

Customs and Excise.

After 1731 a Red Ensign with customs house badge in the fly. **(1)** The yellow badge on the Red Ensign of the Maritime Department of the Excise Board was a crown above a star containing the letters *E X* **(2)** while the Irish Board of Customs and Excise had a crown above a harp. **(3)** After 1784 Revenue Cutters that fired upon suspected smugglers were required to hoist a Blue Ensign with the custom house badge **(4)** After 1801 the cantons of the defaced Red **(5)** and Blue Customs Ensigns **(6)** and Excise Red Ensigns **(7)** were changed. In 1816 Customs cruisers came under Admiralty control; the Customs Red Ensign had, in yellow, a crown above *C H* in a star **(8)** while the Excise badge was changed from yellow to white and set on a Blue Ensign **(9)**. Following a Royal Proclamation of 10 Feb 1817 the ensign of all vessels employed by both Customs and Excise became a Red Ensign with a crown in the fly **(10)**. Customs did not adopt defaced Blue Ensigns in 1864 as the Order in Council had not specifically repealed the Royal Proclamation. In 1872 Red Ensigns with *C H* above the crown **(11)** were being used on buildings and hulks, but in 1873 a Blue Ensign with a crown in the fly **(12)** was introduced as the only Customs and Excise ensign, and continued in use until 1949.

Fishery Board for Scotland. Blue Ensign. Only one previous badge, but details of the illustration in the 1916 Admiralty Flag Book were wrong, as was the 1925 amendment that was supposed to correct the errors. ADM 1/8685/156.

General Post Office. The Mail Packets' ensigns were colloquially known as the Post Boy Ensigns because of their design. The London Gazette of 21 Dec 1696 commanded mail packets to wear a special flag as follows “...*This is to give notice.....the Right Honourable the Lords of the Admiralty have directed that the boats employed in this service do carry colours, in which there is to be represented a man on horseback blowing a post horn.*” However this was a jack and the badge was not authorised for Red Ensigns until 1731. The post-boy is riding towards the hoist in some **(1)**, the fly in others **(2)**. The Union canton changed in 1801 **(3)**. Between about 1833, when the Admiralty began to take-over the mail packets, and 1857 when the service was contracted out to steam-ship companies, three Blue Ensigns have been identified, the post boy **(4)**, *POST OFFICE* in white letters **(5)** and a crown above initials *G P O* in gold **(6)**. Note also the unproven possibility of a New South Wales version of this flag. Just possibly also a white version according to the late Mr Louis Loynes, but not counted.

Ministry of Transport. Blue Ensign with winged elliptical spoked wheel approved 29 Jun 1920. In Sep 1950 a red spoked wheel surmounted by a white anchor ensigned with a crown was approved by King George VI, who had criticised the previous badge. It was hoisted for the first time in the SS EMPIRE FOWEY at Southampton on 11 Jly 1951. Flown by troopships and tugs, and also by sea transport launches in Singapore, Hong Kong, Aden, and at colonial lighthouses on special occasions. Permission had been obtained for it to be flown at the 153 Coastguard Stations operated by the MoT, but this was probably rarely done for reasons of economy. In Scotland the Tudor crown (still used in 1960) was replaced by the Scottish crown. MT 9/5226, MT45/580.

Ministry of Munitions of War. 26 July 1916 the cupping and rolling factory at Woolston (Southampton) requested a Blue Ensign with the badge painted on their transport vehicles. The very handsome flag badge depicted a gunnery shell with wings within a white annulus. No warrant was necessary. In 1919 it was noticed that the badge had not been included in amendments to the Admiralty Flag Book, by which time it was obsolete. ADM 1/8464/183.

National Fire Service. Quarterly blue and red with Union in first quarter, and in the blue fourth quarter *N F S* in red on the white centre of a crowned radiant star. Presented on 22 Jan 1944, the second anniversary of Service's establishment. Laid up in Imperial War Museum 20 Jan 1949. A proposal by Richmond Herald that the Union should not have St Patrick's saltire as the Northern Ireland brigades had not been amalgamated into the NFS was rejected.

Pacific Cable Board. Blue Ensign with crown above cable-laying implements in saltire. Formed in 1901 by the governments of Britain, Canada, New Zealand and Australia, to establish a west-about cable link with Australia, that would not cross any foreign territory. The ensign became obsolete in 1929 when the Board was wound-up and its assets combined with those of the Eastern Telegraph Company, to form Imperial & International Communications, whose name was changed to Cable & Wireless in 1934

Property Services Agency Dredging & Diving Fleet. Blue Ensign used until 1994. The only known British ensign to include the colour purple as a main feature of the defacing badge. No warrant is believed to have been issued for this ensign which was probably intended to be a house flag.

South Wales Sea Fisheries Committee. Red Ensign. The defacement was changed, without any authorisation, in about 1994.

Ireland (11)

Congested Districts Board Ireland. 1893 - 1907. Blue Ensign with initials *CDB* below a crown and above a harp. Worn by the yacht FINGAL. 1907 - 1916. The initials were rearranged so that they did not separate the crown from the harp; all enclosed within red outlined lozenge. Worn by SS GRANUAILE, the name since held by successive flagships of the Commissioners of Irish Lights (latest vessel commissioned in 2000). The CDB operated along the remote but well populated coastline of Donegal, Mayo, Galway, Clare and Kerry.

Department of Agriculture Dublin. About 1900. Blue Ensign with yellow harp on blue disc surrounded by green shamrock on white ring.

Government of Northern Ireland. 1930. Blue Ensign with red initials *GNI* on white disc for vessels operated by the Government of Northern Ireland.

'Irish' Ensign. Green ensigns. 1606 Union with gold crown and harp in the fly. 1801 Union with the same, and also harp without crown, and plain green ensign with no defacement.

Port of Dublin Corporation. Blue Ensign 1864. Similar to present Irish Lights ensign, but inscribed Port of Dublin Corporation, which was the General Lighthouse Authority for Ireland. In 1867 the Port of Dublin was separated from Port of Dublin Corporation which became the Commissioners of Irish Lights. ADM 116/1063C.

Royal Ulster Constabulary. Granted 1 Jan 1948 after an application of 6 Nov 1947. The warrant states it is only permitted for RUC patrol boats on Upper and Lower Lough Erne. Was worn by the one named vessel LADY GREY (the three small craft did not wear an ensign). In recent years the ensign has been worn only during VIP visits. An RUC flag and a Standard were available for shore use. ADM 1/20883.

Unknown. Discovered in USA in 2007, a Blue Ensign bearing the shield of Ulster (St George's Cross with the bloody hand in the centre) surrounded by 6 six pointed white stars. Definitely old.

Miscellaneous (3)

Guernsey. During the 19th century a blue (or black) and white 96 square check flag with an overall red cross and Union in the canton was in use but it never became widely accepted. There was also the possibility of a Guernsey Blue Ensign for States vessels, but this is not proven.

Hospital Ship HAMADRYAD. Blue Ensign with *HAMADRYAD* over cursive *H S* within open top gold wreath surmounted by a crown. 1896-1905. The ship was built at Pembroke Dock in 1823, but never put into service. Cardiff had no hospital for seamen and in 1866 HAMADRYAD was moored in Bute Dock to remedy this deficiency. A seaman's hospital was built ashore in 1904 and the present general hospital still bears the name Royal Hamadryad Hospital.

Manx Karran Fleet. Five minor variants of the Manx Red Ensign were used by the five ships of the Karran fleet of sailing vessels. Each ensign had a small hand-painted picture of the ship concerned beneath the trinacria in the fly. One example is in the Manx museum. Counted as a single entity due to similarity of design.

Nautical Schools and Training Ships (18) followed by **Cadets** (4)

AKBAR. "Blue Ensign (probably plain ?) discontinued 4 April 1933 after 20 years." Reformatory Ship, Rock Ferry, Birkenhead 1860 -1906, Nautical School, Heswall, Cheshire 1908 - 1956. **Not counted.**

ARETHUSA. Admiralty warrant of 31 Dec 1927 for Blue Ensign with *TS ARETHUSA* in white. A Shaftesbury Home ship moored astern of CHICHESTER (below). Said to have flown a plain Blue Ensign and Union Jack as a jack since 1874. New warrant for the same ensign issued on 18 July 1933 when the school was moved to ex-German nitrate carrier PEKING, renamed ARETHUSA, moored at Upnor on the Medway. School closed in 1968. Ship now in New York museum as PEKING.

Bearwood College. Red Ensign with (probably) a yellow dolphin and anchor beneath a crown. Independent school since 1970 but had been Royal Merchant Seamen's Orphanage in 1921 and Royal Merchant Navy School in 1935. The college chapel contains many fine wall paintings of the house flags of shipping lines from days gone by.

CHICHESTER. Shaftesbury Home, Greenhithe, Lower Thames 1866 - 1889. Said to have had an Admiralty Warrant for probably a plain Blue Ensign in 1877. **Not counted.**

CONWAY. 31 Dec 1927 warrant for Blue Ensign with yellow castle. Previous warrant of 4 May 1896 for defaced Blue Ensign probably similar. Liverpool Mercantile Marine Association school ship moored off Birkenhead in 1859. Moved to Menai Straits in 1940. School taken ashore to Anglesey 1953. Closed 1974.

CORNWALL. 31 Dec 1927 warrant for Blue Ensign defaced with letter C in white. Reformatory set up in redundant ship-of-the-line HMS CORNWALL moored at Purfleet by the School Ship Society in 1859. Transferred to Blyth in 1868 and became TS WELLESLEY. Society then purchased HMS WELLESLEY, built by the East India Company and renamed her TS CORNWALL. Probably flew plain Blue Ensign until 1927. In 1932 it was suggested that the ensign should be red as the boys were not eligible to enlist in the Royal Navy. Moved to Gravesend in 1928 and sunk in 1940. Only (?) ship-of-the-line to have been sunk by aircraft.

CUMBERLAND / EMPRESS. Adopted Blue Ensign with lion rampant before 1878. CUMBERLAND replaced by EMPRESS formerly HMS REVENGE in 1889. Clyde Industrial T.S.Society. Greenock/Gareloch 1869 - 1923. **Not counted;** the same as Royal Harwich Yacht Club.

EXMOUTH. 6 Jan 1928 warrant for Blue Ensign with shield of Metropolitan Asylums Board, "argent on a cross gules the rod of Aesculapius or, a bordure engrailed sable". Former HMS GOLIATH moored off Grays, Essex, replaced in 1875 by former HMS EXMOUTH. Replaced in 1905 by a new steel copy of a ship-of-the-line. After the Board's functions were transferred to the London County Council a new warrant was issued 15 Apr 1930 for a Blue Ensign with "barry wavy of six azure and argent on a chief of the last the cross of St George charged with leopard of England. The shield is ensigned with a mural crown." The school moved ashore in

1939, but the ensign was revived when a letter of 3 Nov 1947 permitted the London Nautical School to fly it ashore at Woolverstone, Essex. The school now flies a plain Red Ensign at its premises near Waterloo railway station. After the war the ship itself became TS WORCESTER. (2)

FOUDROYANT. Yellow lightning strike through red letter *F* on blue disc with yellow border. Frigate HMS TRINCOMALEE was renamed when she replaced the original FOU DROYANT. Moored in Falmouth, then Milford Haven, then Portsmouth where she was attached to TS IMPLACABLE. School closed in 1986 but ship now in Hartlepool restored to original condition as HMS TRINCOMALEE.

INDEFATIGABLE. 31 Dec 1927 warrant for Blue Ensign with Liver Bird in the fly. In 1865 the original ship was moored at Rock Ferry, Mersey, in the same area as AKBAR and CONWAY, with reformatory ship CLARENCE nearby at New Ferry. School moved ashore in 1940 to Plas Llanfair, Anglesey, as the National Sea Training School for Boys which closed in 1995.

MARS. Established at Woodhaven near Dundee as an industrial ship in 1869, and closed 1929. 7 Feb 1878 letter of approval from Admiral Phillimore for Blue Ensign with lion rampant and thistles in each corner. Had requested a lion rampant but this had already been granted to TS CUMBERLAND. However CUMBERLAND was closed after the Great War and a warrant was issued on 31 Dec 1927 for Blue Ensign with yellow Scottish lion.

MERCURY. 31 Dec 1927 warrant for Blue Ensign defaced with the talaria (winged sandals) of Mercury. River Hamble 1892 - 1968. Flew plain Blue Ensign in the 1950s possible because Captain Superintendent was an honorary Captain RNR. Original ship replaced by HM Sloop GANNET (renamed MERCURY) in 1913. Now in Chatham Historic Dockyard restored as HMS GANNET.

Navy League. 6 June 1916. Blue Ensign defaced with badge of Navy League approved for TS Stork at Hammersmith and Liscard (Boys Naval Brigade) Wallasey. Badge (probably) a foul anchor within a circular border inscribed NAVY LEAGUE above, and KEEP WATCH below, with a naval crown above circle. In 1921 the badge on a Red Ensign was adopted as the proper flag for Sea Cadet Corps vessels, while larger training ships flew a Blue Ensign with the badge. Possibly included FOU DROYANT, IMPLACABLE, BOUNTY and NELSON. Admiralty took over the units to form the Sea Cadet Corps in 1942.

NORTHAMPTON. 27 Mar 1914 five year warrant for Blue Ensign having "an anchor with an axe and a hammer crossed in the ring thereof and the letter N and A on either side respectively the whole surmounted by a coronet." The Marquess of Northampton was patron of the school which was sited in the former torpedo-gunboat HMS SHARPSHOOTER moored at Temple Pier on Thames Embankment.

Pangbourne Nautical College. An independent public school since 1969 but was founded in 1917 in continuation of Devitt & Moore's training scheme started in 1890. Granted a defaced Blue Ensign by the Admiralty but details not known.

Prince of Wales Sea Training School Society. Red Ensign with blue scroll inscribed BRITISH SAILORS SOCIETY above white Prince of Wales feathers within blue ring inscribed PRINCE OF WALES SEA TRAINING SCHOOL. The school was founded in 1920 and closed in 1976. Photograph at fotw.net/flags/gb~bts2.html#powstss.

WARSPITE. Lower Thames. Marine Society. Admiralty Letter of 28 Dec 1877 authorised a special ensign, details not known. Ship destroyed by fire 1918 and school moved to cruiser HERMIONE renamed WARSPITE moored off Grays, Essex. Admiralty warrant 31 Dec 1927 authorised Blue Ensign defaced MARINE SOCIETY, but around 1936 this was replaced by the current ensign with the Marine Society badge.

Watts Naval Traing School, Elham, Norfolk. Blue Ensign with badge of college (?) granted 16 Jan 1933 [NL 4090/32]. Had previously used a White Ensign with initials *W N T S* in the lower fly. Was told to stop using it in a letter of 22 Mar 1927. School closed in 1954. **(2)**

WELLESLEY. Former HMS CORNWALL moved from Purfleet to Blyth and renamed in 1868. Retained name when replaced by former HMS BOSCAWEN in 1873. Blue Ensign with the crest of Sir Arthur Wellesley, Duke of Wellington, (coronet with red demi-lion rampant holding red pennant with St George hoist) granted 1877. School moved ashore in 1914 but ensign continued in use until withdrawn in 1933.

WORCESTER. Sister ship of TRINCOMALEE. Lower Thames, 1862. 31 Dec 1927 Admiralty warrant for Blue Ensign defaced *T N T C* (Thames Nautical Training College) in white. 1876 replaced by HMS FREDERICK WILLIAM renamed. After 1945 took over EXMOUTH which was renamed and moored at Greenhithe. Granted Blue Ensign defaced by letter *W* surmounted by a naval crown all in yellow. College closed in 1968. Ensign revived in 1974 as a special ensign for a yacht club restricted to former WORCESTER cadets. **(1)**

Cadets (4)

Church Lads Brigade. Warrant of 4 May 1922 for Red Ensign defaced with an anchor surmounted by a naval crown and the letters *C.L.B.*

Combined Cadet Force (Royal Navy Section). In Chapter 2 it will have been noted that the first batch of CCF ensigns wrongly included the word *Corps* in place of *Force* on the defacing badge.

North Irish Central Association of Sea Cadet Corps. Warrant of 29 Aug 1922 for Red Ensign defaced with the Red Hand of Ulster. A request for a defaced Blue Ensign, which included a royal crown, had been turned down.

Sea Cadet Corps. Blue Ensign with badge designed by H.Gresham-Carr was introduced in 1942 when the Admiralty took control of the existing independent and Navy League units. Minor alterations to the colours and the star below the anchor were made in September 1948 to produce the current badge.

Port & River Authorities (5)

Port Authorities were not entitled to a defaced ensign, but two were issued, probably through confusion between Public Offices, which did qualify, and Public Bodies, which did not.

Humber Conservancy Commissioners. Red Ensign warrant issued 13 Jan 1888. River god badge redrawn and inscription changed 1911 following name change to Humber Conservancy Board in 1907. The latter was worn by SS AUKLAND. Incorporated into British Transport Docks Board in 1968.

Mersey Docks and Harbour Board. Red Ensign warrant for dredging fleet issued in the 1880s became obsolete in 1912 when the present Blue Ensign warrant was issued.

Falmouth Harbour Commissioners. A special Blue Ensign was requested in 1955, to be defaced with the FHC badge in the fly. The request was refused but it is possible that the launch ARWENACK wore an unofficial ensign of similar design in 1910 – this one is not counted in the totals however. ADM 1/26610.

Metropolitan Asylums Board. Blue Ensign worn by the London River Ambulance Steamers. *MAB* on white cross in fly.

National Fire Service A Blue Ensign with the NFS badge in the fly was approved for Fire Boats on 19th November 1943.

Red Ensigns (1)

Red Ensign. 1707-1801 version without St Patrick's Cross in the Union. However it will have been noted from Chapter 2 that this ensign is still flown in front of the Sillers Building in Jackson Mississippi. It has not been counted as a current ensign however.

Royal Air Force (6)

Ocean Weather Ship. 19 Nov 1948 Admiralty Letter approved Blue Ensign having a badge with the words OCEAN WEATHER SHIP for the four weather ships owned by the Air Ministry and administered by the the Meteorological Office. [NL 6920/48] The ships were withdrawn by 1981, but when the (MOD owned) Ocean Weather Ship CUMULUS was stationed in the North Atlantic between 1993 and 1996 the words on the badge were changed to OCEAN WEATHER SERVICE. In 1998 CUMULUS was converted into a yacht, which is said to be the 40th largest in the world. She was for sale for 19.75 million dollars.

Royal Air Force. White Ensign with blue overall cross; eagle in the centre of the cross and crown above on vertical arm. The 1918 armistice ensign. Only four of these ensigns were ever made - to be flown from the Air Ministry building on Armistice Day 1918, although one without the badge was flown at Inverkeithing Air Force Pier in 1919. It was never formally adopted by the newly created Royal Air Force, which used the Union Flag until the adoption of its present ensign in 1921. ADM 1/12493.

Royal Air Force Air Support Craft. Blue Ensign with RAF wings above an anchor. It became obsolete in 1993 when the function was contracted out to a private company.

Royal Air Force World War One Station Flag. Pale blue ensign bearing a small roundel in fly with gold RAF wings beneath. Only version know on sale for £79-00 on e-bay in November 2005 !

Royal Air Force (Belgian Section). Used in World War Two. RAF roundel replaced by Belgian version. It may be questioned if other national RAF ensigns existed too.

Royal Observer Corps. Formed in October 1925. June 1945 Royal Warrant for RAF Blue Ensign with ROC badge (Elizabethan Coast-Watcher within garland surmounted by a crown and *Forwarned is Forearmed* below). Following a partial stand down in September 1991, the ROC was finally stood down on 31 March 1996 (although the volunteer element stood down on 31 Dec 1995) after more than 70 years service. The ROC Banner (or Colour) was laid up at RAF Cranwell on 8 Dec 1995.

Royal Navy (12)

Naval Ordnance. Blue Ensign with Ordnance shield; red border replaced by yellow cable border and an anchor added in the lower hoist. Introduced 1892, when Naval Ordnance was separated from the War Office, and phased out in 1922 by Admiralty Fleet Order 2189 which stated *The special ensign used by Naval Armament Vessels will cease to be used when existing stocks of flags have been consumed.* Two examples of the Naval Ordnance Ensign are known to exist, and are in the naval armament museum at Priddy's Hard in Gosport; recently transferred to the ownership of Gosport Borough Council.

Navy Office. Red Ensign, pre and post 1801, with a plain anchor flanked by two smaller plain anchors. There were very minor differences (in the relative size of the canton) between the jacks and ensigns of this office during the 18 and 19th century, nevertheless the jacks have not been counted separately. There is some doubt about this ensign; would the Navy Office have had any vessels ?

Royal Marines. Perhaps strictly speaking this flag should be classed as a colour and thus be ineligible for inclusion however, in 1806 a battalion of 340 Royal Marines under Major A M McKenzie RM landed to attack Buenos Aires, carrying both their regimental colour and a Red Ensign defaced with the letters *RMB* in white. This flag is preserved in the convent of Santo Domingo with the caption (translated from Spanish) "*Trophy of the reconquest of Buenos Aires 1806, of the Guard of Infantry of the Sea*".

Royal Maritime Auxiliary Service. Blue Ensign granted 29 May 1970. The RMAS horizontal anchor reflects mooring work and wavy lines illustrate sea-going character of the Service. Defacement designed by the then Director of Marine Services (Captain Cartwright RN) in 1969. In 1995 the RMAS flotilla comprised nearly 100 named vessels and some 300 small craft, however the majority of the fleet was transferred to Serco-Denholm Ltd on 12 Aug 1996 following a market test, and those vessels now sail under the General Service Blue Ensign. The flagship of the remaining RMAS was the support vessel RMAS NEWTON until the final contractorisation in 2007. Last flown 1 April 2008 at the disbanding ceremony on salvage vessel MOORHEN.

Royal Naval Minewatching Service. 1954 - 1962. Blue Ensign with "ship's badge" of RNMWS. When formed in 1952 (?) its only vessels were the yachts owned by some members. Initially they flew the Red Ensign with a distinguishing blue flag bearing the RNMWS badge. Owners who were members of yacht clubs that had a special ensign flew a Blue Ensign when sailing their boat privately, but a Red Ensign when operating it on behalf of the Navy.

Royal Naval Auxiliary Service. 1962 - 1994. The RN Minewatching Service became the RN Auxiliary Service in 1962. The "ship's badge" which showed a mine dropping into the water was retained, but the initials in the panel below the naval crown changed from RNMWS to RNXS. The RNXS Blue Ensign became obsolete on 1 April 1994 when the Service was disbanded.

Royal Naval Artillery Volunteers. 1877-1892. Blue Ensign with the initials *RNAV*.

Royal Naval Reserve. Blue Ensign with initials *RNR*. Dates from 1862-64.

Transport Office. Red Ensign, pre and post 1801, with plain anchor.

Victualling Office. Pre 1801 Red Ensign, and post 1801 Red Ensign and Blue Ensign, with yellow crossed foul anchors

White Ensigns (3)

White Ensign 1707 - c1720. 1707 Union with no overall St George's cross. For use in home waters.

White Ensign 1707 - 1801. Similar to the modern version but with 1707 Union. Foreign service only until c1720. This latter flag is still flown at public expense over All Saints church at Burnham Thorpe in Norfolk.

White Ensign with red border. Authorised about 1819 for use by merchant vessels whose Red Ensign had become "*much torn and is being repaired*". The red border was to be 14 inches wide for ships over 800 tons and 9 inches wide for vessels under 800 tons.

White Ensigns - defaced (4)

British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society. A plain White Ensign bearing a coat of arms of the society. Nothing further known at time of writing Jan 2005.

International Police Association. This was traditionally a pale blue defaced ensign but was changed to a white one in about 1993 because it was found to be cheaper to produce. No warrant was sought or obtained by the IPA for either flag.

Lloyd's Signal Stations. White Ensign with Lloyd's Arms approved in 1896 after refusal of an 1894 request to fly a naval White Ensign but with a blue cross. This was despite current Lloyds Blue Ensign having been granted in 1882. White variant ceased to be used in 1914. ADM 1/8950.

Not Known. A curious White Ensign defaced in the lower fly with a black 'Balkan' type of eagle was discovered for sale on the Internet in May 2004. Its provenance has yet to be established.

OBSOLETE COMMONWEALTH and COLONIAL ENSIGNS

The basis for an organised system of colonial ensigns was established by the Colonial Naval Defence Act of 1865. After the Act had been passed the Admiralty laid down the "Rules as to the Flag to be borne by any Vessels maintained by any Colony under the Clauses of that Act :-

1. That any Vessel provided and used under the Third Section of the Colonial Naval Defence Act, should wear the Blue Ensign, with the Seal or Badge of the Colony in the Fly thereof, and a Blue Pennant.
2. That all Vessels belonging to, or permanently in the service of the Colonies, but not commissioned as Vessels of War under the Act above referred to, should wear a similar Blue Ensign, but not the Pennant.

A Blue Ensign for a colony did not require a warrant. It was established by agreement between the Admiralty, the Colonial Office and the Governor of the Colony. A Red Ensign did require a warrant as it was established under the legislation of various Merchant Shipping Acts.

Red Ensigns fall into three categories.

1. Those needed by Protectorates and Mandated Territories whose inhabitants were not British subjects and whose vessels were therefore not entitled to fly a plain Red Ensign.
2. Those established for self-governing Colonies or Dominions as a mark of distinction.
3. Unwarranted ensigns with a colonial badge that had been authorised only for Blue Ensigns, or for governor's Union Jacks. A change dated 1 April 1890 to Article 86 of Queen's Regulations included the statement that *A Colonial Merchant Vessel may carry a distinguishing flag with the Badge of the Colony thereon, in addition to the Red Ensign, provided that such Flag does not infringe the provisions of Section 105 of the Merchant Shipping Act 1854 (see Article 87)*. This is further emphasised in Flags of All Nations dated 1930 Chapter V paragraph 127.3 in which was reprinted an extract from King's Regulations & Admiralty Instructions (KRs & AIs) of the time which stated .. *Any colonial merchant vessel, may, however, fly a distinguishing flag with the badge of the colony thereon, in addition to the Red Ensign, provided that such flag does not infringe the provisions of Section 73 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894.*

Similar directives to those mentioned above appeared in subsequent KRs & AIs, and indeed in other official pronouncements. For example the Foreign and Commonwealth Office issued a statement on 20 August 1969 declaring that the Ministry of Defence had agreed to the use of defaced Blue Ensigns in Overseas Territories *For decorative purposes inside the Colony and For distinguishing purposes inside or outside the Colony*. Therefore some pronouncements suggested that colonial distinguishing flags should comprise a plain field bearing the arms of the colony, whilst others permitted the defacement of a Blue (and sometimes Red) ensign. Confusion and ambiguity have always been features of the British ensign story. Some authorities (F E Hulme for instance) have alluded to the general acceptance of defaced colonial ensigns provided of course an Admiralty warrant was obtained. Perhaps some distinguishing flags eventually took the form of a defaced ensign and replaced the undefaced ensign in the colony concerned without such a warrant being obtained. It is not really surprising that some unauthorised defaced ensigns remain commonplace in certain Overseas Territories to this day; and this matter only began to be addressed seriously in 1996 with the authorisation of the new Gibraltar Red Ensign.

In this section each valid ensign is classified according to the following criteria.

[o] Official. Listed in an Admiralty or Colonial Office flag book, or officially recognised if before 1865.

[oa] Official Amended. eg. Badge modified or white disc removed. Changes to representations of the royal crown, which occurred after the accession of King Edward VII in 1901 and Queen Elizabeth II in 1952 are not listed.

[oo] Other Official. Not in official flag books but good evidence that the flag was used by an official body, or officially approved organisation, though not always with Admiralty or Colonial Office approval.

[i] Irregular Use. Use of an official badge on the wrong, usually red, ensign.

Other flags with Union cantons.

An unofficial flag imitating an ensign, or a proposed ensign of some significance that was probably not brought into use.

Doubtful Validity.

Possible variants of doubtful validity. Any information about them would be most welcome.

Errors. Common errors and badges that appeared only as Union Jack defacements are listed but not classified.

Colour. All ensigns are Blue Ensigns unless noted otherwise. **Red Ensigns** and **light blue ensigns** are coloured appropriately. **White ensigns and striped ensigns** are coloured purple.

Arranged.

Countries are listed within geographical areas in the following order,

	Pre-1865	Post-1865
Europe/Mediterranean,	p78	p81
Africa, north to south,	p79	p82
Indian Ocean,		p87
Indian Empire,	p79	p88
Far East,		p90
Australasia	p79	p92
(includes Papua/New Guinea, Cook Is and Western Samoa)		
Pacific,		p95
North America,	p81	p96
Caribbean (including British Guiana and Honduras),		p99
Atlantic (including Bermuda and Falklands).		p101

Page 102 Other flags with Union cantons.

Page 104 Doubtful Validity.

Summary of Obsolete Ensigns

The completely amazing proliferation of British ensigns used throughout the past three centuries must surely be the all time record for flags derived from a single national theme. They represent over one hundred and fifty authorities in over one hundred colonies, provinces, regions, states or organisations of one form or another. Such was (and indeed still is) the scope and extent of British influence throughout the world, and is something of which we can rightly be very proud.

Before 1865

	Blue Ensign	Red Ensign	White etc. / striped	
Official	---	5	2	7
Official amended	---	3	5	8
Other official	---	2	1	3
Irregular use	---	---	7	7
	---	10	15	25

1865 and later

	Blue Ensign	Red Ensign	White etc. / striped	
Official	96	27	7	130
Official amended	28	6	---	34
Other official	59	12	17	88
Irregular use	---	15	2	17
	183	60	26	269

Totals	183	70	41	294
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Other Flags with Union cantons				17
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Grand Total				311
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Flags used before the 1865 Colonial Naval Defence Act.

EUROPE

Hanover.

In 1727 King George II, who was also Elector of Hanover, directed that all his subjects' ships should have similar flags. This came to an end in 1866 when Hanover was annexed by Prussia.

[o] 1727. **Red Ensign** with a white horse on the Union canton.

[oa] 1801. Same with 1801 Union.

[o] 1801 Hanover **Red Ensign** for the Royal Yacht; a crown over *GR* over *V* in fly.

[o] Postal flag; a Hanover **Red Ensign** with a post-horn, crown, and garland in fly.

Heligoland

[i]1807-1890. **Green over red over white**. From the Governor's dispatch No 37 of 11 May 1888 "Tricolour is flown on shore and in their boats, and some have added the English (sic) jack to mark their English (sic) nationality." The Colonial Office responded that the tricolour was not officially recognised and the Red Ensign should be used, however the matter was not of great enough importance for any action to be taken. [ADM 116/300]

ALL ENSIGNS ARE BLUE ENSIGNS UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE

Ionian Islands

[o] St Mark's lion on a **red bordered blue flag**. Between 1817 and 1864, when the islands were a British protectorate, a Union canton was added to the flag, as authorised by the Constitutional Chart of the United States of the Ionian Islands, ratified by the Prince Regent 26 Aug 1817. It was intended to be flown "on days of public rejoicing and festivity."

WEST AFRICA

Nigeria

[oa] **White Ensign** bearing letters *K*, *E*, and *H* in the white quarters. King Eyo Honesty, 1860. [Steenbergen] Probably Eyo Honesty III who established christianity as the official religion at Creek town in the Niger Delta. The flag may have been the work of the British consul at Old Calabar and Presbyterian church missionaries.

INDIA

The Honourable East India Company

Granted a trading monopoly by Queen Elizabeth I in 1600, it eventually had a fleet of forty three warships (and its own army as well), and held sway over half the world's trade and one quarter of its population between the Red Sea and China.

[o] Ensigns with the 1606 Union usually had **six or seven white stripes and six red stripes**.

Some ensigns with the 1801 Union were effectively **White Ensigns with either broad [oa] or narrow arms [oa], and three narrow red stripes in each of the three white quarters. Those without an overall cross had seven white and six red stripes [oa], or four white and five red stripes [oa]** Officially all were replaced by the Red Ensign in 1824, but the Bengal Marine were still flying striped ensigns in 1861.

AUSTRALASIA

AUSTRALIA

Nicholson's Chart

On 1 Jan 1832, Captain John Nicholson (the harbourmaster of Port Jackson) produced an engraving entitled 'Code of signals for the Colony of New South Wales'. It showed eight flags all in ensign form in a panel entitled 'Proposed Miscellaneous Flags for N.S.Wales and the South Seas'. Red, Blue, Customs, Post Office (bearing Post Boy on plain white ensign), NSW civil (with Federation Flag star design), NSW civil (same but with blue horizontal stripe in quarters 2, 3 and 4), NZ (with 4 blue and 3 white horizontal stripes) and Sandwich Islands (4 red and 3 white horizontal stripes). Apart from NSW civil, they have not been counted additionally to others in the list because their provenance is unproven. The same applies to John Bingle's National Colonial Flag of 1823/4, a White Ensign with a white star on each arm of the St George's cross.

ALL ENSIGNS ARE BLUE ENSIGNS UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE

Australasian Anti-Transportation League.

[I] A 3:4 **blue flag with Union canton and a white border on the free edges.** *AUSTRALASIAN LEAGUE*, colony eg *TASMANIA*, and *INSTITUTED 1851* were inscribed in the top, fly and bottom borders respectively. The fly originally had a four star Southern Cross, but the number was increased to five [I] to represent each of the protesting colonies of New South Wales, New Zealand, South Australia, Tasmania and Victoria. The flag was flown on at least two ships; the brig 'Raven' and the schooner 'Swift'.

Murray River Flag

[I] 1853. Known only from an ambiguous contemporary description. "**It bears a red cross with four horizontal bars of blue, the cross being charged with five stars as emblems of the different Australian colonies, while in the upper corner in token of british connection is depicted the Union Jack.**" This has been interpreted as either an overall red cross with two blue bars on white in each of the three free quarters, or the red cross on white in the upper fly, and the four blue bars on white in the whole of the lower half of the flag. The modern replicas used on tourist boats (p39) have the second interpretation, but with the red cross on a blue background.

New South Wales Ensign.

[i] **White Ensign with five white (eight-pointed ?) stars on the arms of a blue overall cross.** Appeared on, not only Nicholson's chart of 1832 (see below), but also Hedberg's Hobart flag chart of 1855. It was flown at sea until 1883 when its use was prohibited by the Admiralty due to its similarity to a Royal Navy White Ensign. It later reappeared in a modified form with five-point stars as a flag promoting federation of the Australian colonies. Still used occasionally; page 39.

Queensland Customs

[oo] Possibly early 19th century. **Red Ensign** defaced with royal crown above 6 pointed star formed by interlocking triangles, with a gold Q in the centre of the star. Resembles in some respects the British Excise ensign used between 1801 - 1816. A picture of this ensign, dated 1899, can be found in the Customs House on Queen St, Brisbane

Queensland Separation Flag.

[I] Described in the Moreton Bay Courier on 5 Nov 1859, as a **light blue** flag with a red St George's Cross, and the union in the upper corner. Said to have been made to celebrate Queensland's separation from New South Wales on 10 Dec 1859 under its first governor Mr Bowen, and used unofficially until 1870. Seen flying in 2004 !!

Van Diemen's Land Ensign. (Name changed to Tasmania in the mid-1850s)

[i] **White Ensign with two, three or four horizontal blue stripes in the white quarters.** Shown in a number of flag charts produced in the early 1850s by Private Edward Murphy of the 99th Regiment. The design is similar in some respects to the contemporary Murray River Flag (see above).

New Zealand

Maori Queen and Tribal Flags. Flags were often presented to chiefs and tribes as a reward for loyal services during the Maori Wars. Such flags were unique in that only one of each was made. Some of these, such as *Te Rakau i Mataahu*, which Queen Victoria presented to Major Ropata in the 1860's, incorporated the **Red Ensign** with special devices. But those presented by the Government usually consisted of the NZ **Red Ensign** with the name of the hapu, or of a noble ancestor, worked or printed on the fly. Maoris preferred this flag because red is a colour denoting rank and mana. Moreover the hapu that could boast a genuine 'Queen' flag was bound to acquire great prestige in the eyes of less fortunate hapus. The Maoris of the Ngati Makino tribe of Otamarakau Pa (near Rotorua) requested a flag in August 1902 which was duly presented by the Government (**New Zealand Red Ensign** with *WAHAHA AHE* in the lower hoist). In commemoration of the Wanganui tribes' victory over the Hauhaus at Moutoa Island (on 14/5/1864), the ladies of the town presented a large silken flag of their own design to the local chiefs. It comprised a plain White Ensign and in the fly a gold crown with leaves on either side, below this the word *MOUTOA*, and between the two both Maori and European hands clasped in friendship. This group is counted as a nominal three in total; **[o] defaced Red Ensign**, **[oa] New Zealand Red Ensign** and **[i] White Ensign**.

NORTH AMERICA

Hudson Bay Company. The company was formed in 1670 and on 21 July 1682 its ships were given permission by Prince Rupert, Vice Admiral of England - and at that time also Governor of HBC - to fly the Kings Jack while west of the straits of Hudson Bay. The cross of St Patrick would not have originally been included. In about 1767 the company adopted its first house flag (the company Coat of Arms on a white field), which was joined in about 1818 by the **[o] Red Ensign** defaced with the company initials *H B C* (Said by some to mean 'Here Before Christ') There appear to have been two versions of the flag, the more common of which had the letters H and B conjoined. **[oa]**

Northwest Company.

[oo] Formed in 1783 and merged with Hudson Bay Company in 1821. **Red Ensign** with *NW Co* in the fly.

Colony of Maryland

[oo] c1755. **Yellow and black lozenge check** with pre-1801 Union canton. Banner of Arms of Calvert family.

POST - 1865 OBSOLETE ENSIGNS

MEDITERRANEAN

Cyprus

[o] 1881 - 1922. *CHC* on white disc. Intended only for Cyprus High Commissioner on his Union Jack, but also used on Blue Ensign until error noticed.

[o] 1922 - 1960. Two red lions.

[o] 1922 - 1960. **Red Ensign** Two red lions on a white disc.

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Gibraltar

[o] 1870 - 1923. Arms on a white disc. Granted 10 July 1502 by, probably, King Ferdinand. 1923. White disc removed creating current ensign.

[i] 1870 badge on a **Red Ensign**.

Malta

[o] 1874 - c1905. White Maltese cross on white/red shield with elaborate gold frame, on white disc.

[o] c1905 - 1922. Simplified white/red shield with no cross, on white disc.

[oa] 1922 - 1943. White disc removed.

[oa] 1943 - 1964. Top of shield straightened, St George's cross added on blue canton, on white disc.

Palestine

[o] 1927 - 1948. **Red Ensign** *PALESTINE* circumscribed on a white disc.

[o] 1929 - 1947. *PALESTINE* on white disc.

[oo] 1926 - 1929. **Customs**. *PALESTINE CUSTOMS* on white disc.

[oo] c1940 - c1945. **Police**. Badge of Palestine Police.

WEST AFRICA

West Africa Settlements

Comprised Gold Coast (until 1877), Lagos (until 1888), and Sierra Leone and Gambia (until 1889).

[o] 1870-1889. *WEST AFRICA SETTLEMENTS* inscribed in red on a circular badge with an elephant and palm tree from the Public Seal of the Gold Coast Settlements.

Gold Coast

[oa] 1877 – 1957. Same badge as West Africa Settlements but inscribed *G.C.*.

Also in the Gold Coast are the unofficial tribal flags of the Ghanaian Fante Asafo people which are mentioned in Chapter 2. Although very many of them are in current use, some are historical only, however no attempt has been made to differentiate each category. An exhibition of a selection of Asafo flags took place in London and around Britain in 1993.

[oo] 1933. **HM CUSTOMS** in white.

[oo] 1933. **Public Health Office**. *P.H.O.* in white.

Lagos Colony Lagos, which had been ceded to Britain in 1861 as a base for operations against the slave trade, joined the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria in 1906 to form Colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria.

[oa] 1888 - 1906. Same badge as West Africa Settlements but inscribed *L* in red.

Gambia

[oa] 1888 – 1965. Same badge as West Africa Settlements but inscribed *G* in red.

Sierra Leone

[oa] 1888 - 1916. Same badge as West Africa Settlements inscribed *S.L.* in red.

[o] 1916 - 1961. Shield and motto of Arms, granted 30 July 1914, on a white disc.

[oo] 192? - 1933. **POLICE** added below badge. ADM 1/8771/162, CO 323/1222/2]

[oo] 1935. **CUSTOMS** added below badge.

[oo] 1935. **DISTRICT COMMISSIONER PORT LOKO** below badge.[CO 323/1333/9]

ALL ENSIGNS ARE BLUE ENSIGNS UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE

Oil Rivers Protectorate 1885 - 1893. Probably no ensign as the protectorate was administered by the Foreign Office. A consul-general was appointed in 1891 replacing the consul at Old Calabar. See West Africa in pre-1865 section.

Niger Coast Protectorate 1893 - 1900. Name given to Oil Rivers Protectorate when it was enlarged.

[o] 1895 - 1900. Crown above garter, inscribed *NIGER COAST PROTECTORATE*, enclosing the Royal Arms, on a white disc. Even though the Niger Coast Protectorate was administered by the Foreign Office until 1899, a flag badge was produced and added to the Admiralty Flag Book as an 1895 amendment.

Protectorate of Southern Nigeria formed by combining Niger Coast Protectorate with the southern territories of Royal Niger Company. Amalgamated with Colony of Lagos in 1906.

[oa] 1900 - 1914. Crown above garter, inscribed *SOUTHERN NIGERIA*, enclosing the Royal Arms, on a green disc. Originally the disc was to have been yellow.

Protectorate of Northern Nigeria. Name given to the northern territories of the Royal Niger Company when its charter was surrendered to the Crown in 1899.

[oa] 1900 - 1914. Crown above garter, inscribed *NORTHERN NIGERIA*, enclosing the Royal Arms, on a red disc.

Royal Niger Company

[o] 1888 - 1899. Black Y on red ringed white disc. *ARS*, *JUS* and *PAX* on the arms in white or perhaps gold. The Y represented the rivers Quorra from the north-west and Benue from the north-east and the union of them both from Lokoja to the sea.

[i] 1887 - 1888 Same badge on a **plain White Ensign**. On 2 June 1887 the Admiralty approved the badge for use in the fly of the Saint George's cross White Ensign on the presumption that its use would be confined to inland waterways. When the Admiralty discovered that the company actually used it on a plain White Ensign, which was flown at sea, as well as on inland waters the warrant was withdrawn on 1 February 1888 and a new warrant was issued authorising use of the badge on the Blue Ensign. This flag does appear to live on. Outside an hotel in Nigeria stands a memorial to the company, and in 1996 the management of the hotel asked the Flag Institute for details of the ensign which they intend to fly from the memorial. It is not known if this is still done.

[ADM 1/21259, FO 403/75, FO 403/76]

Nigeria

[o] 1914 - 1960. Crown and *NIGERIA* in centre of interlaced green triangles on a red disc.

The whole of Nigeria had been claimed by Britain at the Conference of Berlin in 1886, and Northern and Southern Nigeria merged in 1914. Of the flag badge Lord Lugard wrote "The design of interlaced triangles is I think commonly called Solomon's Seal. I do not know if and when it was adopted as the seal of Islam, but it was found on the lid of a very handsome goblet or jug of brass and copper covered with designs, which was captured by our troops when the Emir of Kontagora, the principle slave raider in Northern Nigeria, was defeated. I thought it an appropriate badge for Northern Nigeria and as far as I can remember it was my own suggestion. On amalgamation of North and South it was adopted as the emblem of united Nigeria"

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[oo] Before 1932- ? **Customs**. Crown and *HM CUSTOMS*. Authorised by the Admiralty and confirmed by Colonial Office in 1933 for Lagos and Victoria.

[oo] ?-1958-? **Customs & Excise**. Full colour crown above *H.M. CUSTOMS & EXCISE* above *NIGERIA*. An example of this flag is in the possession of HM Customs and Excise, and was until the early 1990s kept at their Portsmouth office in the old HMS Vernon (now subsumed within the Gunwharf Quays development). Another was bought at auction in 2011.

[oo] 1955 - 1960. **Nigeria Ports Authority**. Yellow *N.P.A.* within interlaced green triangles on white disc. Authorised 29 August 1955. Return of warrant requested 6 November 1961. [ADM 1/26610]

[oo] ? - 1934. **NIGERIA POLICE FORCE**

EAST AFRICA

British Somaliland

1884 - 1898 administered from Aden as a dependency of Government of India, 1898 - 1904 by Foreign Office.

[o] 1904 - 1950. Head of antelope on white disc.

[o] 1904 - 1950. **Red Ensign** Head of an antelope (kudu) on white disc. Somaliland Registration of Vessels Regulations 1904. Article 3.

Every vessel employed in navigation in any waters of the Protectorate which belongs to, or is used by, any natives of the Protectorate, or any person residing or to any Company or partnership carrying on business therein shall, unless exempted, be registered, lettered and numbered in a manner hereinafter provided.

Article 20.

1] Every vessel registered under these Regulations shall fly the red ensign with the Protectorate badge on the fly in the prescribed form.

Article 23 allowed exemptions which were.

a] native canoes,

b] yachts, vessels or boats used solely for pleasure or private purposes

c] HM ships or vessels belonging to the Government of the Somaliland Protectorate.

[o] 1950 - 1960. Arms. (on white disc ?)

[o] 1950 - 1960. **Red Ensign** Arms. (on white disc ?)

Imperial British East Africa Company

[o] 1890 - 1895. Radiant sun surmounted by a royal crown.

[o] 1890 - 1895. **Red Ensign** Radiant sun surmounted by a royal crown. Warrant 6 March 1890, cancelled 1895.

Kenya. British East Africa Protectorate 1890 - 1920.

[o] 1896 - 1921. Red rampant guardant lion on white disc.

[oa] 1921 - 1963. White disc removed.

[oo] ? - 1933. **KENYA POLICE** in black around the badge within a white disc.

Some sources incorrectly record a Red Ensign. This may be because the British East Africa Protectorate, which became Kenya in 1920, had previously been administered by the Imperial British East Africa Company, which did have a Red Ensign warrant. See above.

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Tanganyika

[o] 1919 - 1961. The head of a giraffe.

[o] 1919 - 1961. **Red Ensign** Head of a giraffe on a white disc. The ensign appears to have been introduced without a proper warrant. It was listed in a 1920 amendment to the Admiralty Flag Book with reference to NL 35731/19, but after a letter dated 13 Nov 1922 had reported that in Tanganyika locally registered vessels were using a defaced Red Ensign, a warrant dated 9 Mar 1923 was issued for, "... the head of a giraffe.... for inhabitants of the Tanganyika Territory." [ADM 1/8690/219]

[oo] 1934. The head of a giraffe and **HM CUSTOMS**.

[oo] ? - c1933. **POLICE** in white on launches at Dar es Salaam and Tanga.

[CO 323/1333/9]

Uganda

[o] 1914 - 1962. Circular badge of a gold crested crane.

East Africa High Commission

[o] 1937 - 1949. Crowned blue garter inscribed **Kenya & Uganda Railways & Harbour Administration**, enclosing a red monogram *KUR* on white.

On 3 December 1936 the High Commissioner for Transport in Nairobi wrote to the Colonial Office requesting a Blue Ensign defaced with the badge of the Kenya and Uganda Railways and Harbours Administration, for the Administration's harbour craft, lake steamers, and headquarters in Nairobi. Normally the Blue Ensign of a colonial Public Office was defaced with the badge of the colony, but under Orders in Council of 16 December 1925, 20 December 1927 and 13 August 1935, the working and management of Kenya and Uganda Railways and Harbours was vested in a High Commission for Transport, a 'Corporation Sole', staffed by officers administering the Governments of Kenya and Uganda acting jointly. Existing regulations did not cover two colonies having a joint administration, and the vessels could fly neither the Kenya nor the Uganda Blue Ensign. The Colonial Office replied on 8 March 1937 that the badge submitted had been approved by the King for the Blue Ensign of the Administration's lake steamers and harbour launches, and also for its building in Mombassa. It was not approved for the headquarters in Nairobi, where the badge should be set on a plain blue flag. "Port Authority" might be written on the ensign flown ashore in Mombassa. [CO 323/1377/4]

[o] 1949 - 1961. Giraffe, lion and crane within a ring inscribed **East African Railways and Harbour Administration**, surmounted by crown, flanked by palm trees, on a white disc

Royal East African Navy, 1952 - 1962, was finally granted a badge in 1957, but this was used only on the jack, as the R.E.A.N. had been granted the privilege of flying the White Ensign.

Zanzibar The badge was used only on the Union Jack of the British Resident.

CENTRAL AFRICA

British South Africa Company

[o] 1902 - 1924. Crest of Arms of the company, a lion guardant passant holding an ivory tusk, above *B.S.A.C.*

[o] 1902 - 1924. **Red Ensign** Lion and ivory tusk crest from Company Arms above letters *B.S.A.C.* Warrant 11 November 1902.

Northern Rhodesia (Zambia)

[o] 1928 - 1964. Shield type badge which was used as the basis of the Arms granted in 1939. Heraldic representation of Victoria Falls with a fish-eagle in chief.

[i] The badge of the Blue Ensign is reported to have been used on **Red Ensigns** by yachts on Lake Nyasa.

Southern Rhodesia. (Zimbabwe)

[o] 1924 - 1964. Shield of Arms granted 11 August 1924. A pick with a lion between thistles in chief. Possibly used only outside Southern Rhodesia on land. Many examples said to have had the shield on a white disc.

[i] The badge of the Blue Ensign was used, both with and without a white disc, on unauthorised **Red Ensign** land flags in the late 1940s - early 1950s.

[oo] **Rhodesia** 1964 - 1968. **Light Blue** Same shield. Introduced 1 April 1964 following the creation of Zambia out of Northern Rhodesia in December 1963

Royal Rhodesian Air Force

[o] 1953 - 1964. **Light Blue** RAF Ensign with countries of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland represented by three small assegais on the red roundel.

[oo] 1964 - 1970. **Light Blue** Same ensign with one large assegai on the whole roundel following the dissolution of the Federation.

British Central Africa Protectorate / Nyasaland (Malawi)

Nyasaland was made a British Protectorate in 1889, renamed British Central Africa Protectorate in 1893, transferred from the Foreign Office to the Colonial Office in 1904, and resumed original name in 1907.

[o] 1905 - 1914. Coffee bush on disc diagonally divided yellow / white / black.

[o] 1914 - 1920. Shield of Arms on a white disc. Leopard standing on a rock with rising sun in chief.

[oa] 1920 - 1964. White disc removed.

[i] The badge of the Blue Ensign is reported to have been used on **Red Ensigns** by yachts on Lake Nyasa.

Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland

[o] 1954 - 1963. Shield of Arms. Lion of Southern Rhodesia between the rising sun of Nyasaland above, and Northern Rhodesia's representation of the Victoria Falls below.

SOUTH AFRICA

Union of South Africa

[o] 1910 - 1928. Quartered shield of female Hope, two Wildebeest, an Orange Tree and an Ox-Wagon. HMSA Ships wore the White Ensign until 1946, often also flying the South African national flag at the yardarm. During the 1920s there were a number of proposals for a new national flag, two of which bore a Union Flag in the canton, but neither were ever adopted or used.

[o] 1910 - 1912. Admiralty warrant of 28 Dec 1910 authorized a **Red Ensign** with the shield of the Arms granted on 17 Sep 1910..

[oa] 1912 - 1951. The first quarter of the shield was red and a note was added to the Admiralty Flag Book that "In the case of the **Red Ensign** the shield is displayed on a white ground in the fly." The ensign was the unofficial national flag until the introduction of the Vierkleur in 1928, but remained the official ensign of the South African merchant marine, outside South African waters, until 1951.

South African Railways

[oa] A third variant of the above **Red Ensign** was used (inter alia) by the South African Railways. This comprised the full 1910 Arms of South Africa on a white disc, complete with supporters and motto. A surviving example of this flag was originally issued by the Railways Stores Depot at Bloemfontein. The Railways Version (in standard regimental Colour size) was used as a Colour by General Botha in the South West Africa campaign of 1915. A 6' by 3' example, which probably dates from that campaign, is displayed at the S.Africa Army College to this day.

Graaf Reinet Commando

[!] This flag is one of a small number which lie on the border between a regimental Colour and flag. As a Colour it should be excluded, but it was actually a 'home made' **Red Ensign** defaced with the words *GRAAF REINET COMMANDO 1914* and the motto (sewn onto a black ribbon) *DIEU NOUS CONDUIT*. It was a gift from a Mrs C A Naser and was consecrated on parade on 27 Oct 1914 at 3 pm. The Colour Party was commanded by Lieutenant G van Niekerk, and the unit took part in the 1915 South West Africa campaign.

Cape Colony

[o] 1875 - 1910. Complete Arms, that had been granted by Royal Warrant of 29 May 1876, on a white disc.

Natal

[oo] The badge later approved for the Blue Ensign in 1876 had been adopted for the **Red Ensign** as a land flag by the Natal Legislative Council in 1870, and continued in use until 1905. An example preserved in Durban has the wildebeest running towards the hoist rather than towards the fly.

[o] 1876 - 1905. Circular badge of the complete Public Seal including the Royal Arms.

[oa] 1905 - 1910. From the distinctive panel of the Seal, two wildebeest surmounted by a crown.

Transvaal

[o] 1904 - 1910. Circular badge of a lion in realistic landscape.

Orange River Colony

[o] 1904 - 1910. Realistic Springbok in a circular badge.

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Basutoland The Arms were used by only the Resident Commissioner on a Union Jack.

INDIAN OCEAN

Aden

[o] 1937 - 1967. Circular badge of two masted dhow on an heraldic sea. Replaced the Indian Local Maritime Ensign when the administration of Aden was transferred from the Indian Government to the Colonial Office.

Ceylon (Sri Lanka)

[o] 1870 - 1948. Circular badge of elephant and temple within decorated red border. Designed by Mr Smithers of the Public Works Department as the design in the Public Seal was unsuitable as a flag badge. One of few early colonial badges which were never altered. [ADM 1/8771/1/162, CO 54/457].

[oo] ? - 1933. **Police**. *POLICE* in white below colony badge.

Mauritius

[o] 1869 - 1906. Shield / motto on white disc. 'Stella clavisque maris indici' (Star and Key of the Indian Sea)

[oa] 1906 - 1923. Same elements on redrawn shield with supporters added, on white disc. The Arms on the 1869 badge may have been an amateur design.

[oa] 1923 - 1968. White disc removed.

Seychelles. Before 1903 the islands were administered as a dependency of Mauritius.

[o] 1903 - 1961. Coco-de-mer and giant tortoise on a sandy beach.

[oa] 1961 - 1976. More detail added to the scene which is set in a decorated oval frame. According to a Toronto newspaper the governor of Seychelles held a competition for a new badge, and selected the entry of Mrs. Alec McEwen, a former commercial artist of Toronto. The Queen approved the design and the Admiralty agreed to its use.

INDIAN EMPIRE

[oo] 1880 - 1884. Yellow ring inscribed **Bombay Port Trust** enclosing four port scenes surmounted by a crown.

[oo] 1883 - 1884 (?). Yellow ring inscribed **Calcutta Port Trust** enclosing four port scenes surmounted by a crown.

[o] 1896 - 192? **Red Ensign** Yellow ring inscribed **Commissioners for the Port of Calcutta** enclosing four port scenes surmounted by a crown. Admiralty Warrant of 1 Feb 1896 issued after the Government of India had required the return of the original Blue Ensign Warrant.

[o] 1884 - 1947. **Indian Government Local Maritime Ensign**. Yellow lion rampant guardant holding a crown; the crest of the East India Company. The Indian equivalent of a colonial Blue Ensign.

[o] 1906(?) -c1927 **Red Ensign** Yellow ring inscribed **Commissioners for the Port of Rangoon** enclosing four port scenes surmounted by a crown.

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[o] Star of India

1879 - 1892. Ensign of **HM Indian Marine**.

1892 - 1928. Ensign of **Royal Indian Marine**.

1928 - 1947. Jack of **Royal Indian Navy**.

2 July 1879. Admiralty Letter granted ensign to HM Indian Marine.

30 July 1883. Admiralty Warrant granted ensign to Indian Harbour Defence Force vessels 'Abyssinia' and 'Magdala' while firing shotted guns for exercise. (Indian Government Local Maritime Ensign would have been the normal ensign)

21 April 1884. Admiralty Warrant for HMI Marine confirming letter of 2 July 1879.

[oo] 1928. **Military Transports**. Admiralty anchor with the Star of India in the centre of the stock. Worn by vessels of the Military Department of the Government of India manned by Royal Indian Marine personnel but not operating as an R.I.M. unit. Also vessels other than ships of war employed in the Naval Service. Illustrations of this ensign in two different books show the Lord High Admiral's anchor with cable draped around three sides, but it is more likely that it was the plain horizontal Admiralty anchor.

[oo] 1942? - 1947. **Royal Indian Army Service Corps**. Star of India on crossed swords.

Flag of India

[oo] A **Red Ensign** with the Star of India in the fly was flown with the flags of the Dominions at the ceremonial opening of Luton Airport in 1938. It was probably used between 1945 and 1947 to represent India at the United Nations, and may have been used earlier at the League of Nations.

Burma

[o] Circular badge of peacock in splendour, based upon the flag of King Mindon, was approved by King George VI. The Times of 9 February 1939 reported that the date of use would be announced after international recognition.

Red Ensigns of Indian Native States

In 1917 the vessels of some Princely States in north west India that traded to the Persian Gulf were reported to be flying unlicensed plain Red Ensigns outside the territorial waters of the British Empire contrary to the requirements of the General Act of the Brussels Conference, 1890. An Order in Council of 22 April 1920 made some sections of the British Merchant Shipping Act 1894 applicable to vessels of the rulers of Indian States and their subjects. Following an Order in Council of 14 July 1921, the Admiralty issued a General Warrant authorising the use of the **Red Ensign**, defaced with an appropriate badge, by vessels of the States detailed below. Individual Warrants were issued for approved badges on 10 October 1924.

[ADM 116/1847B]

[o] **Baroda** A horseman, a scimitar and *BARODA* in white on a red ochre rectangle with a white margin. [oa] Between 1921 and 1924 the symbols below *BARODA* had been the hoof of a horse over crossed swords.

[o] **Bhavnagar** A crimson shield bearing a gold eagle supported by bulls above a motto, which translated as *Man Proposes, God Disposes*.

[o] **Cambay** A green shield bearing two galleys and a tower in white, supported by angels, a portcullis crest with helm and mantling.

[o] **Cochin** A gold and red palangin, a gold lamp, a red umbrella, and a white conch, all in a white circle.

[o] **Janjira** A crescent moon and a five pointed star in white above a fort in black and white.

[oa] **Jafrabad** A much larger crescent moon and star with no fort.

[o] **Junagadh** Three bezants and three mountains in green below the words *JUNAGADH STATE BADGE* in red, in a white circle.

[o] **Kutch** A crescent moon and sun and words *KUTCH STATE* in white.

[o] **Morvi** A gold shield bearing an oval badge charged with the sun, crescent moon and stars and the words *MORVI STATE*, supported by tigers and surmounted by a crown, above a motto which translated as *Valour With Forgiveness*.

[o] **Nawanagar** A shield bearing a galley and three fishes, supported by antelopes with a lion crest, above a motto, which translated as *Victory Be To Shrijam*.

[o] **Porbandar** A figure of Hanuman flying, with a club and a mountain in his hands.

[o] **Sachin** A right hand in green (known as a Panja).

[o] **Travancore** A conch shell in white surmounted by a crest in gold adorned by a cloth in blue.

THE FAR EAST

BORNEO

British North Borneo Company. Royal Charter 1 November 1881.

[o] 1882 - 1946. Red lion rampant on a yellow disc. The 1889 Admiralty Flag Book incorrectly showed the lion facing the fly. [ADM 116/898B]

[o] 1882 - 1946 **Red Ensign** Red lion rampant on yellow disc Warrant 5 Jan 1882.

[o] 1948 - 1963. Crest of Arms granted 13 September 1948. Two different arms holding a flag staff.

[o] **Labuan** 1875 - 1907. Circular badge of Sir James Brooke's schooner *ROYALIST* with the mountains of Kinabalu in the background. [CO 325/54] Labuan was administered by the British North Borneo Company from 1890 to 1907 when it became part of Singapore within the Straits Settlements.

Sarawak

[o] 1947 - 1963. Shield of Arms; crown in centre of cross vertically divided black/red on yellow, on white disc.

Brunei 1948 - 1983. Two different badges used only on Union Jack.

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MALAYAN PENINSULAR

Straits Settlements

[oo] 1870 - 1877. Gold crown in lower fly.

[o] 1877 - 1946. Three crowns, on white pall reversed (inverted Y) on red lozenge.

Perak

[o] **British Resident.** **White over yellow over black swallow-tail** with Union canton. On government vessels; at main for Resident, at fore for Assistant Resident. Resolved at Perak Council Meeting 1 Mar 1879 in accordance with letter 790/79 of 31 Jan 1879 from Governor of Straits Settlements

Singapore. After Straits Settlements were officially dissolved in 1946.

[o] 1948 - 1959. Crown in centre of red pall reversed (inverted Y) on white disc.

Malacca While in the Federation of Malaya 1948 - 1957.

[o] 1951 - 1957. Gateway on white disc. (Crest of Arms)

Penang While in the Federation of Malaya 1948 - 1957.

[o] 1949 - 1957. Shield of Arms : blue fess embattled separating, blue Prince of Wales feathers on yellow in chief, from barry wavy blue and white.

CHINA

Hong Kong

[oo] 1870 - 1873. Crown / *H.K.* 1873 - 1876. Crown.

[o] 1876 - 1955. Circular badge of harbour scene from the Public Seal.

[oa] 1955 - 1959. Harbour scene revised.

[oa] 1959 - 1997. Full Arms on white disc. Order in Council 27 July 1959.

[i] **Red Ensign** The badge based upon the Arms granted on 21 January 1959 was widely used without authorisation for Hong Kong registered vessels and local craft from 1959 to the end of June 1997. Hong Kong vessels were supposed to wear an unsightly combination of the Hong Kong Blue Ensign above the undefaced Red Ensign on the same mast but, not surprisingly, most did not.

[oo] 1969? - 1997? **Royal Hong Kong Police.** 1876 harbour scene surmounted by crown, enclosed by yellow / red garland, with *ROYAL HONG KONG POLICE* on scroll below. Title Royal was granted in 1969. Displayed in the office of the Commissioner of Police. Possibly the only example.

Liu Kung Tau Main town in Weihaiwei.

1902 - 1903. Chinese dragon. Civil Commissioner's flag. Badge used only on **Union Jack**.

Weihaiwei

1903 - 1930. Mandarin ducks replaced dragon badge of **Liu Kung Tau**.

"The design of the flag hitherto used by the Commissioner of this Dependency is a dragon on the **Union Jack** and is in my opinion quite unsuitable. I have therefore to request that the Crown Agents may be instructed to have made for the use of the Commissioner two new flags, the device of the Mandarin Duck being substituted for the dragon, which is as you are aware the national emblem of China and not appropriate in the case of a British Dependency." J.H.Stewart Lockhart, Government House, Port Edward. [CO 523/2]

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AUSTRALASIA

AUSTRALIA

Australia is a particularly rich source of ensigns both past and present. There were many slight variations in design of state flags over the years, especially in the stars and crowns so some licence is needed in counting those substantially different. It is also the case that a significant number of historic Australian flags are being seen once more as the constitutional future of the country is debated.

Australian National Flag

[o] 1902 - 1909. Six point Commonwealth Star. Telegram approving design sent 6 October 1902.

In 1966 the Australian National Flag defaced with the Arms of Australia was proposed as a flag for the **Prime Minister**, but not adopted.

[o] 1903 - 1909. **Red Ensign** version of National Flag. Warrant dated 4 June 1903 Delayed until after the Commonwealth Navigation Act had been passed.

[o] 1935 - 1948. **Civil Air Ensign**. **Light Blue**. Similar to current ensign but with yellow stars instead of white .

Customs Service

[oo] 1882. **Red Ensign** with overall white cross and white *C H* in lower fly

[oo] 1901 - 1904. White letters *H M C* above *AUSTRALIA*.

[oo] 1904 - 1988 (or 1955 ?) *H M C* in white on Australian National Flag.

[oo] **Commonwealth Lighthouse Service**. The Australian national flag with a lighthouse badge in the middle of the southern cross. This flag was in existence since before World War II, but is no longer in use. Note that the small five-pointed star had to be moved flywards in order to accommodate the oval badge.

[oo] **Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service**.

[oo] **Department of Defence** (Civilian manned vessels). This handsome ensign (blue defaced by a horizontal gold anchor surrounded by a gold circle) has sadly and unnecessarily become extinct by default. In September 1928 it was noted that Australian auxiliaries were using the Australian National Flag as their ensign and the RFA jack as their jack. The Australian Navy Board suggested a distinct ensign should be adopted and proposed the badge described above. It appears to have gone out of use around the 1970s, although the Master Attendant in Sydney has no records. [ADM 1/8732/214]

[oo] **Chief of the General Staff**. Royal crest on 2:3 Australian National Flag was replaced by The Australian Army badge on 1:2 National Flag 1 October 1992.

[oo] **General Officer Commanding in Chief** Australian Army badge on Australian National Flag.

[oo] **Royal Australian Engineers**

[oo] **Royal Australian Army Ordnance Corps**

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Royal Australian Air Force Ensign

19?? - 1948. The same as the Royal Air Force Ensign.

[o] 1948 - 1982. **Light Blue** version of Australian National Flag with Southern Cross angled to accommodate a small Royal Air Force roundel in the bottom corner of the fly.

New South Wales

[o] 1870 - 1876. White initials *N S W* in the lower fly; worn by two unarmed government vessels and two vessels of the naval brigade.

[oo] **Customs** 1882. **Red Ensign** Overall white cross with white *C H* in lower fly.

[oo] **Dept of Navigation.** (Details ?)

[oo] **Maritime Services Board.** (1936 – 1995 ?) On a White Disc, *M S B* in Black above NSW Shield ensigned by a Crown, superimposed on angled Blue Foul Anchor. This flag is still sometimes seen.

[oo] **Sydney Harbour Trust.** (1900 – 1936 ?) Description ?

Queensland.

[o] 1870 - 1876. Head of Queen Victoria on blue disc within white ring inscribed *QUEENSLAND*.

South Australia.

[oo] 1870 - 1878. White Southern Cross including the two 'pointers' in lower hoist.

[o] 1878 - 1904. Circular badge derived from the public Seal depicting Britannia being greeted by an Aboriginal. Includes what may be the first official depiction of a kangaroo on a flag.

[oo] **Customs** 1889. Crown above *C H* in red.

[oo] **Dept of Marine and Harbours**

Tasmania.

[oo] Existed briefly from 9 November 1875, when it was officially proclaimed, until 23 November 1875, when a second proclamation revoked the first. Overall white cross and white Southern Cross in the fly; three stars in the upper quarter, and two in the lower quarter.

[oo] Similar **Red Ensign**

Victoria.

[oo] 1865. Navy Gun Raft. White Ensign with crown in upper fly and '1' in lower fly. Illustrated Melbourne Post 18 Feb. (Alternative description had crown in centre and letter 'V'.

[o] 1870 - 1877. White Southern Cross. Various permutations involving a shield appeared on only the Governor's Union Jack.

[oo] 1870 - 1875 (or 1903). Mercantile Marine **Red Ensign**. Southern Cross in white, but stars small and spread over the whole fly. Authorised by mistake. Probably allowed to continue in use until 1903.

[oo] 1900. **Boxer Rebellion Ensign.** White Southern Cross spread over whole of fly with crown inserted between canton and upper star.

[oo] **Victoria Police.** Victoria Police badge.

[oo] **Melbourne Harbour Trust Commissioners.** Crossed white anchors.

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Western Australia.

[o] 1876-1953. Same as present flag but with swan facing the fly.

[oo] Dept of Harbours and Lights.

[oo] Dept of Marine and Harbours.

[oo] Albany Port Authority.

[oo] Geraldton Port Authority.

[oo] c1970-2005. Western Australia Police. State flag with *WA* above and *POLICE* below the badge.

PAPUA / NEW GUINEA

[o] 1885 - 1906. Crown / *N.G.* on white disc. South-eastern New Guinea while a British protectorate / colony. Possibly also Crown / *B.N.G.*

[o] 1906 - 1942. Crown / *PAPUA* on white disc. The same area but now a Territory of Australia.

[o] 1921 - 1942. Crown / *T.N.G.* on a white disc. North-eastern New Guinea as an Trust Territory of Australia. Possibly also surrounded by a laurel wreath.

[oa] 1921 - 1942. **Trust Territory Customs** Design not known.

[oa] 1949 ? - 1965 ? **Territory of Papua & New Guinea Customs** *T.P & N.G.C.* on a white disc on the Australian Blue Ensign.

NEW ZEALAND

[oo] 1867 - 1869. *NZ* in red fimbriated white.

1869. Essentially the same as the current flag. New Zealand Gazette, 23 October, a Blue Ensign with "four five-pointed red stars in the fly, with white borders to correspond to the colouring of the Jack". This was designed by Lieutenant (later Admiral) Albert Hastings Markham whilst First Lieutenant of the screw sloop HMS *BLANCHE* on the Australian station. He was asked to suggest a distinctive flag. He replied "You already have the right to fly the Blue Ensign, why not add to it the stars of the Southern Cross". The initial design had the stars rather small and was returned with a request to enlarge them in Lewis Carol verse "Will you, won't you, will you, won't you, magnify the star". This was duly done. In 1893 Markham rammed and sank the flagship of the Mediterranean Fleet in a manoeuvring accident.

[oo] 1900 - 1902. On some ensigns the four red stars were placed in a white disc. It was intended for use only in conjunction with signal flags, but was used on land.

Red Ensign In the latter part of 19th century an ensign similar to the current New Zealand Civil Ensign was in use and became the official Civil Ensign in 1903.

[oo] 1900 - 1903. **Red Ensign** Four red stars on white disc. Warrant dated 7 Februar 1899. Intended to be used only in conjunction with signal flags.

[oo] **Auckland Harbour Board.** c1870 - 1900? *AHB* on New Zealand Blue Ensign.

"similar flag with different letters is used by some other local bodies in the colony"
[Napier, MP for Auckland City, Code Signals Bill, NZ Parliament Sept.1900]

[oo] **Customs Service Ensign.** ? - 1996. *HMC* in the 3rd quarter of New Zealand Blue Ensign.

[oo] New Zealand Forces Motor Service Corps. 1915 - ? Granted to the Motor Boat Section by warrant dated 9 October 1915.

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Cook Islands

British Protectorate in 1888 but annexed to New Zealand in 1901. Between 1901 and 1979 the islands' flags did not have a Union canton.

[o] 1892 - 1901. Palm tree badge on Union canton of **red over white over red ensign**.

[i] A possible earlier version in which a Union canton was added to the Raratonga flag which had three blue stars on the white band.

British Resident Commissioner 1895 - 1901. Same *crown / BR* as Solomon Is. etc

Western Samoa

Occupied in 1914 and Mandated Territory of New Zealand 1920 - 1962.

[o] 1914(?) - 1962. Circular badge with three coconut trees. Ensign was not authorised until 16 Jan 1925.

[o] Similar **Red Ensign**

Not counted are those flags which contained a canton within a canton, eg. the Prime Minister of the Cook Islands flag of 1973 ~ which bore the NZ flag in the canton.

WESTERN PACIFIC

Western Pacific High Commission. 1880 - 1976. Crown / *W.P.H.C.* Used only on Union Jack.

British Resident Commissioner

[o] Crown above *B.R.* on white disc.

British Solomon Islands c1902 - 1947? Still listed in Admiralty Flag Books after Solomon Is badge had been inserted.

Cook Islands. 1895 - 1902.

Gilbert Islands 1895 - c1905.

Gilbert & Ellice Islands c1905 - 1937?

British Solomon Islands

[o] 1902 - 1947. Crown encircled by *BRITISH SOLOMON ISLANDS* on white disc. [CO 863/1] Did not appear in Admiralty Flag Book until 1916.

[o] 1947 - 1956. Shield of Arms (triangular pattern / turtle) and *BRITISH SOLOMON ISLANDS* on white disc.

[o] 1956 - 1978. Quartered shield and lion in chief of 24 September 1956 Arms, on white disc.

[i] A **Red Ensign** version is of doubtful legality although it undoubtedly existed.

Gilbert & Ellice Islands (now separate as Kiribati and Tuvalu)

[o] 1937 - 1975. Shield of frigate bird above sun rising from the sea. The introduction of this badge involved nine government departments or agencies, that took nearly six years to agree on the design. A further four years elapsed before the Admiralty Flag Book was amended. 1975 - 1979. Ensign of only the Gilbert Islands.

[oo] 1934 - 1937? **Customs.** "Block letters *H.M.C.*"

[o] 1976 - 1978. **Ellice Islands / Tuvalu** Shield depicting a meeting house, with motto below, on white disc.

[oo] 1976 - 1978 Flag of Chief Minister (or State Flag ?). Current **Light Blue** national flag with 'meeting house shield' in lower hoist.

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New Hebrides (Vanuatu)

[o] 1902 - 1909. Crown / *NEW HEBRIDES* on white disc. Flag of British Resident. The Condominium was not proclaimed until 1906, but British and French Resident Commissioners had been appointed in 1902.

1909 - 1980. Ensign of government vessels. In 1909 the British Resident was considered to be an 'Officer Administering a Government' and allowed a defaced Union Jack. [CO 323/1641/11]

Fiji

[o] 1874 - 1883. Mermaid on shield superimposed on crossed war clubs(?) and foliage on a white disc. In 1882 M.des Volux complained about the badge and suggested a simpler one. It was not, as had been thought, the Public Seal, but the Seal of the Supreme Court of Fiji. [CO 325/54]

[o] 1883 - 1908. Royal Crest above *FIJI* on a white disc.

[o] 1908 - 1924. Complete Arms on white disc.

[oa] 1924 - 1970. White disc removed.

NORTH AMERICA

Canada

[o] 1870 - 1922. Four province shield.

[o] 1922 - 1957. Shield of the Arms granted to Canada on 21 November 1921.

[oa] 1957 - 1965. The maple leaves were changed from green to red, and the female harp replaced by a celtic harp. Still in very limited use; page 39.

At sea.

[o] With the encouragement of the Canadian government the four province badge of the Blue Ensign was being used at sea on **Red Ensigns** from the early 1870s. The Admiralty finally issued a warrant for its use by vessels registered in the Dominion on 2 Feb 1892.

[oa] 1922 - 1957. The shield of the Arms granted to Canada on 21 November 1921 was authorized for use on the **Red Ensign** by Order in Council 26 April 1922.

[oa] 1957 - 1965. **Red Ensign**. Same badge as on Blue Ensign

On land.

Red Ensigns with the four province badge were also unofficially used on land,

[i] often with a garland and crown as used on the flag of the Governor-General.

By 1891 use of the defaced **Red Ensign** was being officially encouraged by the Canadian government. Other unofficial **Red Ensigns** had badges that reflected the increasing number of Canadian provinces.

[i] 1870 - 1873. Five province shield with Manitoba added to Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

[i] 1873 - c1907. Seven province shield; Prince Edward Island and British Columbia added.

[i] In 1896 a Toronto barrister, Edward Chadwick, produced an ensign, with a single maple leaf, that had a limited use right up to the 1950s.

[i] In the early 1900s he also designed a nine 'province' badge, modifying the seven province badge and adding shields for Yukon and North West Territories.

[i] c1907 - 1921. Nine province shield; adding Saskatchewan and Alberta.

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There may possibly have been Blue Ensign versions of some of the various multi-province Red Ensigns, but there is no conclusive evidence.

Some books state that badges of the **Canadian Provinces** could be used on a Blue Ensign. This was not legal, and there appears to be no evidence that it was ever done, even unofficially. "The badge with the crown is used by the Governor-General of the Dominion of Canada, and without the crown is used in the fly of the flags of all vessels belonging to the Dominion of Canada irrespective of the particular Province to which they belong." [1875 Admiralty Flag Book] Later Flag Books omitted "irrespective of the particular Province to which they belong".

In 1926 and again in 1939 British Columbia requested a Blue Ensign with the badge of British Columbia for Police and Forestry launches, citing the Australian States' flags. The request was refused with the observation that the badge of the province might be worn on a square blue flag used as a jack. [ADM 1/8700/133, DO 35/629/2]

Customs

[oo] 1850 - 1911. Crown on **Red Ensign**. (British Customs had changed to a Blue Ensign in 1873)

Erroneous Governor-General's Flag Four province badge with crown and garland in the centre of a **White Ensign** (instead of a Union Jack). Used at a reception at Windsor Hotel in Montreal when the Earl of Dufferin (the third Governor-General) visited the city on 11 February 1878.

British Columbia

[oo] mid-1920s. Provincial badge on **Red Ensign** for trade mission in San Francisco.

Ontario Lieutenant Governor

[oo] 1959-1965. Canadian **Red Ensign** with the provincial arms beneath the Union canton. An unusual case of two major defacements on one flag.

[oo] **Battle Flag. White Flag with Union canton** Designed by Colonel A Fortesque Duguid and approved by War Committee on 7 December 1939. Three red maple leaves on single stem in centre, three gold fleur-de-lys on blue roundel in upper fly. Flown on merchant ship acting as HQ of 1st Canadian Division went overseas, and at HQ in Britain. Small car flag version presented to King George VI, who accepted it and expressed approval.

Royal Canadian Ordnance Corps

[oo] The only corps in the Canadian Army with the distinction of its special flag, developed through its connection with the RAOC. Defaced in the fly with a large green yellow maple leaf bearing the original (1694) Board of Ordnance arms in the centre (azure, three field pieces in pale or, on a chief argent three canon balls sable). The design was submitted for approval on 23 April 1947 and approved in CAO 54-3 on 1 December 1952. In 1964 CAOs describe the flag as "On a blue field, the Union Flag in the upper left hand corner; on the fly end a green maple leaf 12 inches high; superimposed on the maple leaf, in full colour, the Royal Canadian Ordnance Corps badge in the design approved by the Sovereign in December 1963, height of badge 6 ½". This is for a flag 3' by 6'.

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Royal Canadian Air Force

[o] 1941 - 1968. Same as the Royal Air Force **Light Blue Ensign** but with central red circle of roundel replaced by a red maple leaf

Civil Air Ensign.

[o] 1922 - ?. **Light blue ensign**, with white albatross over three conjoined maple leaves on white edged red shield in fly, for premises of the Air Board. Canada Gazette 7 Jan 1922.

Defence Research Board

[oo] 1952 - 1968. Armillary sphere with naval, mural and astral crowns. Approved by the Queen in 1952.

[oo] Royal Canadian Sea Cadets.

1953 - 1976. **White Ensign with no overall cross** Approved by Chief of Naval Staff. In the fly a gold anchor on blue circle surrounded by red maple leaves surmounted by a naval crown.

[oo] **Royal Canadian Air Cadets. Light Blue Ensign.** RAF eagle surmounted by maple leaf on blue disc.

Victory Loan Flags. **White Ensigns with red border and no overall cross.**

[oo] 1919. Royal Arms with feather and dragon badges of Prince of Wales in lower fly. Awarded to any city or district that had purchased a specific value in Victory Bonds. Augmented with badge of Prince of Wales coronet and feathers, added in any position, for each 25% raised over the assigned target. One example had six badges spread along the bottom of the flag, and also "Victory Loan 1919" in purple in the upper fly, while another had two badges in the upper fly.

[oo] 2 June 1941 - blue torch. Taken from the poem written by Canadian John McRae 'In Flanders Fields' – "To you from failing hands we throw the torch, be yours to hold it high"

[oo] 16 February 1942 – blue maple leaf.

[oo] 19 October 1942 – blue dagger on shield.

[oo] 26 April 1943 – IV above four maple leaves on a shield.

[oo] 18 October 1943 – winged V on a shield.

[oo] 24 April 1944 – winged VI on a shield.

[oo] 23 October 1944 – Flaming sword over a 7 on a shield.

[oo] 23 October 1945 – laurel around an 8 on a shield.

[oo] 22 October 1945 – 9 over a pen on a shield

Hudson Bay Company

An Admiralty warrant may have been issued in 1929 for a **Red Ensign** defaced HBC, but is not listed in any known records. See Hudson Bay in pre-1865 section.

Newfoundland

Became a province of Canada in 1949, but retained its unique ensigns until 1965.

[o] 1870 - 1904. Crown above *TERRA NOVA* on white disc.

[o] 1904 - 1965. Circular badge of Mercury, a kneeling fisherman and Britannia.

[o] 1918 - 1965. **Red Ensign** Same badge.

[oo] 1939. **Red Ensign** Shield of Arms granted in 1638, but unknown in Newfoundland until 1924; a white St George's cross on red with a lion in the 1st and 4th and unicorn in the 2nd and 3rd quarters; presumably on a white disc. Used during the Royal Visit of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth.

In 1987 the unusual provincial flag based loosely on the Union Jack was introduced.

CARIBBEAN

Bahamas

[o] 1869 - 1923. Ship from Public Seal in crowned garter on white disc.

[oa] 1923 - 1963. White disc removed.

[oa] 1963 - 1973. Badge modified.

[oo] A land flag used during the celebration of internal self-government in 1964. The badge was the shield and motto of the 1959 Arms on a white disc.

[oo] A similar **Red Ensign** which had *BAHAMAS* on a ribbon above the shield was also used.

Board of Trade Tenders to Bahamas & Sombrero Lighthouses

[o] 1898 - 1973? Crown above oval frame, inscribed *Board of Trade*, around lighthouse. *BAHAMAS* on scroll. Admiralty warrant 20 July 1898.

1919. **Out Island Commissioners** Large St Edward's crown. Known as the Revenue Flag.

[i] No records exist of warrants or other authorisations for Bahamas **Red Ensigns** which are assumed to have been unofficial. It is likely that they appeared with the 1869 badge and the 1964 badge, both with, and without, a white disc [i]. The spread of the Bahamas Red Ensign was encouraged by its use as a courtesy flag on American and Canadian vessels in Bahamian waters. In 1962 it was estimated by the Nassau Port Director that there were up to one thousand such ensigns in use and that over the years it had probably been flown by over five thousand different vessels. As an unconnected aside, when the author visited Nassau in a ship in 1963, the Harbourmaster came on board sporting three gold stripes. He immediately noticed the Captain also had three gold stripes. When the Harbourmaster returned the next day he had been miraculously promoted and was wearing four gold stripes, thus outranking our Captain.

Turks & Caicos Islands

1799 Dependency of Bahamas. 1848 Presidency of Jamaica. 1874 Dependency of Jamaica with own Commissioner.

[o] 1875 - 1968. Circular badge, of sailing ship with salt pans in the foreground. Quaintly for a flag from the sub-tropics, this one bore an igloo on its defacing badge. The original badge in the Colonial Office flag book showed two piles of salt, but in the Admiralty flag books a small arched rectangle at ground level was added to one pile giving it the appearance of an igloo.

British Honduras (Belize)

[o] 1870 - 1919. Tripartite panel of Union Jack, logging tools, and sailing ship, on white disc.

[oa] 1920 - 1981. White disc removed.

Jamaica

[o] 1875 - 1906. Shield and crest.

[o] 1906 - 1957. Arms on white disc.

[oa] 1957 - 1962. Mantling and more elaborate scroll added.

[i] 1950s. 1906 badge. **Red Ensigns** existed and may have been used.

Perhaps some connection with the reported, but unauthorised Montego Bay Yacht Club ensign ?

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Cayman Islands Dependency of Jamaica until 1959.

[oo] 1935 - 19???. **POLICE.** Commissioner indented for a 12' x 6' ensign for the Police Station, and a 4' x 2' ensign for the Police launch. Colonial Office pointed out that the Blue Ensign should not be flown on land and instructed the Crown Agents to supply only the smaller ensign. [CO 323/1333/9]

Leeward Islands St Christopher & Nevis, Antigua, Montserrat, Virgin Islands and, until 1940, Dominica.

[o] 1874-1956. Circular badge of pineapple and ships from Public Seal.

St Christopher, Nevis & Anguilla

[o] 1957 - 1967. Crest and shield with three pictorial compartments; Nevis and St Christopher from the Leeward Island Arms and a new design for Anguilla which was not represented on the Arms.

Antigua

[o] 1956 -1967. Shield from Leeward Islands Arms. Coastal scene.

Dominica

[o] 1955 - 1965. Shield from Leeward Is. Arms; sailing-ship near coast at sunset.

[o] 1965 - 1978. Arms of Dominica.

Barbados

[o] 1870 - 1966. Circular badge of Britannia and 'Sea-Horses' from Public Seal.

[oo] 1919. **Harbour Police.** "Buckle, white with yellow edge, *HARBOUR POLICE* in red on the white."

Windward Islands St Lucia, St Vincent and Grenada.

The island group did not have a flag of its own (apart from the Governor-in-Chief's Union Jack) because although united into a single government, the individual islands had retained their own institutions. This raises the question of what ensign would have been flown by a vessel belonging to the government of Dominica, between 1940, when Dominica was transferred from the Leeward Islands to the Windward Islands, and 1955 when Dominica's first badge was authorised ?

St Lucia

[o] 1875 - 1937. Circular badge of coastal scene from Public Seal.

[o] 1937 - 1967. Black shield quartered by sugar canes, with roses first and fourth, fleur-de-lis second and third. Originally a badge, but granted as Arms in 1939.

[oo] 1919. **Harbour Master.** White letters *HM* in the fly.

St Vincent

[o] 1877 - 1907. Circular badge with two maidens at an altar and the inscription *St Vincent*, from Public Seal.

[oa] 1907 - 1969. Maidens' garments altered and inscription changed to *Pax et Justitia*.

Grenada

[o] 1875 - 1903. Circular badge of sugar mill from Public Seal.

[o] 1903 - 1974. Circular badge of Mediaeval ship from new Public Seal.

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Tobago

[o] 1870 - 1889. Circular badge of coastal scene. Reported variations of badge probably due to inaccurate reproductions of a complicated picture.

Trinidad & Tobago

[o] 1875 - 1958. Circular badge of harbour scene from Public Seal.

[o] 1958 - 1962. Shield and Motto of Arms.

[oo] 1906 - 1933. **Water Police.** *TRINIDAD CONSTABULARY* around colony badge. [ADM 116/1063D]

British Guiana (Guyana)

[o] 1875 - 1905. Circular badge of sailing ship from Public Seal.

[oa] 1906 - 1920. Same badge in an oval garter bearing the words *damus petimusque vicissim*, all on a white disc.

[oa] 1920 - 1955. White disc removed.

[oa] 1955 - 1966. Shield of Arms granted 6 December 1954 which were based on the same badge. Admiralty help had been requested to ensure that " the design submitted is correct from a seaman's point of view." Badge approved 6 July 1955. [ADM 1/25042]

ATLANTIC

Bermuda

[o] 1869 - 1910. Derived from 1817 public Seal showing Bermuda's wet dock.

St Helena & Dependencies

[o] 1874 - 1985. Ship near cliffs in ornate gold frame; based on Seal.

1816. Ascension Island classified as sloop-of-war HMS ASCENSION and flew the White Ensign until paid off to the Colonial Office 31 October 1922.

Falkland Islands and Dependencies

[o] 1870 - 1936. Bullock triumphant and ship; based on Seal in use since 1846.

[o] 1936 - 1948. Sea Lion and ship 'Desire'; based on Arms granted 16 Oct 1925.

South Georgia & South Sandwich Islands

[o] 1992 - 1999. On a white disc, a blue/white lozenge shield with a yellow lion holding a torch on a green triangle.

ALL ENSIGNS ARE BLUE ENSIGNS UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE

OTHER FLAGS with UNION CANTONS

WEST AFRICA

The Lower Niger. On 22 Mar 1830, Richard Lander and his brother John landed at Badagri in Nigeria, and travelled inland to Bussa. From thence they explored the Niger upstream for 100 miles, followed by a hazardous canoe trip downstream to the delta. They were captured by natives at the delta and held until a large ransom was paid and they secured passage to Fernando Po. On the Lower Niger they saw many canoes flying flags on very tall bamboo canes. These flags were generally similar to those flown by the Fante Asafo of Ghana, and some were depicted in contemporary sketches bearing a Union Flag in the canton - however unlikely this may have been. Perhaps an illustrative count of one 'obsolete ensign' may be allowed for the Lower Niger as a result.

SOUTH AFRICA

Prince of Orange Ensign. This most unusual ensign is a mystery and is believed to have been orange with a blue cross fimbriated in white. It was reputedly worn by HMS ECHO at the battle of Muizenburg on 7 Aug 1795, and is said to have represented an agreement between the British government and the Prince of Orange. This is probably a myth and the only evidence for it is on a large oil painting from the period. There remains doubt about its authenticity and it is not counted in the total.

Malay Corps

This flag of the Seventh Cape Frontier War of 1846 is more likely a colour than an ensign, but nevertheless an interesting (and surely unique) combination of Christian and Muslim symbology on one flag; green with a Union canton bearing the defacement ALLAH AKBAR.

The Digger's Republic

The flag of the Digger's Republic comprised a large brown horse upon a Red Ensign (sometimes depicted facing the hoist, and sometimes the fly). The Digger's Republic (which had various other names too) existed for a few months towards the end of 1870.

INDIA

Indian Home Rule Movement. Of the several HRM flags of the early 1900s, the 1917 version was striped and burgee shaped with the Union in the canton. First hoisted by Dr Annie Besant and Lokmanya Tilak.

AUSTRALIA

Australian Colonial Flag 1823 - 1824. White Ensign with a star on each arm of the overall St George's cross. Also a version with a fifth star in the centre. Proposed and said to have been approved by the Admiralty, but probably never used.

Herald Federal flag of 1900. Similar to the 1901 Australian Blue Ensign but with six red stripes on a white lower hoist. The winning design was from a competition run by a Melbourne newspaper.

Australian First Fleet Re-Enactment In May 1987 a replica of the First Fleet sailed from Portsmouth to Sydney. The BOUNTY wore as a jack a modified 1823 Australian Colonial Flag. The differences were the use of a pre-1801 Union Flag in the canton and the addition of the SIRIUS star at the join of the overall cross (SIRIUS was the flagship of the First Fleet). This unusual jack was therefore an unofficial 20th century flag based on an unofficial 19th century flag !

PACIFIC

Hawaii, or the Sandwich Islands

1816-1845 (Red/White/Blue stripes, possibly three of each). The Hawaiian Islands (or Sandwich Islands) were never formally part of the British Empire, although they considered themselves to be a British Protectorate from 1794 to 1816. In 1793, Captain George Vancouver gave a Union Flag to King Kamehameha I, who incorporated it into his local striped flag (it must have been in the pre-1801 pattern, although there is no record of the old Union Flag being used). The earliest documented use of Hawaiian flag was during the visit of HMS BLONDE in 1816. A Hawaiian ship first flew the flag during a visit to San Francisco in 1828. The King's flag was retained as the flag of the islands when Hawaii became a territory and later a state of the USA, and the only change has been the order and number of the coloured stripes in about 1845.

Hawaiian naval ensign Red and white stripes. On 21 January 1887 the Hawaiian government bought a 15 year old British copra steamer and converted it into a gunboat and training ship, commissioning it as HHMS KAIMILOA (the local translation of its original name Explorer). The King asked his friend Isobel Strong (the step daughter of Robert Louis Stevenson) to design an ensign. She defaced the Hawaiian flag with a white rectangle bearing a yellow shield bearing in turn a poloulu crossed with two red kahili, to symbolise the king and the princess heir apparent. A jack of red, white and blue stripes was also flown. The ship and the Hawaiian navy ceased to exist within a year.

AMERICA

Canada

Vancouver Island A modern replica of an ensign which almost certainly never existed. Distinctive device (a beaver, Neptune's trident, a caduceus of two serpents and a bunch of pine cones) from the Seal of the Colony of Vancouver Island on a Blue Ensign. The Colonial Office Circular introducing defaced Blue Ensigns was not issued until 22 December 1865, and Vancouver Island merged with British Columbia in October 1866. The process of having a design approved by the Colonial Office and the Admiralty would not have been completed in ten months, even if had been thought worth doing.

New England

A flag said to have been used in New England between 1707 and 1775 comprised a Red Ensign with the first quarter of the Union replaced by a green fir tree. This unique and ingenious design merits inclusion for that reason.

Taunton Flag

Red Ensign. The Boston Evening Post of Monday 24 October 1774 reported that 'We have just received the following intelligence from Taunton – that on Friday last a liberty pole 112 feet long was raised there on which a vane, and a Union flag flying with the words *LIBERTY* and *UNION* thereon.'

Continental Colours

1775 - 77. Red and white stripes. The first national flag of the American Colonies (also known as the Great Union Flag and, since the 19th century sometimes as the Cambridge Flag or the Grand Union Flag) was identical to one of the flags of the East India Company, however because of their entirely different usage they have both been counted.

Lexington Ensign

1776. Grand Union with Red/White/Blue stripes. Flown by brigantine 'Wild Duck' renamed 'Lexington'.

Commodore Hopkins' Ships

1776-77. Grand Union with individual ships identified by different coloured stripes. One known to have been Red/Green .

Mosquito Coast Eastern Nicaragua.

Blue and white. 1824 version with six horizontal stripes. 1852 with ten stripes and 1853-1881 with twelve stripes. Defaced *KING OF MOSQUITO COAST* .

Doubtful Validity

Any Ideas Welcome

Aden. No flag until 1937. Possibly two variants existed.

What was the variant ?

Australia

Australian Civil Air Ensign. (LB). At least two and possibly three (pd)s 1935-1948. Stars were originally yellow and are now white. **What were the other designs ?**

New South Wales. (B). Two (pd)s. (1876).

Was there a previous design other than *N.S.W.* before the current design ?

Queensland. (B). Two other (pd)s possibly.

Was there a previous design, other than the head of Queen Victoria, before the current design ?

Board of Trade Tenders to Bahamas & Sombrero Lighthouses. (B). Possibly two variants with different badges. **What were the variants ?**

Barbados. Possibly both (R) and (B); not confirmed but given benefit of doubt

Was there a Red Ensign ?

Bremen-Hanover. (R/W). Quarantine flag. The hoist was green with a defaced Hanover Union Flag in canton; in the fly were five red and white horizontal stripes with a blue panel bearing gold key.

Did this flag have a Hanover Union canton or were the Hanover and Bremen flags side by side in the centre of a green flag ?

Hanover. Between 1714 and 1837 the (G/R/W) quarantine flag.

Was there a quarantine flag with a Hanover Union canton ?

British New Guinea (until 1908): Papua (since 1908). (B). Six examples: 1884-888; 1888-1906, 1906-1921, 1921-1942 / 1945-1949, 1921-1942 (Customs) and 1951-1964 (Customs); also a defaced ANF.

Is there a complete and definitive list of the ensigns of Papua/New Guinea before 1964 ?

India

Indian Maritime Governments. (B). 1897-1947. Two variants.

What was the variant ?

Bombay Port Trust Vessels. (R). Possibly two variants originally designed as Blue Ensigns, but changed to Red Ensigns at the request of the Indian Government. 1880-1884.

What was the variant ?

Hong Kong. Five (B) variants pre-1959.

Were there five variants before 1959 rather than the three listed ?

Canada

Harbour Commissioners of Montreal. 1911 Recorded at www.collectionscanada.gc.ca as 'Blue Ensign'. Plain or defaced ?

Blue or possibly Red ensign defaced with the letters *PH* in the fly and photographed on a small pleasure craft in Toronto in the early 1900s.

Newfoundland. Also two unofficial versions, one using the 1637 arms was certified in 1925 and reinstated in 1928,

Did the flag using the 1637 arms reinstated in 1928 have a Union canton ?

Mosquito Coast. (B/W). 1824 version with six horizontal stripes. 1852 with ten stripes and 1853-1881 with twelve stripes. Defaced *KING OF MOSQUITO COAST*. **Did the number of stripes have any significance ?**

St Helena and Dependencies. (B). Two variants pre 1995.

What were the variants ?

Tobago. (B). Until 1888. Some authorities quote two additional flag badges.

What were the additional badges ? Likely to be poor representations of original badge.

CHAPTER 4

PROCLAMATIONS

BY THE QUEEN

A PROCLAMATION

AMENDING PROCLAMATION DATED 1st JANUARY 1801
DECLARING WHAT ENSIGN OR COLOURS
SHALL BE BORNE AT SEA BY MERCHANT SHIPS

ELIZABETH R.

Whereas by Royal Proclamation made on the first day of January in the year One Thousand Eight Hundred and One (1), His late Majesty King George III, with the advice of His Privy Council, inter alia, charged and commanded all His subjects not to wear in any of their ships or vessels His Majesty's Union Jack or any pendants or colours usually borne by His Majesty's ships, or any flags, jacks, pendants or colours imitating or resembling those of His Majesty, or any ensign (other than the ensign appointed by the said Proclamation and required thereby to be worn by the masters of all merchant ships and vessels belonging to His Majesty's subjects) without particular warrant for their so doing from His Majesty, or His High Admiral of Great Britain or the Commissioners for executing the Office of High Admiral for the time being;

And whereas it is expedient to modify the said Proclamation in consequence of Our having revoked Our letters Patent whereby We appointed Commissioners to exercise the Office of High Admiral, and having charged one of Our Principal Secretaries of State (hereafter referred to as 'Our Principal Secretary of State for Defence') with general responsibility for the Defence of Our Realm;

Now, therefore, We do hereby declare that the said Proclamation shall have effect as if for any reference therein to Our High Admiral or to the Commissioners for executing the Office of High Admiral for the time being there were substituted a reference to Our Principal Secretary of State for Defence.

Given at Our Court at Buckingham Palace this twenty-sixth day of March in the year of our Lord One Thousand Nine Hundred and Sixty-four and in the thirteenth year of Our Reign.

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN

PROCLAMATION DATED JANUARY 1, 1801 DECLARING WHAT ENSIGN OR
COLOURS SHALL BE BORNE AT SEA BY MERCHANT SHIPS

1 As to Pendant and Ensign of ships in the Preventive Service see Order in Council of February 1, 1817.

BY THE KING

A PROCLAMATION

Declaring what ensign or colours shall be borne at sea, in merchant ships or vessels belonging to any of His Majesty's subjects of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and the dominions thereunto belonging.

George R.

Whereas, by the first article of the Articles of Union of the Kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland, as the same have been ratified and confirmed by two Acts of Parliament, the one made in Our Parliament of Great Britain, and the other in Our Parliament of Ireland, it was provided that the ensigns armorial, flags, and banners of Our United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland should be such as We should appoint by Our royal proclamation under the Great Seal of Our said United Kingdom: And whereas, We have, by Our royal proclamation dated this day, appointed and declared that the arms, or ensigns armorial of the said United Kingdom, should be as therein expressed: And whereas according to ancient usage, the ensigns, flags, jacks, and pendants worn by Our Ships, and appointed as a distinction for the same, ought not to be worn on board any ship or vessel belonging to any of Our subjects, so that Our ships, and those of Our subjects, may be easily distinguished and known:

We have, therefore, thought fit, by and with the advice of Our Privy Council, to order and appoint the ensign described on the side or margin hereof to be worn on board all ships or vessels belonging to any of Our subjects whatsoever, and to issue this Our royal proclamation to notify the same to all Our loving subjects, hereby strictly charging and commanding the masters of all merchant ships and vessels belonging to any of Our subjects, whether employed in Our service or otherwise, and all other persons whom it may concern, to wear the said ensign on board their ships or vessels: And to the end that none of Our subjects may presume, on board their ships, to wear Our flags, jacks, and pendants, which according to ancient usage, have been appointed as a distinction to Our ships, or any flags, jacks, or pendants in shape and mixture of colours so far resembling Ours as not to be easily distinguished therefrom, We do, with the advice of Our Privy Council, hereby strictly charge and command all Our subjects whatsoever that they do not presume to wear in any of their ships or vessels Our jack, commonly called the Union Jack, nor any pendants, nor any such colours as are usually borne by Our ships, without particular warrant for their so doing from Us, or Our High Admiral of Great Britain or the Commissioners for executing the Office of High Admiral for the time being: And we do hereby also further command all Our loving subjects, that without such warrant as aforesaid, they presume not to wear on board their ships or vessels any flags, jacks, pendants, or colours, made in imitation of, or resembling Ours, or any kind of pendant whatsoever or any other ensign than the ensign described on the side or margin hereof which shall be worn instead of the ensign before this time usually worn in merchant ships; saving that for the better distinction of such ships as shall have commissions of letters of mark or reprisals against the enemy, and any other ships or vessels which may be employed by the principal officers and commissioners of Our Navy, the principal officers of Our ordnance, the commissioners for victualling Our navy, the commissioners for Our customs and excise, and the commissioners for transportation for Our service relating particularly to those offices, Our royal will and pleasure is, that all such ships as have commissions of letters of mark or reprisals shall, besides the colours or ensign hereby appointed to be worn by merchant ships, wear a red jack with a Union Jack described in a canton at the

upper corner thereof, next the staff; and that such ships and vessels as shall be employed by Our service by the principal officers and commissioners of Our navy, the principal officers of Our ordnance, the commissioner for victualling Our navy, the commissioners for Our customs and excise (2), and the commissioners for transportation for our service relating particularly to those officers, shall wear a red jack with a Union Jack in a canton at the upper corner thereof, next the staff as aforesaid, and in the other part of the said jack shall be described the seal used in such of the respective offices aforesaid, by which the said ships and vessels shall be employed; and We do strictly charge and command that none of Our loving subjects do presume to wear any of the said distinction-jacks, unless they shall have commissions of letters of mark or reprisals, or be employed in Our service by any of the before-mentioned officers; and We hereby require Our high admiral, and commissioners for executing the office of high admiral, the governors of our forts and castles, the officers of Our customs, and the commanders or officers of any of Our ships, for the time being, upon their meeting with or otherwise observing any ships or vessels belonging to any of Our subjects, neglecting to wear the ensign hereby appointed to be borne as aforesaid, or wearing any flag, pendant, jack, or ensign contrary hereunto, whether at sea or in port, not only to seize, or cause to be forthwith seized, such flag, pendant, jack, or ensign, worn contrary to Our royal will and pleasure herein expressed, but also to return the names of such ships and vessels neglecting to wear the ensign hereby appointed, or wearing any flag, pendant, jack, or ensign contrary hereunto, together with the names of their respective masters or commanders unto Our high admiral or commissioners for executing the office of high admiral, or the judge of Our High Court of Admiralty for the time being, to the end that all persons offending may be duly punished for the same. And We do hereby command and enjoin the judge and judges of Our High Court of Admiralty for the time being, that they make strict inquiry concerning all such offenders, and cause them to be duly punished; and all vice admirals and judges of the vice admiralties are hereby also required to proceed in the like manner, within the several ports and places belonging to their respective precincts. And Our further pleasure is, that this proclamation shall take place according to the times hereafter mentioned; videlicet, for all ships in the Channel or British seas, and in the North Seas, after twelve days from the date of these presents; and from the mouth of the channel unto Cape St Vincent, after six weeks from the date of these presents; and beyond the Cape, and on this side of the Equinoctial Line, as well as in the ocean and Mediterranean as elsewhere, after ten weeks from the date of these presents; and beyond the line after the space of eight months from the date of these presents.

Given at Our Court of St James's, the first day of January one thousand eight hundred and one, in the forty-first year of Our reign.

GOD SAVE THE KING

2 As to Pendant and Ensign of ships in the Preventive Service see Order in Council of February 1, 1817.