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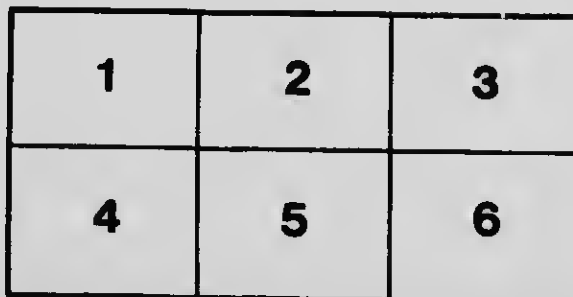
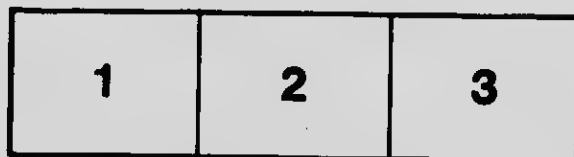
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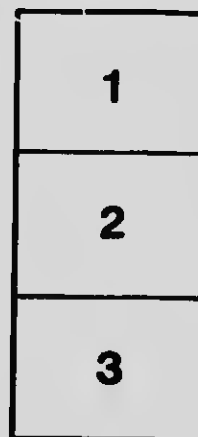
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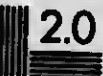


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# Our Flag

AND

# The Sailors of Our Empire



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**OUR FLAG**  
**AND**  
**THE SAILORS OF OUR EMPIRE**



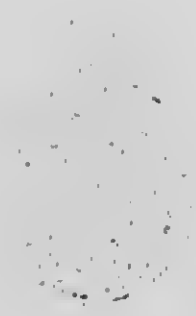
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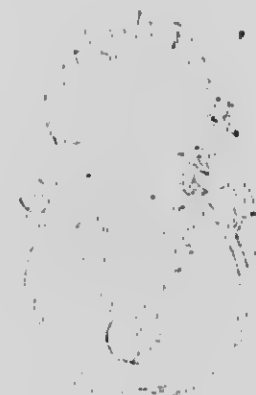
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# OUR FLAG

AND

## THE SAILORS OF OUR EMPIRE

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(1). When King Alfred the Great (A.D. 880) ruled over the Saxons in the small group of Islands which today is the centre of the Great British Empire, he realized that to overcome his enemies (the Danes) he must build boats and meet them in battle at sea, rather than await them on land. And this he would have successfully done had it not been for the rivalry of his two brothers. When union within Great Britain was established, the supremacy of the seas became an accomplished fact.

(2). When Richard Coeur de Lion in 1194 led the English to the Holy War in Palestine, unlike the Kings of Europe, he transported his men in boats and won a great victory over the Saracens near Beyrut, thus gaining the grotto of St. George. The first instance in history of soldiers being transported by a fleet, and the word "Admiral," which is probably Arabic "amir" or "emir," came into use at this period.

From that time our seafaring nation adopted St. George as their patron saint, and wore the red cross on their surcoats or jacques, and it was from the raising of one of these upon a lance or staff at the bow-sprit or forepart of a ship (in order that the nationality of those on board might be known) that a flag bearing on it only a cross came to be known as a jacque or jack.

(3). When Edward ~~the First's~~ <sup>III's</sup> Navy under the Cross of St. George won the Battle of Sluys, the lordship of the Narrow Seas (the North Sea and English Channel) was won.

(4). Under the same ensign, Cabot discovered America; Drake sailed the world; Frobisher sought the Northwest Passage; Raleigh founded Virginia, and the splendid Navy of Queen Elizabeth conquered the great Spanish Armada.

(5). These great sea victories were won by the English under their Patron Saint, St. George, before the sister nations of Scotland and Ireland joined. The Cross of St. George, therefore, is intact on the White Ensign, the Flag of the British Navy, and is preserved on the pendants of Admirals and other Naval Officers.

## **LEGEND OF ST. GEORGE**

St. George was a Christian martyr who, brought up in Cappadocia, entered the Roman Army.

At a town in Silene there was a pond infested by a monster who poisoned all people who came near, and to avoid him visiting the city he was given victims daily, first beasts, and afterwards human sacrifices. The Princess of Silene was at last chosen to be the sacrifice, and was tied to the spot to await the arrival of the dragon. St. George arrived just in time, and went towards the dragon with the sign of the cross, brandished his lance and hurled it with such force that he transfixed the monster and cast it to the ground. The Princess then passed her girdle round it and the monster followed them like a lamb to the city, where St. George cut off its head and bade the people put aside fear and believe. The King and 20,000 people were baptized into the Christian Church.

### **ALLEGORY BENEATH THE FABLE**

St. George is any of us who faithfully try to help in the evolution of humanity, armed with the Breast-plate of Service, the Shield of Faith, the Helmet of Intelligence, and the Sword of the Spirit, which is the power of Good.

The White is the emblem of Purity of Motive.

The Red is the emblem of Courage.

The Cross is the emblem of Sacrifice.

Truly the British Navy has followed the example of its Country's Patron Saint, St. George, and has and is now living up to the ideals of its ensign.

## **UNION OF ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND**

When the thrones of England and Scotland came under the rule of one King, James the First, the National Flags of England and Scotland were joined, forming a Union Jack known as the "additional jack" because it was flown by each country in addition to their own ensign.

The Scotch Flag is a white saltire on a blue field. St. Andrew, the patron saint, it is said, refused to be crucified on the Latin cross as was his Master, Christ, considering it too great a honour, and after his martyrdom a Greek monk, having been warned in a vision, carried the remains away by ships and was wrecked on the shores of Scotland, then called Caledonia, about A.D. 370. Here this monk was given land and built a church to enshrine the sacred relic. The King of Scotland went barefoot and vowed to adopt the Saint's Cross as a national emblem, and it is said that when the King was in prayer, the Cross of St. Andrew appeared in white

clouds upon the background of a blue sky. The colours of this flag stand for Purity and Truth.

The flag of St. Andrew was used by some of the great pirates of the North Sea. In the reign of Richard the Second, Mercer flourished. In Henry the Seventh's reign, Sir Andrew Wood of Leith challenged the English Royal Navy in contest, three ships were chosen, and Sir Andrew Wood overmastered them and carried them off as prizes to Dundee. James the Fourth of Scotland returned the ships and men to Henry the Seventh, saying, "The contest had been for honour, not for booty."

The last of these Scotch rovers was Sir Andrew Barton, who was the terror of the North Sea, and flourished when Henry the Eighth was King.

It was owing to the seas being infested by pirates of all nations that the British Fleet for 400 years of its existence was primarily necessary. Naval engagements as such were few, the chief work of the Navy being the protection of commerce and the suppression of privateering, which was engaged in by smaller nations when at war with Britain.

### **THE IRISH JACK**

Two hundred years later, 1801, the Irish Jack was added to the two-crossed Jack. The Patron Saint of Ireland is St. Patrick. Not much is known of

himself of his emblem, a red saltire on a white field. It is possible that St. Patrick was educated for the Church in Gaul (France) and became a hermit in Ireland. At Lough Derg a cave is supposed to have existed which led to purgatory, which St. Patrick is said to have entered and returned, after visiting the souls in purgatory. Later, the legend says, other Saints tried to follow his example, but never returned.

The Union Jack, therefore, is composed of three crosses—St. George, St. Andrew and St. Patrick—and three colours—Red, White and Blue, the emblem of unity and self-sacrifice, courage, purity and truth.

### **THE PART PLAYED BY THE WHITE ENSIGN AND THE RED IN THE BUILDING OF OUR EMPIRE**

The galleys of Richard I. were the fighting ships, and protected the convoy of store ships in the Expedition of the Third Crusade. Henry VII. built ships to trade to Chios, and the first English consul in the Mediterranean was appointed in 1513. In his reign the Cape of Good Hope route to India was discovered, which greatly increased the sea commerce of Britain, and Henry VII. augmented the force for its protection—the Navy—building ships which carried cannon and protected the merchant

ships from the daring Scotch Pirates, Barton and Wood.

During the Tudor Period, the sovereignty of the flag of St. George was acknowledged by the Powers by lowering their topsail and dipping their banners as a mark of respect. After the defeat of the Spanish Armada, our Navy and Merchant Service thrived under the care of the later Stuarts. The Hollanders, freed from the oppression of Spain on the High Seas, applied themselves to commerce and maritime affairs, and became a great nation of traders with a large colonial empire, carrying the commerce of all nations, protected by Britain's Supremacy of the Seas. When, however, the Dutch refused by the customary salute to acknowledge that supremacy, a naval action took place, which resulted in a prolonged struggle between the Navies, with the final defeat of the Dutch. And thus, as our traders wandered further and further afield, our Navy was forced to enter into combat with Foreign Powers to protect them and establish their trade centres. In this way was our commerce built up with India, China, Japan, Egypt and South Africa.

Within the last hundred years the settlers of Canada have been conveyed to these shores by the merchant ships. These settlers have been supplied

with the necessities for building up the Dominion by the Mercantile Marine, and the Canadian shores protected by the British Navy, and it is time now for Canadians to consider their duty towards the Dominion and the Empire in the matter of ships and shipping. . The Merchant Navy of the British Empire before the war carried more than half the merchandise of the world. When war broke out, the Empire had all the merchant ships they needed and a large surplus. If that surplus tonnage had not been available, England by this time would be almost starving.

The record of the British Navy today is a continuation of all its records of the past. To quote the words of Harold Begbie in the "London Chronicle":

"The British Fleet saved the world and secured the freedom of the seas for all honourable nations by containing the German Fleet. History will say that this service was incomparably the greatest rendered by any one nation to a common cause. But the British Fleet is now doing that which never before has any Navy been called upon to do. It is conducting at one and the same moment two major operations. It is containing the German Navy, and it is fighting the German submarine. To the historian, neither of these operations will appear more



critical than the other. Both are of vital importance, failure in one would mean failure in the other. And the invisible enemy at any moment of the night or day may suddenly throw the whole weight of its sea-power into one attack or the other. Only in one way can we realize the world's debt to the British Navy—Imagine that it had failed us. If that had been, there is not one nation or race or country which would not now be lying helpless at the foot of Prussian brutality.”

### THE SECRET OF THE SHIPS

(“The association between the two services, the Royal Navy and the Mercantile Marine, has been so close during the war, whatever that association might have been before, that it seems to me almost incredible that it can ever be broken asunder.”—Admiral Sir Rosslyn Wemyss.)

On their ventures in the service of a Tudor King or Queen

All the ships were just as like as they could be,  
For the merchantman gave battle; while the Royal ship  
was seen

As a not too simple trader oversea;  
Being heirs to ancient customs, when their upper sails  
came down

As a token of respect in passing by,  
They would add the salutation in a language of their own,  
“God speed you, we be sisters, thou and I.”

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As the centuries receded came a parting of the ways  
Till in time the separation went so far  
That a family was founded who were traders all their days,  
And another who were always men-of-war;  
But whene'er they dipped their colours, one in faith, they  
understood—

And the sea, who taught them both, could tell you  
why—

That the custom never altered, so the greeting still held  
good,

“God speed you, we be sisters, thou and I.”

Then in days of common sacrifice and peril was it strange  
That they ratified the union of the past?

While their masters, unsuspecting, greatly marvelled at  
the change,

But they prayed with all their souls that it would last;  
And the ships, who know the secret, go rejoicing on their  
way,

For whatever be the ensign that they fly,  
Such as keep the seas with honour are united when they  
pray,

“God speed you, we be sisters, thou and I.”

—“Punch.”



