

New Hampshire



On 21 June 1788, New Hampshire became the 9th state to ratify the U.S. Constitution.

Adopted by the New Hampshire State Legislature in 1909, the state flag displays the [State Seal of New Hampshire](#) on a blue field surrounded by laurel leaves and nine stars representing New Hampshire as the ninth state to join the union.

The flag has only been changed once since its adoption in 1909. This change was not to the design of the flag itself, but to the State Seal centered on the flag. In 1931 the New Hampshire Legislature passed recommendations to more precisely describe the State Seal at the prompting of the New Hampshire Historical Society.

New Hampshire has had a state seal for more than 200 years, initially created in 1775 by the First Provincial Congress and featuring a pine tree and an upright fish (symbols of the two major economic resources at the time) on either side of a bundle of five arrows (representing the strength of unity among the then five counties).

In 1784 the seal was revised to depict a ship on stocks with a rising sun in the background (to show that Portsmouth had become a major shipbuilding center during the war years).

Details on the seal became distorted over the next 150 years, as new dies were produced every few years artists had added various items on a frontal dock (such as rum barrels with sometimes human beings beside them), and in 1931 a less objectionable seal was called for and the seal was finally described specifically by legislature.

The present state seal features the frigate Raleigh (built at Portsmouth in 1776 as one of the first 13 warships sponsored by the Continental Congress for a new American navy). The figure 1784 on the old seal was changed to 1776, and the old Latin phrase "Neo Hantoniensis 1784 Sigillum Republica" around the circular seal was replaced with "Seal of the state of New Hampshire 1776." The 1931 seal law spelled out that only a granite boulder could be shown in the foreground as a symbol of the granite state's rugged terrain and the character of its citizenry.