

North Carolina



On 21 Nov 1789, North Carolina became the 12th colony to ratify the U.S. Constitution by a vote of 194-77. They previously voted on 02 Aug 1788 to approve the U.S. Constitution by a vote of 185-84 but the vote was not ratified. At that convention, the convention drafted a "Declaration of Rights" and a list of "Amendments to the Constitution," but in the end, the convention voted "neither to ratify nor reject the Constitution proposed for the government of the United States."

On May 20, 1861, the day that the secession resolution was adopted by the state of North Carolina, an ordinance to adopt a state flag was presented by Colonel John D. Whitford. A committee of seven was formed with Colonel Whitford appointed chairman. The original ordinance stated that "...the flag of this State shall be a blue field with a white V thereon, and a star, encircling which shall be the words, "Sirgit astrum, May 20, 1775."

The design intended by this original description for the flag was never to be. Colonel Whitford and his committee consulted an artist from Raleigh, William Jarl Browne, for advice. Mr. Browne prepared a model for a state flag and submitted it to the committee for approval. The "Browne" flag was not at all like that described in the original proposal but was, nevertheless, approved by the North Carolina Convention on June 22, 1861.

The design provided by William Jarl Browne and adopted by the Convention was described as having a red field with two bars making up the fly; the top one blue and the bottom bar white. Centered on the red field was a white five pointed star. Above the star, in a semi-circular mold, was the date May 20, 1775 representing the much questioned "Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence." Below the star was the date, May 20, 1861 representing the date of North Carolina's secession from the union.

This flag was carried by the North Carolina Regiments, along with the Confederate colors, throughout the Civil War. After the war, North Carolina, like other secession states, adopted a revised design for their state flag. In March of 1885, a bill introduced by General Johnstone Jones was passed and the design of the North Carolina State Flag changed for the last time.

The flag's field was changed from red to blue. The top bar of the fly was changed from blue to red. The gilt letters "N" and "C" were placed on either side of the white star and gilt scrolls were added above and below the star. The scroll above still displays the date of the "[Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence](#)" but the date displayed in black letters on the lower scroll displays April 12, 1776, the date of the "[Halifax Resolves](#)" instead of May 20, 1861, the date of secession.