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Symbols of the United States

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The American flag

http://lyc-george-sand-la-chatre.tice.ac-orleans-tours.fr/eva/sites/lyc-george-sand-la-chatre/local/cache-vignettes/L110xH58/Flag_of_the_United_States-svg-b12b5.png?date=1381694822

The 50 stars on the flag represent the 50 states of the United States of America and the 13 stripes represent the thirteen british colonies that declared the War of Independence to the British Crown and became the first states in the Union. These 13 colonies are **Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New-York, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, Pennsylvannia and Rhode Island**. On July 4, 1960, Hawai was fiftieth stars to joined the flag. Blue on this flag stands for courage, white for the values and red for justice.

Before this flag, each colony had its own flag. When the war of independence was, the colonies decided to create a flag which would symbolize their union ; it was called "Grand Union Flag" (in reference to the British flag, known as the Union Jack)

http://lyc-george-sand-la-chatre.tice.ac-orleans-tours.fr/eva/sites/lyc-george-sand-la-chatre/local/cache-vignettes/L110xH74/Grand_Union_Flag-svg-15101.png?date=1381694906

The British flag in the top left corner was later replaced by stars, hence the name **Stars and Stripes, or Star-Spangled Banner**

Uncle Sam

[<http://lyc-george-sand-la-chatre.tice.ac-orleans-tours.fr/eva/sites/lyc-george-sand-la-chatre/local/cache-vignettes/L298xH400/oncle-sam-f7d4d.jpg>] **Uncle Sam**

Who is he ? Why this name ?

In the early 19th century, the soldiers of the Hudson Valey received boxes of meat on which were written the initials U.S. (standing for United States). The provider of these funds meat was Samuel Wilson, and everyone called him Uncle Sam. Samuel was honest and devoted to his country. The soldiers began to say that the "U.S" written on the boxes meant Uncle Sam. In the 1830s, designers used this picture in the newspapers and the myth gained momentum. Uncle Sam took the features of the President Lincoln : tall, thin and with a small goatee.

The character had become a symbol.

Uncle Sam refers more specifically to the government. Recognizable by his top-hat, his blue jacket and red and white striped pants (like the flag) he has become a personification of the American homeland, like the Statue of Liberty or the spread eagle. Sometimes nice, sometime threatening, Uncle Sam can assume all roles and often served in on army recruiting posters.

There are many parodies of this character, for example this one :

http://lyc-george-sand-la-chatre.tice.ac-orleans-tours.fr/eva/sites/lyc-george-sand-la-chatre/local/cache-vignettes/L93xH120/Fat_Uncle_Sam-sm-cf1a3.jpg?date=1381695139

The President's Seal

The seal of the President of United States represents an eagle turning its head to the right, and holding an olive branch in its right claw, which means that the US are for peace. In its left claw, it holds 13 arrows, symbol of military power. The 50 stars around the eagle represent the 50 states. The 13 stars above its head represent the 13 original states. What's more, the eagle holds in its beak a banner that floats above its head with the motto " E pluribus unum" which means " from many one"

http://lyc-george-sand-la-chatre.tice.ac-orleans-tours.fr/eva/sites/lyc-george-sand-la-chatre/local/cache-vignettes/L110xH111/Seal_Of_The_President_Of_The_United_States_Of_America-svg-d3ba1.png?date=1381695223