

of the State of Pennsylvania evidently gave rise to a part of this unwarranted assertion. As the term "ships' colours" means flags, ensigns, and pennants used on ships, it is not improbable that those made for the Pennsylvania navy were of different patterns and bore such devices as distinguished each particular vessel composing the fleet on the Delaware River and others representing the proprietary title of the State of Pennsylvania.

William Richards, having, on May 21, 1776, been made the husband of the vessels belonging to the fleet, wrote to the council of safety, on August 19, that year, saying: "I hope you have agreed what sort of Colours I am to have made for the Galleys, &c., as they are much wanted.

"You will please to order how you will have the Goods paid for, that are bought for the Provincial Store, for I am in want of a Sum of money for that and the Signals."

Again, at Philadelphia, he wrote, on October 15, that year, to the council of safety, saying:

"The Commodore was with me this morning, and says the Fleet has not any Colours to hoist if they should be called on Duty, it is not in my power to get them done, until there is a design fix'd on to make the Colours by."

Some time within the succeeding seven months certain flags, ensigns, or pennants, were made as is set forth in the following order on the paymaster of the Pennsylvania navy:

"State Navy-Board, May 29, 1777.

* * * *

"An Order on William Webb to Elizabeth Ross, for fourteen pounds twelve shillings and two pence, for Making Ships' Colours, &c., put into William Richards' Store, £14 12 2."¹

The fact that the origin of the flag of the United States is solely traceable to the resolution, passed by the American congress, on the fourteenth of June, 1777, is established by unimpeachable testimony. The newspapers it will be seen were the immediate sources of information from which the people derived their knowledge of the action taken by congress to decree the style of the national standard.

The following extract from the journal of Doctor James Thacher, who served as a surgeon in the continental army during the Revolutionary war, attests the truth of this declaration. Under the date of "August 3d," 1777, he wrote at Albany:

"It appears by the papers, that congress resolved on the 14th of June

¹ Pennsylvania archives. By Samuel Hazard. Philadelphia, 1853, vol. v., pp. 13, 46.
 Pennsylvania archives. Second series. Published under the direction of Matthew S. Quay, secretary of the commonwealth. Edited by John B. Linn and Wm. H. Egle, M.D. Harrisburg, 1874. Minutes of the Navy-Board, from Feb. 18, 1777, to Sept. 24, 1777, vol. i., p. 164.