



FORT HARMAR

Flag Design History and Meaning

THE STORY OF FORT HARMAR

Keep the peace; be ready for war. These seemingly contradictory missions fell to the brand new United States Army in 1785. Commander Josiah Harmar dispatched 150 soldiers of the First Regiment — one-fifth of the entire authorized army — to the leading edge of America's frontier to build Fort Harmar at the wilderness confluence of two great rivers, the Ohio and the Muskingum, future site of the first organized settlement in the Northwest Territory, Marietta.

The Army's First American Regiment at Fort Harmar sought to quell the pattern of retaliatory attacks that had erupted between the Indians and the settlers, expel squatters attempting to settle illegally in the Ohio country, provide crucial security for the first settlers of Marietta, and protect the surveyors laying their important legal foundation for the orderly development of the Northwest Territory. From 1786 through 1789, the fort served as the US Army's field headquarters for the entire western frontier. In January 1789, the two Treaties of Fort Harmar were signed in the "Council House" just upriver from

the fort. One treaty was with representatives of the Wyandot, Delaware, Ottawa, Chippewa, Potawatomi, and Sac (Sauk); the other with Six Nations (the Mohawk did not attend).

Unfortunately, the treaties proved ineffectual in bringing lasting peace. America had been ceded the entire Northwest Territory by the British in the 1783 Treaty of Paris and intended to settle the territory. The Indians hadn't been consulted during those peace talks; they considered the land to be their own. A flood of immigrants from Europe and the eastern states were rushing to put down new roots in this contested wilderness. The troops at Fort Harmar faced a difficult situation.

By the early 1790's, the Army's frontier activities had mostly moved north and west; most of the troops at Fort Harmar followed and the fort ceased operation. Although only in operation less than a decade, the new US Army troops at Fort Harmar gained a vital wilderness foothold for Marietta's settlement and westward expansion of America. We are indebted to them for their service.

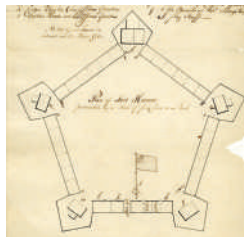
FORT HARMAR FLAG DESIGN

The style of the central image of flag design is reminiscent of a regimental coat of arms, illustrated in a vintage engraving style that would have been utilized in creating artwork during the time of the fort's construction.



COLORS

The colors used in the flag directly reference Commander Harmar's colors as shown above in this flag from Fort Washington. Red, white, blue and gold were also used in the flag of the U.S. Army 1st Regiment.



FORT SHAPE

Fort Harmar had an unusual pentagon shape. It was constructed of wood with upright pickets and the backsides of interior buildings forming its exterior walls. A silhouette of the fort's shape is the central focus of the flag design.



LOCATION

Major John Doughty selected the west bank of the Muskingum River where it enters the Ohio River as the fort's location, which is symbolized by the angled converging colors at the base of the flag design.

SYMBOLISM



The bald eagle and shield in the flag are direct references to the flag of the U.S. Army 1st Regiment (far left) while the stars on the shield are a reference to the original Fort Harmar flag (left). The peace pipes symbolize the relationship efforts with the Native American tribes. The arrows and laurel leaves reinforce the concept of the fort's intended purpose: to provide protection and peace.