

South Carolina Palmetto Flag



South Carolina State Flag: A flag with a field of blue, white crescent, and white palmetto tree was adopted as the state flag of South Carolina in January 1861 after S.C. seceded from the Union.

Symbolism: The Palmetto, crescent, and blue field were symbols of dissent from 1776 and independence from Britain, the 1830's nullification crisis, and the Mexican War. The palmetto became symbolic after the Battle of Fort Moultrie in 1776. This is because the fort on Sullivan's Island during the battle was made from palmetto logs when usually tabby masonry was used. The American troops at Sullivan's Island repulsed the British attack and so the palmetto was established as an emblem of South Carolina.

"Big Red": This South Carolina flag has a red field, not a blue one. The red field makes this flag a spirit flag for the Citadel Corps of Cadets. In the weeks after the secession of South Carolina in December 1860, a variety of "secession flags" were sewn and flown throughout South Carolina. It is likely that "Big Red" is one of these secession flags. The downward pointing crescent suggests that the flag could have been made by the High Vincent Company, which manufactured other secession flags flown in Charleston. This flag was acquired near Mobile, Alabama in 1865 by Private Willard Baker of the 20th Iowa Infantry and was donated to the State Historical Society by Baker in 1919.