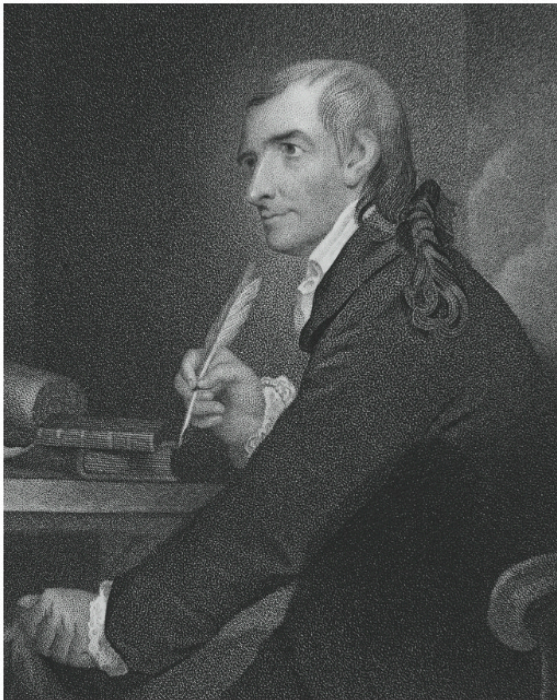**THE HOPKINSON FLAG**

Like many of the Founding Fathers, Francis Hopkinson was a man of many talents. An artist, a musician, a poet, a lawyer, a businessman, and a politician, he seemed to do just about everything. Included in his skillset was a knack for artistic design. This led to his involvement in a number of design projects for the United States.

Hopkinson developed many seals and symbols during the US's infancy, including the Grand Seal of the United States. However, there's no doubt that his most important project was the national flag. He designed it while serving on the Continental Marine Committee, in a position known today as the Secretary of the Navy. In 1777, the flag was adopted as the US's official national flag, and **Hopkinson became the creator of the Stars and Stripes**.

THE HOPKINSON CONTROVERSY

While Hopkinson originally received nothing for his work designing the Grand Seal, the US flag, and various other symbols, he believed he was due compensation. So he billed Congress for his work. His price? A quarter cask of the public wine.

This was the first of many back-and-forths between Hopkinson and the young US government, and ultimately a discussion marked by bureaucracy.

While Congress found the request reasonable, they chose to employ bureaucratic tactics in their negotiations. First, they requested an itemized bill for payment in cash. After Hopkinson delivered that bill, a committee began investigating his charges and his payment was delayed for seemingly arbitrary reasons. They eventually refused to pay him altogether, on the grounds that he was already paid as a public servant and there were others who helped design the seals as well.

Either way, it was clear throughout the process that Hopkinson was the original designer of the Stars and Stripes.

WAIT, DIDN'T BETSY ROSS DESIGN THE FIRST FLAG?

Nope. The legend of Betsy Ross as the first flag's designer didn't come about until her grandson William Canby popularized the story in the late 1800s. While the Betsy Ross flag is used to commemorate the nation's birth, it's quite likely that the Hopkinson flag was the first version of the Stars and Stripes.

Source: https://www.patriotwood.com/blogs/news/15154077-the-history-of-the-hopkinson-flag