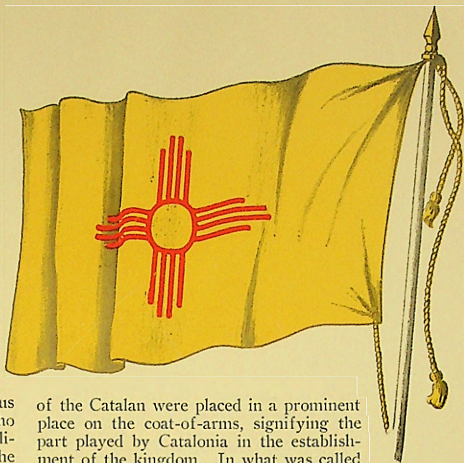


# Our State Flag

or

## Concerning Those "Cherished Memories of Old Spain"

By JUDGE JIM MULLENS



SOMEONE has just sent me a clipping "by a popular writer in an eastern magazine", both writer and magazine being incognito. According to this popular writer, we are not even trying to live down or correct that reputation once given us by a Senator whose erroneous impressions kept us from statehood for some years. Altho he traveled over this wide domain quite a bit and complimented us on our scenery, climate and good roads, he thinks we are still a part of Mexico. He doubtless thinks that New York and New Hampshire are a part of England too, for he calls New Mexico a *new* commonwealth. Now I wonder where he got that *new* stuff? His descriptions of sunrises and "quaint customs of peoples" are so nice that it is a pity he spoiled it all by winding up with, "Notwithstanding its remarkable highway system and many modern buildings along national routes, New Mexico still cherishes memories of old Spain. Even its state flag is an adaption from the heraldic bars on the coat-of-arms of Aragon".

Perhaps a bit of history and geography may not be amiss. New Mexico has had a government and governors, in an almost continuous succession, from 1598 when Juan de Onate was named viceroy, until the year 1929. Only one break in the actual governing body, that being from 1680 to 1687, when the Pueblos revolted and drove Otermin and his Spanish army and settlers back to El Paso. Even during that time Antonio Otermin, Juan Cruzat and Pedro Reneros de Posado were waging wars to recover the country for Spain, no less than seventeen invasions being made and a part of the country reclaimed. On the first day of August, 1689, Governor Domingo Gironzo Petritz fought an all day and decisive battle with the Indians of Zia Pueblo, killing over 600 warriors and settling the question of who was who in New Mexico beyond any cavil or argument. The succession has not skipped since.

When Ferdinand of Aragon married Isabella of Castile, in 1469, it not only united those two strongest provinces but quickly led to the union of the then thirteen provinces of Iberia, or old Spain, under the dual regency of Castile and Aragon. The wedding was 23 years before Columbus set sail from Palos, to discover—US, in the language of the schoolboy. Between Aragon and the Mediterranean Settles the province of Catalonia, the Catalans being allies of Aragon in its wars to expel the Moors from Spain. During a battle, a mortally wounded Catalan warrior, a man of Spartan mold, dipped his four fingers in his own blood, drew them across the yellow scarf he wore, handed the scarf to a companion and bade him bear it in the front as the battle pennon of the Catalans. When the union of armorial bearings was made, the four bars

of the Catalan were placed in a prominent place on the coat-of-arms, signifying the part played by Catalonia in the establishment of the kingdom. In what was called "The Book of Barcelona", published in Valencia in 1478, reference is made to this in a passage from the chiefs of Barcelona, "Catalonia is the west of the Mediterranean, and no fish may swim in its waters unless it bear upon its body the four heraldic bars of the house of Aragon."

So much for the bars of Aragon. Now let us see about the state flag of New Mexico, the old Zia Sun Symbol.

Chapter 115, session laws of 1925, provides for a state flag, describes what it shall be, and gives its dimensions. In part it reads thus: "Said flag shall be the ancient Zia Sun Symbol, of red in the center of a field of yellow. The colors shall be the red and yellow of old Spain." The act then describes how the bars of red shall be placed, four in a row, radiating from a center of yellow (or gold) in the four cardinal directions, making sixteen bars (not four), to typify the Zia idea of the sun's rays, and further symbolical of our own sunshine.

The flag was adopted thru the energetic labors of the Santa Fe Woman's Club, Mrs. Reed Holloman appearing before the legislature in behalf of it. Mrs. R. W. D. Bryan, a member of the house from Bernalillo, urged the adoption of a beautiful but complicated flag sponsored by the ladies of the Albuquerque Woman's Club. The final adoption of the Zia Sun Symbol was due doubtless, to its simplicity and adaptability. Any of the other flags submitted would have been worthless from the standpoint of utilitarian functions carried by the Zia Sun Symbol, such as road markers, and that modern heraldry of gas buggies involved in stamping the State Flag symbol on the license plates issued to motor vehicles in New Mexico. The reference to the *colors of old Spain* was written into the prepared bill by its sponsors, the Woman's Club of Santa Fe, to distinguish between the clear-cut colors of old Spain and the dull tones of the Zia.

No, dear peripatetic journalists, the New Mexico flag is not an *adaption*. It belongs here; the Sun Symbol of a tribe that was occupying four story buildings when our Anglo Saxon forebears were still living in caves. It not only symbolizes the red man's reverence for the Orb of Day, but that Somewhere in New Mexico the Sun is Always Shining—in the daytime. Selah!

New Mexico has this State Flag...part Spanish, part Indian.  
St Augustine, Florida, has her flag...Spanish motif.  
San Antonio should have flag...Spanish motif...and everyone display it on all festive occasions.

*See Appendix*