

History tells us that Columbus dressed in a splendid military suit of scarlet embroidered in gold, and followed by a retinue of his men bearing banners, stepped upon the new world, Friday, October 12, 1492; that he threw himself upon his knees, kissed the earth and with tears of joy gave thanks to God for his safe delivery, and for the success of the expedition; that he formally planted the cross and took possession of the country in the name of Ferdinand and Isabella.

It was through the influence of a few staunch friends at court, and especially through the generous assistance of Queen Isabella, Columbus obtained the assistance required to make his voyage. Out of a total sum of one hundred three thousand dollars contributed toward fitting out the expedition, the queen gave over sixty-seven thousand dollars. Thus, chiefly by a woman's help the brave sailor got the power to undertake his daring enterprise.

The banners spoken of were two in number, the Royal Banner of Spain and the White Banner of the Expedition, a personal flag given the great explorer by Queen Isabella, and were the first European flags ever unfurled on the continent of America of which we have any definite knowledge. Columbus bearing the banner of Spain was the first to land, followed by his men bearing the banner of the expedition.

The green cross stands for Christianity; green is the color of hope. The Spaniards were a very religious people and Columbus repeatedly states his purpose was first of all that of a missionary---he hoped to convert the Great Khan, or emperor of China to Christianity. If they rejected the religion he offered them, then, according to the ideas of the time, any Christian king might seize their possessions and make slaves of them.

The F and Y stand for Ferdinand and Isabella, Isabella beginning with a Y in Spanish.

White Banner of the Expedition

→ as traced on this paper
from the Hughes book,
now in the "Spanish"
Flags in the Am. Conquests"
record + ms.

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