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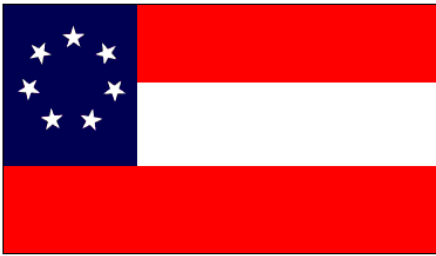
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The History of South Carolina has, at times, been overshadowed by racial divisions. One of the saddest occurrences happened on the evening of June 17, 2015, at the [Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church](#) in downtown [Charleston](#). This article will first trace the history of the rebel flag and then show how this flag was used by a gunman to kill nine innocent people.

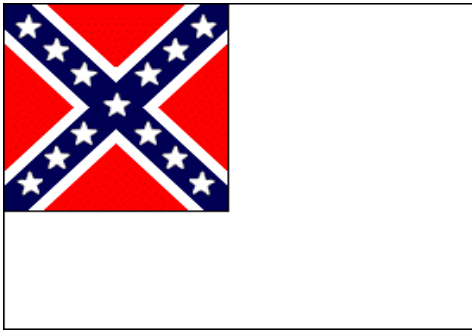
During the Civil War there were several flags that were used by the Confederate Army, but this article will concentrate on only three. The first Confederate Flag had three bars and seven stars in a circle that represented the states and was known as the "Stars and Bars Flag." This was the flag that was used at the inauguration of the first President of the Confederation in March of 1861. [This flag](#) looked similar to the United States Flag and caused problems during the battles since the flags were hard to tell apart.



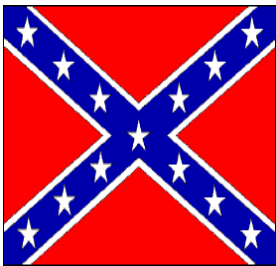
First National Flag Of The Confederacy

March 1861 to May of 1863

As a result the flag was changed and a second flag took its place. The second flag resembled the surrender flag when it was flying in battle and as a result needed to be changed again to something that would look unique to the South.



It is at this time that the Confederate Battle Flag made its debut. This is the flag that is known as the rebel flag or battle flag. It was first carried into battle in Virginia around 1863. And ... this is the flag that has been very controversial since the ending of the civil war.



This is the flag that has symbolized racial inequality for many and state's rights for others.

The flag was first flown over the dome of the Capitol in Columbia, South Carolina in 1961 to remember the start of the Civil War. Fifty-four years later it was moved to the State House grounds. During this time period there were many protests to remove the flag and place it in a museum for the Civil War.

That was the way things stood until:

*Dylann Roof gunned down and killed nine worshipers during a prayer service. Within a day, photos emerged of him holding Confederate or rebel flag.<sup>1</sup>*

Some of the writings of Dylan Reed had focused on his hatred for the African-American community and why he walked into the church service and worshiped with the believers before opening fire on the people.

That was the catalyst of removing, for good, the Confederate flag from the state grounds.

Before the flag was removed, and while the debate was ongoing in the South Carolina capital, Bree Newsome took matters in her own hands and removed the flag. Bree climbed to the top of the flagpole to remove the flag while James Ian Tyson waited at the bottom of the pole. As a result of their actions of defacing a monument, both faced criminal charges. Bree was part of an activist group

Governor Nikki Haley signed the legislation to remove the flag with nine pens that would be given to the families of the nine killed on July 10, 2015. The faith, of the families of the victims, was clearly seen in the way that they handled the tragedy which had fallen on them.

They offered forgiveness to the man who had killed their loved ones.

#### **Footnotes:**

1) Wagner, Meg and Siemaszko, Corky, South Carolina removes Confederate flag from Statehouse as crowd cheers, sings: 'Hey, hey, hey, goodbye', NEW YORK DAILY NEWS, Jul/10/2015, Jul/19/2015, <http://www.nydailynews.com/news/national/confederate-flag-fans-critics-gather-s-statehouse-article-1.2287700>

2) Robles, Frances and Stewart, Nikita, Dylann Roof's Past Reveals Trouble at Home and School, New York

Times, Jul/16/2015, Jul/19/2015,

[http://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/17/us/charleston-shooting-dylann-roof-troubled-past.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/17/us/charleston-shooting-dylann-roof-troubled-past.html?_r=0)

3) Bankoff, Caroline, Who Is Bree Newsome, the Woman Who Took Down South Carolina's Confederate Flag? , Who Is Bree Newsome, the Woman Who Took Down South Carolina's Confederate Flag? , Jun/29/2015, Jul/19/2015, <http://nymag.com/daily/intelligencer/2015/06/who-is-bree-newsome-confederate-flag.html>

4) Staff of U.S. Depot, Inc , Confederate Stars and Bars, The Flags of the United States, U.S. Flag Depot, Inc, Dec/31/1969, Jul/19/2015, <http://www.usflag.org/confederate.stars.and.bars.html>

5) Sanchez, Ray and Payne, Charleston church shooting: Who is Dylann Roof?, CNN, Jun/23/2015, Aug/06/2015, <http://www.cnn.com/2015/06/19/us/charleston-church-shooting-suspect/>

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/The-Rebel-Flag-and-a-Shooting-in-Charleston-South-Carolina-History>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/The-Rebel-Flag-and-a-Shooting-in-Charleston-South-Carolina-History>

## Media Stream



[Charleston shooting: 9 killed in 'hate crime' shooting at church](#)

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