

THE 56 SIGNERS AND THE GADSDEN FLAG.

On the 4th of July, we PROUDLY fly two flags, the American Flag and the Gadsden Flag! While the Gadsden flag is recognized by many, few know its history on an American Naval ship and why a snake was chosen by our forefathers.

The Gadsden flag is a historical American flag with a yellow field depicting a rattlesnake coiled and ready to strike. Positioned below the rattlesnake are the words "Don't tread on me." The flag is named after American general and statesman Christopher Gadsden (1724–1805), who designed it in 1775 during the American Revolution. It was also used by the Continental Marines as an early motto flag. In modern times, the Gadsden flag is often associated with the American Tea Party.

Ben Franklin is credited with writing; "The rattlesnake has sharp eyes, and "may therefore be esteemed an emblem of vigilance." Furthermore, "She never begins an attack, nor, when once engaged, ever surrenders: She is therefore an emblem of magnanimity and true courage. ... she never wounds 'till she has generously given notice, even to her enemy, and cautioned him against the danger of treading on her."

ENJOY THE 4TH BUT,

DON'T FORGET THE 56 MEN WHO SIGNED THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE 240 YEARS AGO.

They knew full well, that the penalty for doing so would be death if they were captured. They pledged their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor to each other.

What kind of men were they and what happened to them? Twenty-four were lawyers and jurists. Eleven were merchants nine were farmers and large plantation owners, men of means, well educated.

o Five signers were captured by the British as traitors, and were tortured before they died.

o Twelve had their homes ransacked and burned.

o Two lost their sons serving in the Revolutionary Army. Another had two sons captured.

o Nine of the 56 fought and died from wounds or hardships of the Revolutionary War.

o Carter Braxton of Virginia, a planter and trader, saw his ships swept from the seas by the British. He sold his home and properties to pay his debts and died in rags.

o Thomas McKeam was so hounded by the British that he was forced to move his family almost constantly. He served in the Congress without pay and his family was kept in hiding. His possessions were taken from him, and poverty was his reward.

o The properties of Dillery, Hall, Clymer, Walton, Gwinnett, Heyward, Rutledge and Middleton were looted by vandals or soldiers.

o Thomas Nelson Jr., noted that at the battle of Yorktown, the British General Cornwallis had taken over the Nelson home for his headquarters. He quietly urged General George Washington to open fire. The home was destroyed, and Nelson died bankrupt.

o Francis Lewis also had his home destroyed. The enemy jailed his wife, and she died within a few months.

o John Hart was driven from his wife's bedside as she was dying. Their 13 children fled for their lives. His fields and his gristmill were laid to waste.

These men were more than just a little inconvenienced; **they paid a fearful price to give us a free America.** It's now **our** turn to keep it free! Will you help?

God Bless America, He has to, Obama wants to fundamentally change it, and 51% of the voters were so feeble minded they re-elected him