

Service Flag

The "Service Flag" was used during World War I and World War II. Each family was entitled to hang a small Service flag in their window; the blue star in the center of the red-bordered white rectangle signified a family member in active service. The star was replaced (or covered) with a gold star if the family member died in action; (Hence the name of the organization "Gold Star Mothers" of women who had lost sons in the war). Service flags about one foot long and always hung vertically from a hook or some other feature of a front window of the home.

A service lapel button was approved to be worn by members of the immediate family of an individual serving in the Armed Forces of the United States during any period of war or hostilities in which the Armed Forces of the United States were engaged.

If a family had a husband and a son, or multiple family members in the service of their country, then additional blue stars were set into the white rectangle. Organizations and corporations extended this practice to fly flags incorporating stars for each of their members/employees who were off to war and, of course, would change/overlay the blue stars with gold ones when the news came back that one of theirs had died in action. These larger flags, some 50 stars in a circle, many of them in gold, measuring about 8 feet long overall, were sometimes flown outside on a pole, but most often were suspended from the ceiling of the factory / meeting hall indoors.

Some Variations are:

- A Blue Star - "Service in Army or Navy."
- A Blue Star with a Gold Greek Cross in the Center - "Wounded in Service."
- An inverted Blue Star with both the Gold Greek Cross and the Gold Ring (as in (2) and (3)) - "Missing."
- An inverted Blue Star inside of a Red Ring - "Captured."

These are the banners used for the subjects in this book.

