

Aloft & Free

Since Betsy Ross stitched the first American flag in 1776, Americans have raised the bars and stars as a symbol of liberty in times of peace and war. Here are three examples from EAA's Attic of the national emblem used during wartime.

World War I pilot Leonard M. Reno, an American volunteer for the Lafayette Flying Corps in France and then an ensign in the U.S. Navy, carried this delicate 48-star flag (bottom) on every aerial mission he made over Europe from 1917 to 1918.

The 4-by-6-inch flag (top), made by Dettras Flag Products of Oaks, Pennsylvania, stands at attention in front of its original packaging. Americans often displayed Old Glory on desks and shelves during World War II.

More recently, EAA received three donations of 50-star banners flown in the Middle East. The center flag, folded into a triangle, was flown in a KC-135 above Iraq during the opening weeks of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003. —*Kathleen L. Witman*

