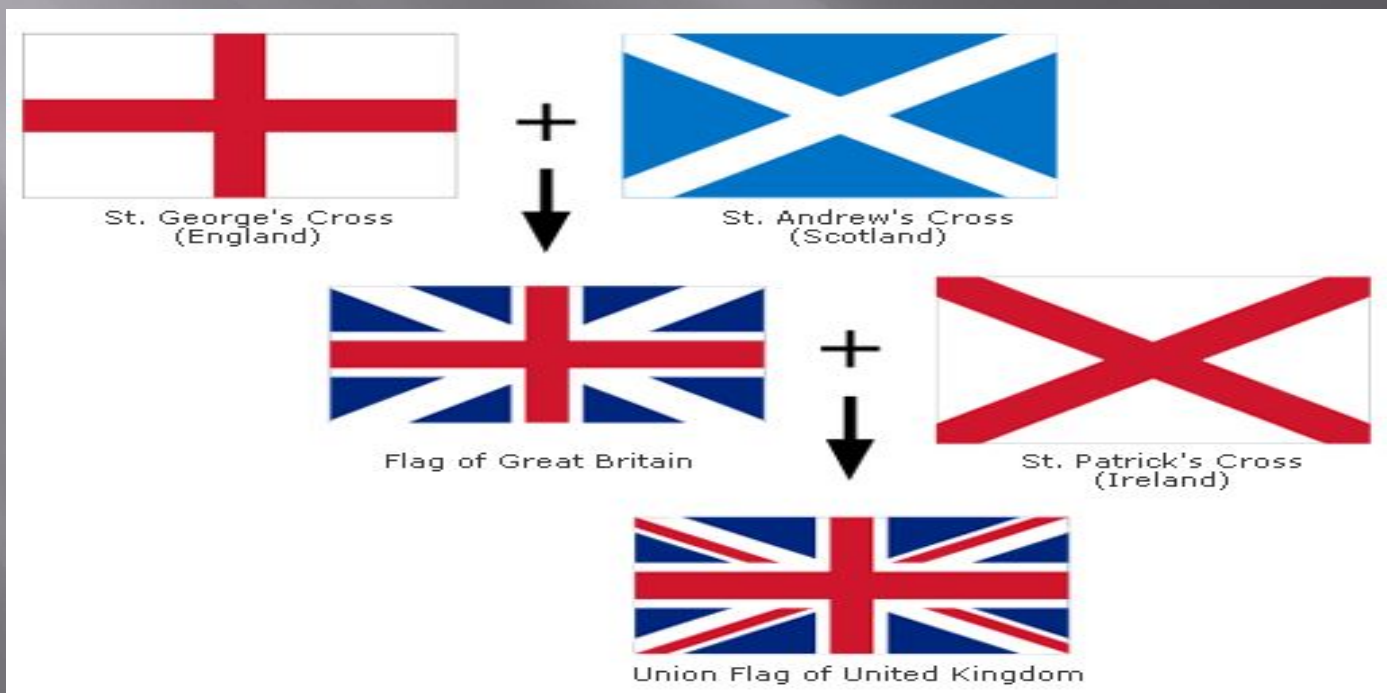


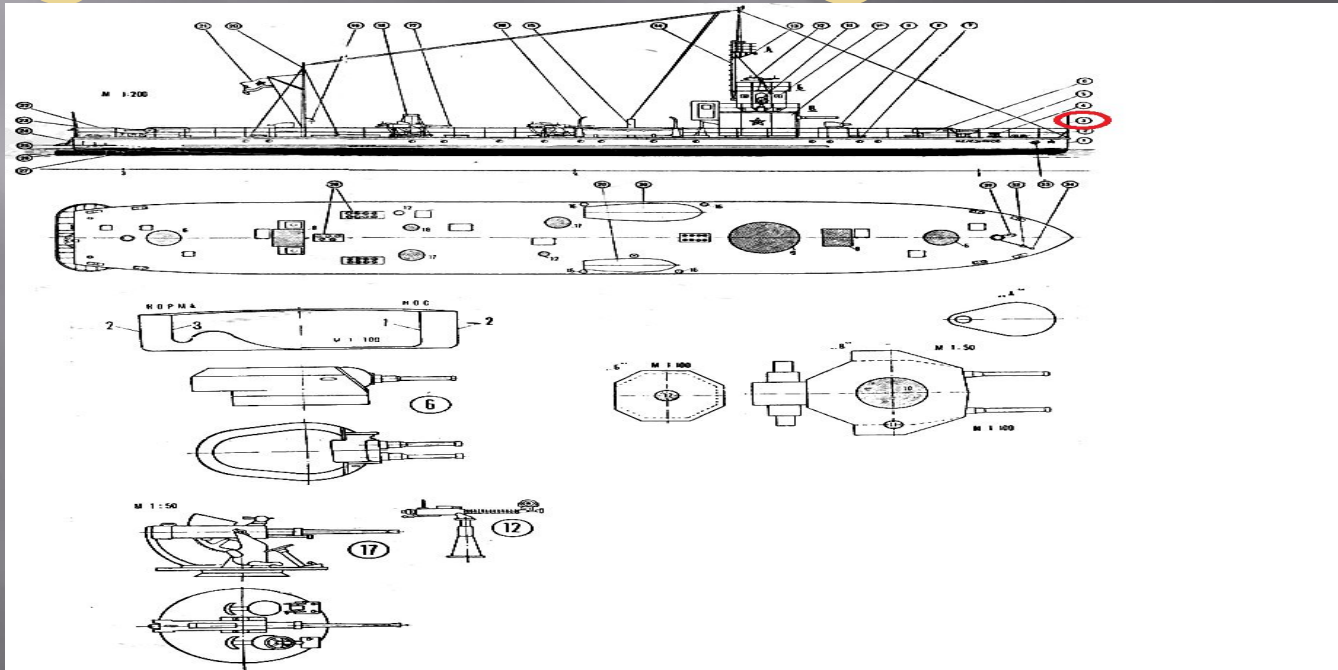
# *THE FLAG OF THE UK*

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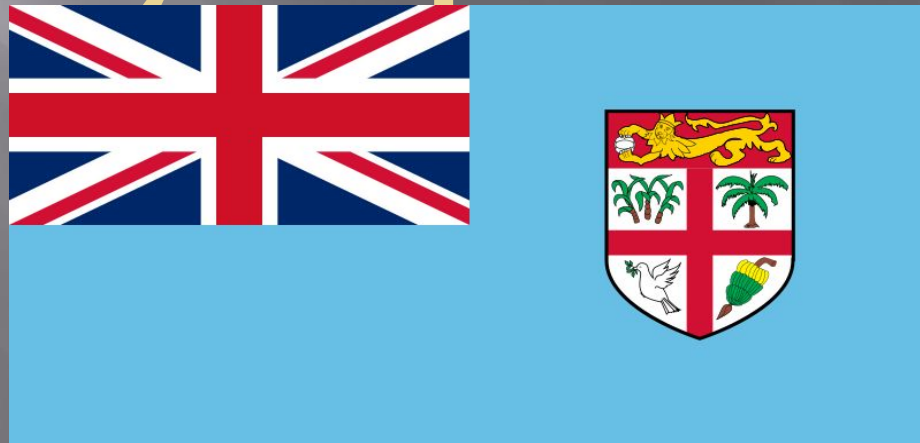
**The flag of the United Kingdom is officially called the Union flag because it embodies the emblems of three countries united under one monarch. The union flag is commonly known as the Union Jack although the exact origin of the name is unclear.**



One explanation is that it gets its name from the “jack staff” of naval vessels(a small flagpole at the front of Royal Navy vessels) from which the original Union flag was flown.



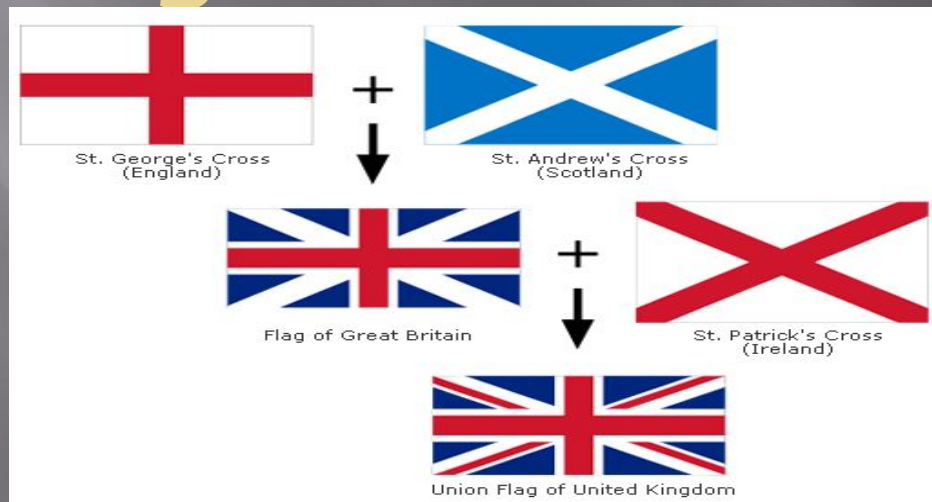
**The emblems that appear on the Union flag are the crosses of the three patron saints: Wales is not represented on the Union flag because by the time the first version of the flag appeared, Wales was already the part of England.**



**The Welsh flag , a red dragon a field of white and green , dates from the fifteenth century.**



**The Union flag underwent a gradual development. The first one was created in 1606 when England and Scotland were united under one king James 1 by combining the flags of St. George and St. Andrew.**



**In the seventeenth century, the flag underwent several changes. After the execution of Charles 1 in 1649, Oliver Cromwell, the lord protector introduced a special Commonwealth flag consisting of St. George cross and the gold harp of Ireland. When Charles 2 was restored to the throne in 1660,he reintroduced the Union flag of James 1.**

**The final version of the Union  
flag appeared in  
1801, following the union of  
Great Britain with Ireland,  
inclusion of the cross of St.  
Patrick. The cross remains on  
the flag although only the  
northern part of Ireland now  
remains part of the UK.**

