

Meaning of the Folds of the Flag-Draped Casket

Prominent in a military funeral is the flag-draped casket. The blue field of the flag is placed at the head of the casket, over the left shoulder of the deceased. The custom began during the Napoleonic Wars of the late 18th and early 19th centuries when a flag was used to cover the dead as they were taken from the battlefield on a caisson.

Here is how to understand the flag that laid upon a casket and is surrendered to so many widows, widowers, mothers and fathers:

Have you ever noticed that the honor guard pays meticulous attention to correctly folding the United States of America Flag 13 times? You probably thought it was to symbolize the original 13 colonies, but we learn something new every day!

The 1st fold of the flag is a symbol of life.

The 2nd fold is a symbol of the belief in eternal life.

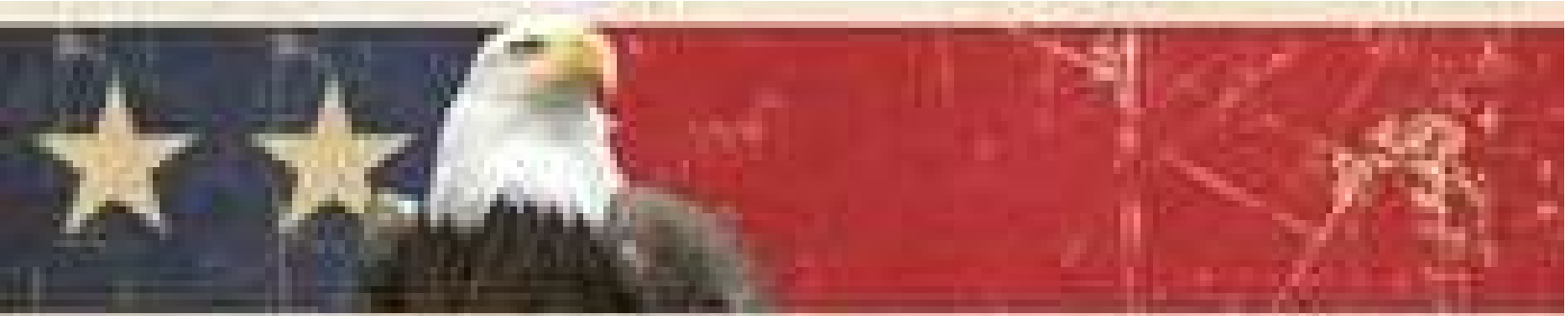
The 3rd fold is made in honor and remembrance of the veterans departing the ranks who gave a portion of their lives for the defense of the country to attain peace throughout the world.

The 4th fold represents the weaker nature, for as American citizens trusting in God, it is to Him we turn in times of peace as well as in time of war for His divine guidance.

The 5th fold is a tribute to the country, for in the words of Stephen Decatur, 'Our Country, in dealing with other countries, may she always be right; but it is still our country, right or wrong.'

The 6th fold is where people's hearts lie. It is with their heart that they pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with Liberty and Justice for all.





The 7th fold is a tribute to its Armed Forces, for it is through the Armed Forces that they protect their country and their flag against all her enemies, whether they be found within or without the boundaries of their republic.

The 8th fold is a tribute to the one who entered into the valley of the shadow of death, that we might see the light of day.

The 9th fold is a tribute to womanhood, and Mothers. For it has been through their faith, their love, loyalty, and devotion that the character of the men and women who have made this country great has been molded.

The 10th fold is a tribute to the father, for he, too, has given his sons and daughters for the defense of their country since they were first born.

The 11th fold represents the lower portion of the seal of King David and King Solomon and glorifies in the Hebrews eyes, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

The 12th fold represents an emblem of eternity and glorifies, in the Christians eyes, God the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit.

The 13th fold, or when the flag is completely folded, the stars are uppermost reminding them of their Nations motto, 'In God We Trust.'

After the flag is completely folded and tucked in, it takes on the appearance of a cocked hat, ever reminding us of the soldiers who served under General George Washington, and the Sailors and Marines who served under Captain John Paul Jones, who were followed by their comrades and shipmates in the Armed Forces of the United States, preserving for them the rights, privileges and freedoms they enjoy today.

