

## THE CORNISH FLAG

St Piran is the patron saint of tin miners and the national saint of Cornwall

Legend has it that St Piran "discovered" tin smelting when his black hearthstone which contained tin bearing ore got hot enough for the tin to melt out. The white liquid tin rose up to form a white cross on a black background, which became his emblem; the St Piran's Flag.

He shared his knowledge with the local people and thus provided them with work.

St Piran's Day is March 5<sup>th</sup> and the flag has become a symbol of Cornish Mining, Cornish culture, and Cornish heritage throughout the world.

**The Motto of the flag is "One and All".**

## THE CORNISH MOTTO & ITS STORY

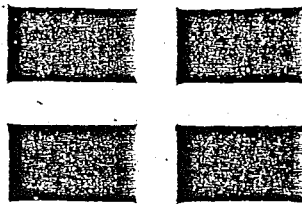
Although the origin of the Cornish Arms and motto, "One and All" have been explained in several ways, the following anecdote is said to express the truth.

During the Crusades; a Duke of Cornwall was taken prisoner by the Saraceus and held to ransom for 15 Bezants; a Bezant being the gold coin in circulation at the time in Constantinople and other eastern cities. On news of his capture reaching Cornwall, all of the inhabitants subscribed the necessary sum amongst them; the women of Cornwall giving up their jewellery, even their wedding rings to ensure that the Duke was set free.

The 15 Bezants are represented by the 15 golden balls in the shield of the Cornish Arms, whilst the motto "One and All" was selected as conveying the loyal fact that all the folk in Cornwall had subscribed to the general fund.



## KERNOW - CORNWALL



Your Cornish flag has a white cross on a black background. In 1835, Davies Gilbert edited the history of over 200 Cornish parishes, including one called St-Piran's-in-the-sands, where there is a reference to "a white cross on a black ground (that) was formally the banner of St Perran and the standard of Cornwall, probably with some allusion to the black ore and the white metal of tin". It is thought that Gilbert obtained his information from oral tradition. From Gilbert's comments, the impression is gained that he believed it to be a flag that was much older.

St Piran was a 6th Century Irish missionary whose original Irish name was Kiarah. St Piran reputedly floated from Ireland to Cornwall on a millstone. He became Patron Saint of the Cornish tin miners and, in due course, one of the three Patron Saints of Cornwall itself, with 5th March being celebrated as St Piran's Day. It is said that St Piran died aged 206 years of alcohol-abuse. The Cornish dialect word "*perinner*" (a drunkard) reflects his name!

The flag is speculatively said to have been sighted at the Battle of Agincourt in 1415 and at the battle of the Boyne. All Cornish people say the flag is the National Flag of Cornwall (*Kernow* in the Cornish language). The flag flies proudly throughout Cornwall and in those many places throughout the World where Cornish people have settled.

Another country, Brittany, which was settled by emigrants from Kernow - Cornwall - in the 6th Century, also has a black and white flag, as do Fribourg and Ceuta.