



ANNIN FLAGMAKERS

AN ILLUSTRATED HISTORY

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Annin Flagmakers: An Illustrated History

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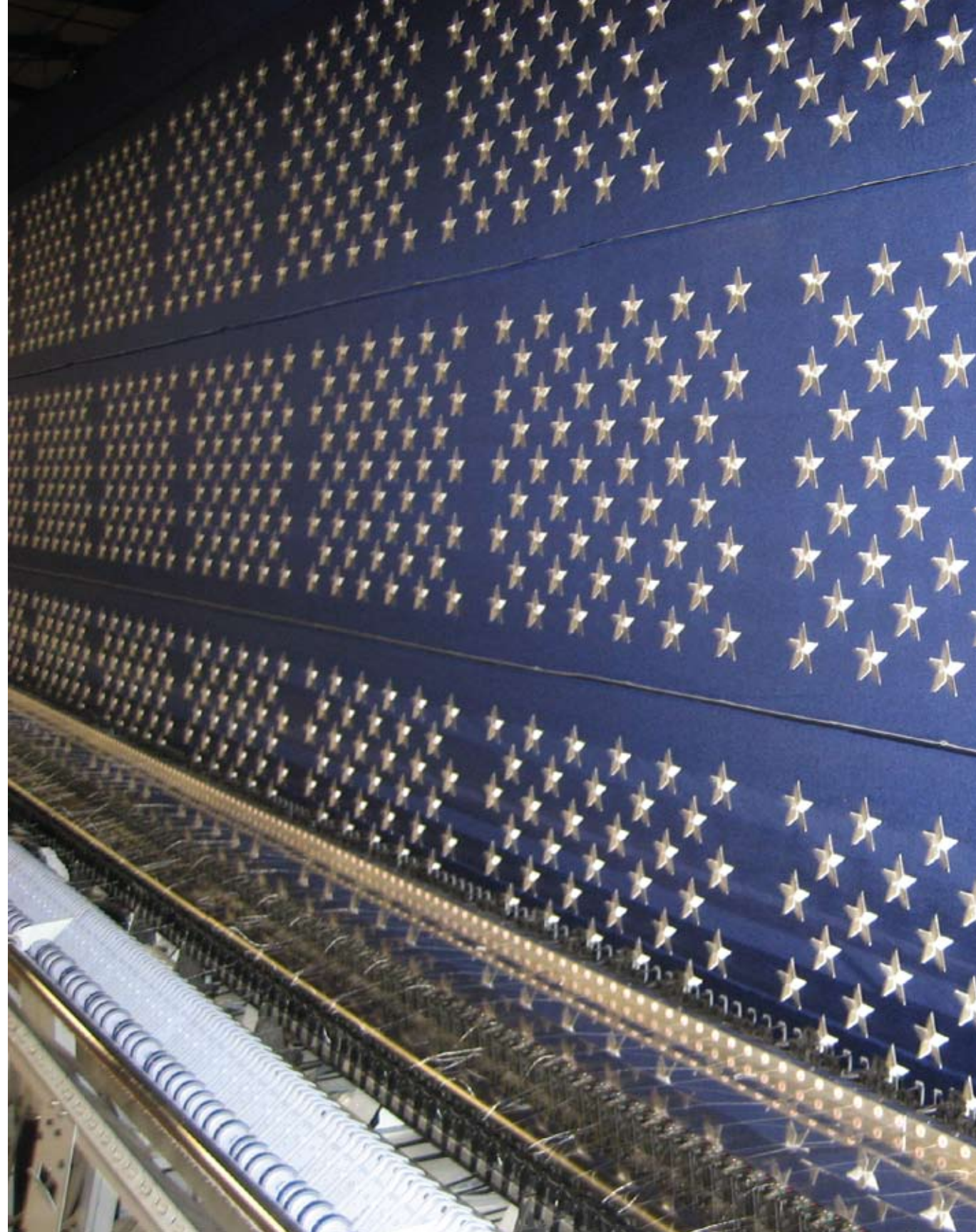
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FRONT COVER: Annin's Fulton Street building, early 1900s; Verona, 1950; South
Boston, Virginia, 2013.

PREVIOUS SPREAD: Splicing rope for code signals at Annin's original location,
99–101 Fulton Street in New York City, were (left to right): an unnamed employee,
John Annin, Charley Wilt, Louis Annin Ames, Barney Rosenberg, and Edward Annin.
The photo was probably taken shortly after Louis joined his uncles at the
company in 1896.

RIGHT: Production of U.S. flag stars using a state-of-the-art Epoca machine at
Star Fields, Annin's embroidery subsidiary in Cobbs Creek, Virginia.





ABOVE: Henry Hibo and Joe Vallone, 1985, in the annex Annin briefly rented at 159 Bloomfield Avenue, Verona.

BELOW: Annin's ad agency developed Apollo 11 art for promotional use.

RIGHT: Created by Annin's bank in the mid-1960s, this ad anticipated the company's role as a supplier to NASA.



Flagmakers to the universe: the moon flags

Even in Louis Annin Ames's day, Annin had its eye on the moon. "Company officials are serenely certain that when the time does come, it will be an Annin banner that mankind carries into outer space," reported *Columbia* magazine in July 1952. Sure enough, when Apollo 11 made its historic lunar journey in 1969, its cargo included 186 Annin Empire Brand foreign and state flags that Astronauts Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin, Neil Armstrong, and Michael Collins would later distribute as mementos.

But was the American flag in the iconic moon-walk photograph made by Annin? Officially, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration wouldn't say. "NASA didn't want another Tang incident," Randy notes, referring to a powdered beverage whose sales soared after its NASA connection was publicized. A government spokesman told Randy that NASA intended to construct the lunar banner from cut-apart flags procured from several suppliers, in part so that no single company could take credit. To fulfill this plan, "three secretaries were sent out to buy 3-by-5-foot nylon flags on their lunch hours, NASA told me," Randy says. It was believed that all three bought their flags at Sears, to which Annin was then the sole flag supplier. But that story, as well as the cut-and-piece-together story, may have been red herrings. An investigative article in *The Raven*, the journal of the North American Vexillological Association, later concluded: "It is uncertain who manufactured the flag that was deployed by the Apollo 11 crew."

There's no question NASA doctored the flag planted by Aldrin. Because the moon has no air, the flag had to be made to look like it was flying. NASA achieved this by pre-stiffening the material, adding ripples, and constructing a push-up device akin to an umbrella opener. The actual flag has long since disintegrated.

Annin shared NASA's desire not to commercialize the moon flag. Company ads and literature generally say only that the lunar mission carried Annin flags. But a retired NASA official told company executives that the photographed flag was unquestionably Annin's. This executive, William Whipkey, worked in the technical services area for NASA during the 1960s and 1970s, and personally dealt with Bill Dwiggins at Annin.



Don't be surprised if Annin is first to the moon.

An Annin-made American flag draped Lincoln's coffin on its somber last journey. In 1909, Admiral Peary planted an Annin-made flag at the North Pole. At two Jima, in that unforgettable tableau, the marines raised one.

Today the nation's oldest and largest flag-maker—Annin & Co. of Verona, New Jersey—has a big stake in new glories as well as Old Glory. Annin's yearly volume runs into millions of units, from tiny paper flags to the largest free-flying flag in the world...from ornate flagpoles to college

pennants and yachting burgees.

Not many companies make, sell, and distribute a product that symbolizes such towering ideals. So we are particularly proud to provide the banking needs of Annin & Company. . . We cannot broaden this company's essential horizons—only its framework of financial well-being.

To that end, we contribute creative banking ideas. If your organization stands in need of some, perhaps we could get together—to prepare for banner days ahead.



Unlike artist's idealized scene shown here, "moon flags" would not be free-flying, due to lack of atmosphere.