

America the Beautiful

Words by Katharine Lee Bates,
Melody by Samuel Ward

O beautiful for spacious skies,
For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties
Above the fruited plain!
America! America!
God shed his grace on thee
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea!

O beautiful for pilgrim feet
Whose stern impassioned stress
A thoroughfare of freedom beat
Across the wilderness!
America! America!
God mend thine every flaw,
Confirm thy soul in self-control,
Thy liberty in law!

O beautiful for heroes proved
In liberating strife.
Who more than self their country loved
And mercy more than life!
America! America!
May God thy gold refine
Till all success be nobleness
And every gain divine!

O beautiful for patriot dream
That sees beyond the years
Thine alabaster cities gleam
Undimmed by human tears!
America! America!
God shed his grace on thee
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea!

O beautiful for halcyon skies,
For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties
Above the enameled plain!
America! America!
God shed his grace on thee
Till souls wax fair as earth and air
And music-hearted sea!

O beautiful for pilgrims feet,
Whose stem impassioned stress
A thoroughfare for freedom beat
Across the wilderness!
America! America!
God shed his grace on thee
Till paths be wrought through
wilds of thought
By pilgrim foot and knee!

O beautiful for glory-tale
Of liberating strife
When once and twice,
for man's avail
Men lavished precious life!
America! America!
God shed his grace on thee
Till selfish gain no longer stain
The banner of the free!

O beautiful for patriot dream
That sees beyond the years
Thine alabaster cities gleam
Undimmed by human tears!
America! America!
God shed his grace on thee
Till nobler men keep once again
Thy whiter jubilee!

God Bless America

Words and music by Irving Berlin

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**God Bless America, □ Land that I love. □ Stand beside her, and
guide her □ Thru the night with a light from above. □ From the
mountains, to the prairies, □ To the oceans, white with foam
□ God bless America, My home sweet home.**

History – Star Spangled Banner

Early history

An artist's rendering of the battle at [Fort McHenry](#).

On [September 3, 1814](#), Key and John S. Skinner, an American prisoner-exchange agent, set sail from Baltimore aboard the ship [HMS *Minden*](#) flying a [flag of truce](#) on a mission approved by [U.S. President James Madison](#). Their objective was to secure the release of Dr. William Beanes, the elderly and popular town physician of [Upper Marlboro](#), a friend of Key's who had been captured in his home. Beanes was accused of aiding in the arrest of British soldiers. Key and Skinner boarded the British [flagship](#), [HMS *Tonnant*](#), on [September 7](#) and spoke with [Major General Robert Ross](#) and [Admiral Alexander Cochrane](#) over dinner, while they discussed war plans. At first, Ross and Cochrane refused to release Beanes, but relented after Key and Skinner showed them letters written by wounded British prisoners praising Beanes and other Americans for their kind treatment.

Because Key and Skinner had heard details of the plans for [the attack on Baltimore](#), they were held captive until after the battle, first aboard [HMS *Surprise*](#), and later back on HMS *Minden*. After the bombardment, certain British gunboats attempted to slip past the fort and effect a landing in a cove to the west of it, but they were turned away by fire from nearby Fort Covington, the city's last line of defense. During the rainy night, Key had witnessed the bombardment and observed that the [fort's](#) smaller "storm flag" continued to fly, but once the shelling had stopped, he would not know how the battle had turned out until dawn. By then, the storm flag had been lowered, and the larger flag had been raised.

15-star, 15-stripe "Star-Spangled Banner" flag

Key was inspired by the American victory and the sight of the large [American flag](#) flying triumphantly above the fort. This flag, with fifteen stars and fifteen

stripes, came to be known as the [Star Spangled Banner Flag](#) and is today on display in the [National Museum of American History](#), a treasure of the [Smithsonian Institution](#). It was restored in 1914 by [Amelia Fowler](#), and again in 1998 as part of an ongoing conservation program.

Aboard the ship the next day, Key wrote a poem on the back of a letter he had kept in his pocket. At twilight on 16 September, he and Skinner were released in Baltimore. He finished the poem at the Indian Queen Hotel, where he was staying, and he entitled it "Defence of Fort M^cHenry."

Key gave the poem to his brother-in-law, Judge Joseph H. Nicholson. Nicholson saw that the words fit the popular melody "[To Anacreon in Heaven](#)", an old British drinking song from the mid-1760s, composed in [London](#) by [John Stafford Smith](#). Nicholson took the poem to a printer in Baltimore, who anonymously printed [broadsheet](#) copies of it—the song's first known printing—on [17 September](#); of these, two known copies survive.

[Francis Scott Key](#)'s original manuscript copy of his Star-Spangled Banner poem. It is now on display at the Maryland Historical Society.

On [20 September](#), both the *Baltimore Patriot* and *The American* printed the song, with the note "Tune: Anacreon in Heaven". The song quickly became popular, with seventeen newspapers from [Georgia](#) to [New Hampshire](#) printing it. Soon after, Thomas Carr of the Carr Music Store in Baltimore published the words and music together under the title "The Star-Spangled Banner", although it was originally called "Defence of Fort M^cHenry." The song's popularity increased, and its first public performance took place in October, when Baltimore actor [Ferdinand Durang](#) sang it at Captain McCauley's [tavern](#).

The song gained popularity throughout the nineteenth century and bands played it during public events, such as [July 4](#) celebrations. On [27 July 1889](#), Secretary of the Navy [Benjamin F. Tracy](#) signed General Order #374, making "The Star-Spangled Banner" the official tune to be played at the raising of the flag.

In 1916, President [Woodrow Wilson](#) ordered that "The Star-Spangled Banner"

be played at military and other appropriate occasions. Although the playing of the song two years later during the [seventh-inning stretch](#) of the [1918 World Series](#) is often noted as the first instance that the Anthem was played at a [baseball](#) game, evidence shows that the "Star-Spangled Banner" was performed as early as 1897 at Opening Day ceremonies in [Philadelphia](#) and then more regularly at the [Polo Grounds](#) in [New York City](#) beginning in 1898. However, the tradition of performing the national anthem before every baseball game began in [World War II](#).^[1] Today, the anthem is performed before the beginning of all [NBA](#), [NHL](#), [MLB](#) and [NFL](#) games, as well as in a pre-race ceremonies portion of every [NASCAR](#) race.

On [3 November 1929](#), [Robert Ripley](#) drew a panel in his syndicated cartoon, *Ripley's Believe it or Not!*, saying "Believe It or Not, America has no national anthem." ^[2] In 1931, [John Philip Sousa](#) published his opinion in favor, stating that "it is the spirit of the music that inspires" as much as it is Key's "soul-stirring" words. By a law signed on [3 March 1931](#) by President [Herbert Hoover](#), "The Star-Spangled Banner" was adopted as the national anthem of the United States.

LET THERE BE PEACE ON EARTH

**Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with
me. Let there be peace on Earth, the peace that was
meant to be.**

**With God as our Father, brothers all are we, Let me
walk with my brother, in perfect harmony.**

**Let peace begin with me, let this be the moment
now. With every step I take, let this be my solemn vow,**

**To take each moment and live each moment in peace,
eternally. Let there be Peace on Earth, and let it begin
with me.**

Words and Music by Jill Jackson and Sy Miller, Circa 1955

Lyrics – Star Spangled Banner

1

O say, can you see, by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming,
Whose broad stripes and bright stars, through the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watched, were so gallantly streaming?
And the rockets' red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there.
O say, does that star spangled banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave?

2

On the shore, dimly seen thro' the mist of the deep,
Where the foe's haughty host in dread silence reposes,
What is that which the breeze, o'er the towering steep,
As it fitfully blows, half conceals, half discloses?
Now it catches the gleam of the morning's first beam,
In full glory reflected now shines in the stream:
'Tis the star-spangled banner! O long may it wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

3

And where is that band who so vauntingly swore
That the havoc of war and the battle's confusion
A home and a country should leave us no more?
Their blood has washed out their foul footsteps' pollution.
No refuge could save the hireling and slave
From the terror of flight, or the gloom of the grave:
And the star-spangled banner, in triumph doth wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

4

O thus be it ever when freemen shall stand
Between their loved homes and the war's desolation!
Blest with vict'ry and peace, may the Heav'n-rescued land
Praise the Power that hath made and preserved us a nation.

Then conquer we must, when our cause it is just,
And this be our motto: "In God is our Trust."
And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave. [5]

The Battle Hymn of the Republic - by Julia Ward Howe

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord; He is
trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored. He
hath loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible swift sword; His truth
is marching on!

[chorus] Glory! Glory! Hallelujah! Glory! Glory! Hallelujah! Glory!
Glory! Hallelujah! His truth is marching on.

I have seen Him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling camps; They
have builded Him an altar in the evening dews and damps. I can
read His righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps; His day is
marching on!

[chorus]

I have read a fiery gospel writ in burnished rows of steel; "As ye deal
with my contemners, so with you my grace shall deal; Let the Hero,
born of woman, crush the serpent with his heel, Since God is
marching on."

[chorus]

He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call retreat; He is
sifting out the hearts of men before His judgment-seat; Oh, be swift,
my soul, to answer Him! be jubilant, my feet! Our God is marching
on!

[chorus]

In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea, With a
glory in his bosom that transfigures you and me; As he died to make
men holy, let us die to make men free, While God is marching on.

THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND

words and music by Woody Guthrie

Chorus:

This land is your land, this land is my land
From California, to the New York Island
From the redwood forest, to the gulf stream waters
This land was made for you and me

As I was walking a ribbon of highway
I saw above me an endless skyway
I saw below me a golden valley
This land was made for you and me

Chorus

I've roamed and rambled and I've followed my footsteps
To the sparkling sands of her diamond deserts
And all around me a voice was sounding
This land was made for you and me

Chorus

The sun comes shining as I was strolling
The wheat fields waving and the dust clouds rolling
The fog was lifting a voice come chanting
This land was made for you and me

Chorus

As I was walkin' - I saw a sign there
And that sign said - no tress passin'
But on the other side it didn't say nothin!
Now that side was made for you and me!

Chorus

In the squares of the city - In the shadow of the steeple
Near the relief office - I see my people
And some are grumblin' and some are wonderin'
If this land's still made for you and me.

Chorus (2x)