

## HISTORY OF "THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER"

In 1814, during the War of 1812, the British attacked Washington D.C., burning the President's house as well as other buildings. They arrested Dr. William Beanes and held him captive on one of their ships in the Chesapeake Bay. On September 7, Francis Scott Key, a lawyer, and John S. Skinner met with General Robert Ross, the British commander, to try to get Dr. Beanes released. The meeting was successful and General Ross promised to release the doctor.

At the same time, the British were preparing to attack the city of Baltimore which was protected by Fort McHenry. On September 13, Fort McHenry was bombarded from the afternoon, through nightfall, and on into early the next morning. During this bombardment, it was pouring down rain which made it difficult to see; but early on September 14, the rain stopped and so did the bombardment.

Francis Scott Key, who was about eight miles away from the battle on board a ship, looked out to see the United States flag flying from Fort McHenry. Inspired that the fort had not surrendered, he began to write a poem called "The Defense of Fort McHenry." This name was later changed to "The Star-Spangled Banner." Key set the words to an English melody called "To Anacreon in Heaven" which is attributed to John Stafford Smith. The song was first performed on October 19, 1814. "The Star-Spangled Banner" became our national anthem by an Act of Congress in 1931. Although we usually sing only one verse, the original poem had four verses:

Oh, 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 rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air,  
 Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there.  
 Oh, say, does that star-spangled banner yet wave  
 O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave?

On the shore, dimly seen through the mists 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 on the stream:  
 'Tis the star-spangled banner; oh, long may it wave  
 O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

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.

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 Pow'r 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.

# THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER

For Mixed Voices, SATB

Text: Francis Scott Key (1779–1843)

Attributed to John Stafford Smith (1750–1836)

Arranged by Ryan D. Neaveill

1 2 3

S *p* Oh, — say, can you see, *cresc. ...* *mp* by the dawn's ear - ly

A *p* Oh, — say, can you see, *cresc. ...* *mp* by the dawn's ear - ly —

T *p* Oh, — say, can — you see, *cresc. ...* *mp* by the dawn's ear - ly

B *p* *cresc. ...* *mp*

keyboard for rehearsal only

4 5 6

light, *mf* What so proud - ly we *cresc. ...* *f* at the

light, *mf* What so proud - ly we *cresc. ...* *f* at the

light, *mf* What so proud - ly we *cresc. ...* *f* at the

*mf* *cresc. ...* *f*

7 8 9

twi - light's last gleam - ing? Whose broad stripes and bright

twi - light's last gleam - ing? Whose broad stripes and bright

twi - light's last gleam - ing? Whose broad stripes and — bright

10 11 12

*cresc. ... mp* stars, through the pe - ri - lous fight, *mf* O'er the

*cresc. ... mp* stars, through the pe - ri - lous — fight, *mf* O'er the

*cresc. ... mp* stars, through the pe - ri - lous fight, *mf* O'er the

13 14 15

ram - parts we watched, *cresc...* *f* were so gal - lant - ly

ram - parts we watched, *cresc...* *f* were so gal - lant - ly

ram - parts we watched, *cresc...* *f* were so gal - lant - ly

ram - parts we watched, *cresc...* *f* were so gal - lant - ly

16 17 18

stream - ing? *p* And the roc - ket's red glare, *cresc...* *mp* the bombs

stream - ing? *p* And the roc - ket's red glare, *cresc...* *mp* the bombs

stream - ing? *p* Oh

stream - ing? *p* Oh

19 20 21

burst - ing in air, *cresc. ...* *mf* Gave proof through the

burst - ing in air, *cresc. ...* *mf* Gave proof through the

*mp* Oh *mf* Oh

*mp* *mf*

22 23 24

*cresc. ...* *f* night that our flag was still there. *p* Oh,

*cresc. ...* *f* night that our flag was still — there.

*f* Oh, that our flag was still there.

*f*

25 26 27

say, does that — star - span - gled ban - ner — yet —

*cresc. . .* *rit. . .*

*mf* Oh, say, does it

*mf* Oh, say, does it —

*mp* Oh, say, does that — ban - ner rit. . . yet

28 29 30

wave — *mp* O'er the land *cresc. . .* — of the free, —

wave — *mf* O'er the land *cresc. . .* — of the

wave — *mf* O'er the land *cresc. . .* — of the

*f* O'er the

31 *ff* 32 *mf* 33

free, *ff* *mf* and the home

free, *ff* *mf* and the home

free, *ff* *p* and the

land *cresc. . .* of the *ff* free, *p*

34 35 36

*f* of the *cresc. . .* *ff* brave?

*f* of the *cresc. . .* *ff* brave?

home *f* of the *cresc. . .* *ff* brave?

*f* *cresc. . .* *ff*