

The Star-Spangled Banner (The Defense of Fort McHenry) by Francis Scott Key (1814)

O say can you see, by the dawn's early light/
What so proudly we hail'd at the twilight's last
gleaming,

Whose broad stripes and bright stars through
the perilous fight/O'er the ramparts we
watch'd were so gallantly streaming?

And the rocket's red glare, the bomb 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?

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 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!

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 wash'd out their foul
footstep's 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 lov'd home and the war's
desolation!

Blest with vict'ry and peace may the heav'n
rescued land/Praise the power that hath
made and preserv'd 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.