

## The National Anthem

### ALL FOUR STANZAS

As dawn began to brighten the eastern sky, Key and Beanes stared out at the fort, trying to see which flag flew over it. He and the physician must have asked each other over and over, "Can you see the flag?"

After it was all finished, Key wrote a four-stanza poem telling the events of the night. Called "The Defence of Fort M'Henry," it was published in newspapers and swept the nation. Someone noted that the words fit an old English tune called "To Anacreon in Heaven"—a difficult melody with an uncomfortably large vocal range. For obvious reasons, Key's work became known as "The Star-Spangled Banner," and in 1931 Congress declared it the official anthem of the United States.

#### 1st

*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 rockets' red glare, the bombs bursting in air,*

*Gave proof thro' 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?*

#### 2nd

*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 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!*

#### 3rd

During World War II, when the British were our staunchest allies, this third stanza was not sung.

*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.*

#### 4th

The fourth stanza, a pious hope for the future, should be sung more slowly than the other three and with even deeper feeling:

*Oh! 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, for our cause it is just,*

*And this be our motto—"In God is our trust."*

*And the star-spangled banner in triumph doth wave*

*O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.*