“The Star-Spangled Banner” by Francis Scott Key

Oh, 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, thro' the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watch'd, 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.
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 thro' 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:
'T is 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 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 lov'd 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 preserv'd us as a nation!
Then conquer we must, when our cause 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!

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| **1694. The Flag Goes By** |
|   |
| **By Henry Holcomb Bennett** |
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|   |
| HATS off! |  |
| Along the street there comes |  |
| A blare of bugles, a ruffle of drums, |  |
| A flash of color beneath the sky: |  |
| Hats off! | *5* |
| The flag is passing by! |  |
|   |  |
| Blue and crimson and white it shines, |  |
| Over the steel-tipped, ordered lines. |  |
| Hats off! |  |
| The colors before us fly; | *10* |
| But more than the flag is passing by. |  |
|   |  |
| Sea-fights and land-fights, grim and great, |  |
| Fought to make and to save the State: |  |
| Weary marches and sinking ships; |  |
| Cheers of victory on dying lips; | *15* |
|   |  |
| Days of plenty and years of peace; |  |
| March of a strong land’s swift increase; |  |
| Equal justice, right and law, |  |
| Stately honor and reverend awe; |  |
|   |  |
| Sign of a nation, great and strong | *20* |
| To ward her people from foreign wrong: |  |
| Pride and glory and honor,—all |  |
| Live in the colors to stand or fall. |  |
|   |  |
| Hats off! |  |
| Along the street there comes | *25* |
| A blare of bugles, a ruffle of drums; |  |
| And loyal hearts are beating high: |  |
| Hats off! |  |
| The flag is passing by! |  |
|   |  |

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WASHINGTON MONUMENT BY NIGHT
by Carl Sandburg
1

The stone goes straight.
A lean swimmer dives into night sky,
Into half-moon mist.

2

Two trees are coal black.
This is a great white ghost between.
It is cool to look at,
Strong men, strong women, come here.

3

Eight years is a long time
To be fighting all the time.

4

The republic is a dream.
Nothing happens unless first a dream.

5

The wind bit hard at Valley Forge one Christmas.
Soldiers tied rags on their feet.
Red footprints wrote on the snow . . .
. . . and stone shoots into stars here
. . . into half-moon mist tonight.

6

Tongues wrangled dark at a man.
He buttoned his overcoat and stood alone.
In a snowstorm, red hollyberries, thoughts, he stood alone.

7

Women said: He is lonely
. . . fighting . . . fighting . . . eight years . . .

8

The name of an iron man goes over the world.
It takes a long time to forget an iron man.

“A Nation’s Strength”

By Ralph Waldo Emerson

What makes a nation’s pillars high
And it’s foundations strong?
What makes it mighty to defy
The foes that round it throng?

It is not gold. Its kingdoms grand
Go down in battle shock;
Its shafts are laid on sinking sand,
Not on abiding rock.

Is it the sword? Ask the red dust
Of empires passed away;
The blood has turned their stones to rust,
Their glory to decay.

And is it pride? Ah, that bright crown
Has seemed to nations sweet;
But God has struck its luster down
In ashes at his feet.

Not gold but only men can make
A people great and strong;
Men who for truth and honor’s sake
Stand fast and suffer long.

Brave men who work while others sleep,
Who dare while others fly…
They build a nation’s pillars deep
And lift them to the sky.