

June 2012 National Patriotic Instructors Page

The War of 1812 and The story of our Star Spangled Banner National Anthem Of The United States of America. John W. Bates National Patriotic Instructor

Every day of our lives as Citizens of These United States, we are privileged to have The United States Flag flying above our heads. While I think most people in this country know what our Flag is, I would guess that most of do not know the real History behind it or what it truly represents. Our National Anthem The Star Spangled Banner, was a poem written by Francis Scott Key in Baltimore Harbor during The War of 1812.

It was not actually made The official National Anthem of The United States of America until Congressional action in 1931. This Anthem, sung before all sporting and other events in our land maybe familiar to most of us, but not its origins or meaning. The British Navy invaded Baltimore (MD) Harbor, and on September 13, 1814 had fired on Fort McHenry intending to destroy or capture it. Francis Scott Key, a Baltimore Lawyer had been aboard a ship trying to negotiate the release of an imprisoned American Civilian. As The Bombardment commenced, Key was detained on a ship and was witness to the all night firing. As Dawn broke on September 14, 1814, he saw The gigantic United States Flag still flying over Th Fort. He then began jotting down the words we are so familiar with today. In 1931, they became our National Anthem.

During The Civil War, The Flag revived the Patriotic attachment to not only itself, but also to the Words of The Star Spangled Banner. They both served as an inspiring and unifying National symbol for The Union States. This war redefined The United States and what it stood for.

Therefore, The Flag became the Primary Icon of National Identity and ideals, with memories and meaning to all in The Great Conflict. As the war went on to its conclusion in 1865, The Blood shed by Northern Soldiers to preserve it forever came to symbolize to The Union that its cause was right, its price paid (in Blood) was just and its reunification was decided and permanent. May it always be so.

God Bless The United States of America, now and for all time.