

# WHAT SO ★ PROUDLY ★ WE HAIL

*The American Soul in Story, Speech, and Song*

## The Battle Cry of Freedom

GEORGE F. ROOT

Page | 1

*“The Battle Cry of Freedom” quickly became one of the war’s most popular songs, even inspiring a Southern version. Written in 1862 by prolific patriotic composer George F. Root (1820–95), it was so highly demanded that printing presses could not produce enough copies. Ultimately, 500,000 to 700,000 copies were produced.*

*Look closely at each stanza and at the chorus. What are the reasons given for going into battle? What do you think “Freedom” means in this song? What is the relation among “the battle cry of Freedom,” “the Union forever,” and the flag? What role is played by the “call of our Brothers gone before”?*

*For a musical rendition, listen to the 97th Regimental String Band perform the song at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ccO6cT-9kk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ccO6cT-9kk). Another version can be heard at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=zhCheCryopA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zhCheCryopA).*

Yes we’ll rally round the flag, boys, we’ll rally once again  
Shouting the battle cry of Freedom,  
We will rally from the hillside, we’ll gather from the plain,  
Shouting the battle cry of Freedom.

*(Chorus)*

The Union forever, Hurrah boys, Hurrah!  
Down with the traitor, up with the star,  
While we rally round the flag, boys, rally once again,  
Shouting the battle cry of Freedom.

We are springing to the call of our Brothers gone before,  
Shouting the battle cry of Freedom,  
And we’ll fill the vacant ranks with a million freemen more  
Shouting the battle cry of Freedom.

*(Chorus)*

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We will welcome to our numbers the loyal true and brave,  
Shouting the battle cry of Freedom,  
And altho' he may be poor he shall never be a slave,  
Shouting the battle cry of Freedom.

*(Chorus)*

So we're springing to the call from the East and from the West,  
Shouting the battle cry of Freedom,  
And we'll hurl the rebel crew from the land we love the best,  
Shouting the battle cry of Freedom.

*(Final Chorus)*

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Page | 2