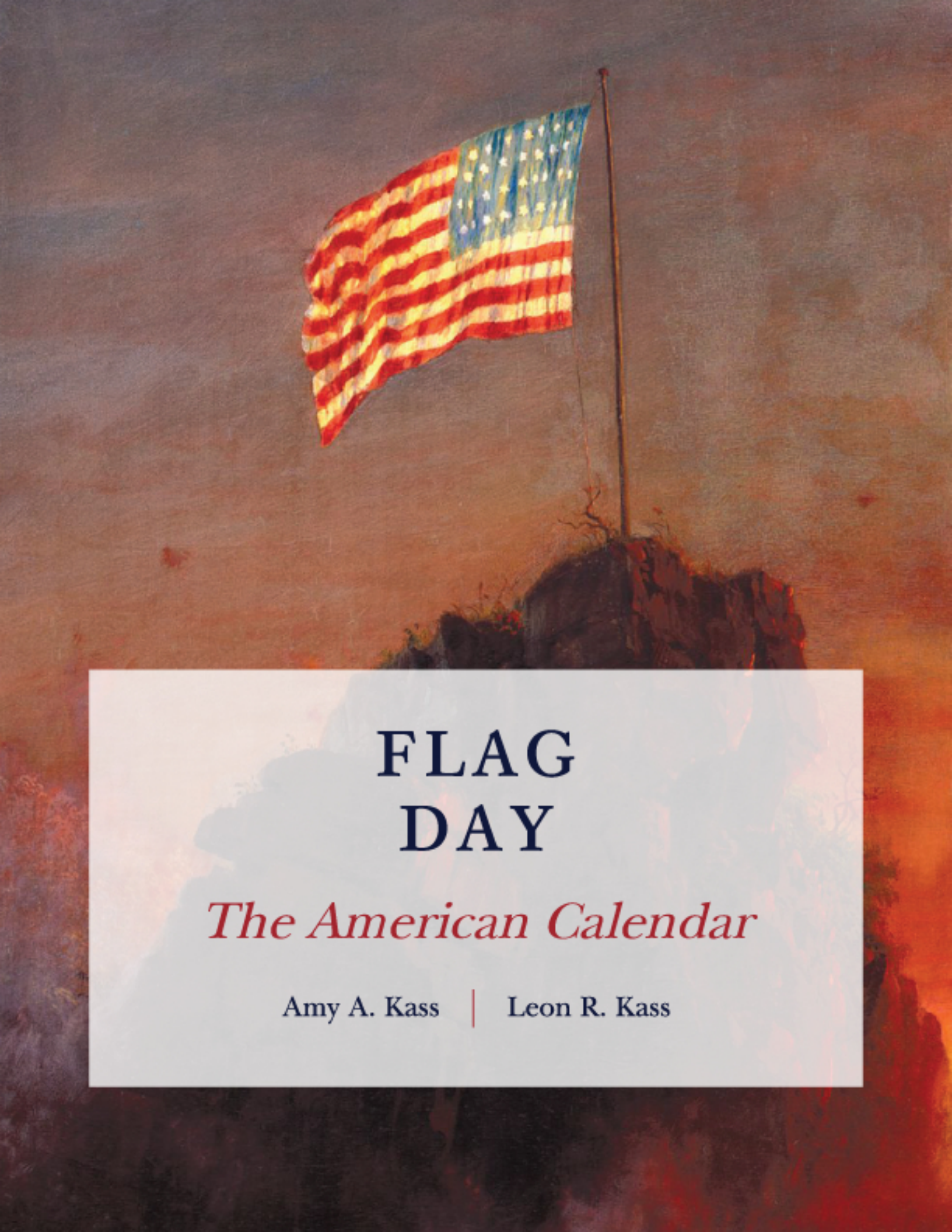

FLAG DAY

The American Calendar

Amy A. Kass | Leon R. Kass

THE MEANING OF FLAG DAY

The American Calendar

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Table of Contents

* *Suitable for students grades 5–8*

1

Flag Day:
An American Holiday

A Short History of the American Flag

"Our flag carries American ideas, American history, and American feelings," Henry Ward Beecher declared in 1861 to a group of Union soldiers. "It is not a painted rag. It is a whole national history. It is the Constitution. It is the government."[1]

It wasn't always so. Though iconic today—it is hard to imagine World War II without also picturing the raising of the flag on Iwo Jima, or to think about 9/11 without also seeing the New York firefighters hoisting the red, white, and blue above the ruins of the World Trade Center—the American flag has a long and storied history. Its story in many ways mirrors that of the nation it represents. The flag has grown and evolved with the American colonies, first as the colonies became "these United States of America," and then as the nation grew to welcome new states. To study the flag, then, is to be reminded of the history and ideals of the nation.

Birth of the American Flag

Even before they declared their independence from Great Britain in 1776, American colonists created their own flags to provide a symbol for their opposition to British policies. In the mid-1760s, the Sons of Liberty—best known as the instigators of the Boston Tea Party in 1773—rallied around white flags with the word "liberty" spelled out in large capital letters. Other flags displayed a rattlesnake, a motif inspired by Benjamin Franklin's remark in 1751 that a rattlesnake would make an appropriate gift for the colonists to send to England. The Gadsden flag (so named for its creator, Christopher Gadsden), for example, consisted of a drawing of a coiled rattler with the words "Don't Tread on Me" underneath, while other flags simply re-created the cartoon Franklin himself had penned during the French and Indian War, showing a segmented snake and the words "Join, or Die." Another popular anti-British symbol—especially in New England—was the pine tree, which comes from the 1629 seal of the Massachusetts Bay Colony and was subsequently used on the 1686 flag of New England. That banner, present at the Battle of Bunker Hill in June 1775, consists of a red background, with the Cross of St. George and a pine tree shown in the upper left-hand corner.

None of these revolutionary-era flags, however, became emblematic in all of the colonies as *the* American flag. Indeed, throughout the Revolutionary War the American colonists rallied around many different flags. The one that came closest to a national flag was the "Continental Colors" or the "Union Flag," which George Washington hoisted on January 1, 1776, at his camp outside of Boston to recognize the birth of the Continental Army. This flag featured the British Union Jack, with its Crosses of St. George and St. Andrew, in the canton (the top left-hand corner), and then had 13 alternating red and white stripes flowing horizontally across. Although historians aren't sure who designed the flag, a popular explanation of its origins is that the use of the Union Jack showed the colonists' belief—especially during the early stages of the conflict—that they were

[1] Henry Ward Beecher, Address to the 14th Brooklyn Regiment, see below.

fighting for their rights as Englishmen.[2] (The British, too, saw something in the colonists' use of the Union Jack: three days after having the flag raised, Washington recorded that the British saw it as a "signal of submission" and thought the colonists were surrendering![3]) The Union Flag raised by Washington was also used by American naval forces, and by the beginning of 1777 the Maritime Committee of the Continental Congress issued orders making this *de facto* practice standard across the Navy.

On July 4, 1776—just two days after passing the motion declaring independence—the Continental Congress appointed John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, and Thomas Jefferson to a committee to design the Great Seal of the United States. Rejecting their design, the Congress eventually went through two more committees before finally adopting a design in June 1782.

The process for adopting the American flag could not have been more different. It was not until almost a year after the war had officially begun that Congress even took up the question of a national flag—and then it only did so during a session dealing with fiscal affairs. On June 14, 1777, after debating matters such as advance pay for specific Continental Army officers and delegating command of Continental Navy ships sailing in the Delaware River, the Congress passed a short resolution:

> *Resolved*, That the flag of the thirteen United States be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white: that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation.[4]

No record exists of who introduced the resolution, or why it was introduced. We only know that the motion carried without debate or comment. The resolution did not set the size or proportions of the flag, or even what shape the constellation of stars should be. For that matter, the resolution didn't determine what shape the flag itself should be. As a result, flags of the era showed the constellation of stars in different arrangements, and flags were made with differing proportions. And though the resolution was passed fairly early in the war, other flags remained popular, and it is likely that Washington still used the Union Flag for most of the war.

Nor are the origins of the flag's design known. Many historians believe that Francis Hopkinson, a signer of the Declaration of Independence from New Jersey, holds the honor. In addition to being a lawyer and congressman, Hopkinson was also an artist, and it was his design for the Great Seal that the second committee on the subject submitted to Congress in 1780. That year Hopkinson sought compensation from Congress for his designs for the Great Seal (which Congress chose not to use), the seal for the Treasury

[2] An interesting side note is that the Union Flag looks almost identical to the flag that the East India Company had been flying in other parts of the world since the 1670s; since the flag was not used in American waters, historians think the likeness simply a coincidence.
[3] Marc Leepson, *Flag: An American Biography* (New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2005), 18.
[4] *Journals of the American Congress from 1774–1788*, Vol. 2 (Washington: Way and Gideon, 1823), 165.

Board, and the flag of the United States. The Treasury Board refused the request, noting that Hopkinson "was not the only person consulted on those exhibitions."[5]

Another account of the flag's creation, of course, involves Betsy Ross. Born in 1752 as Elizabeth Griscom, she married John Ross shortly before the Revolutionary War began, and the couple started a small upholstery shop in Philadelphia. In January 1776, John was killed while on patrol with the local militia. Betsy married twice more before independence was won—the second marriage also left her a war widow—and she continued the sewing business she and John had started. According to the story made popular by her grandson William Canby in the 1870s, Ross sewed the first version of the stars and stripes when she was visited by George Washington at her shop in June 1776. Washington, accompanied by Colonel George Ross and Pennsylvania Congressman Robert Morris, called on the seamstress with a rough sketch of the flag, which he then re-drew to incorporate her suggestions. Ross sewed the flag, and Washington and his committee returned to Congress to show them the country's new standard, which Congress readily accepted. Whether the story is true or not (most historians think it isn't), we do know that Ross was a seamstress and that she probably *did* sew American flags; she just didn't create the first one.

An Evolving Flag for a Growing Country

The resolution passed by Congress in 1777 also failed to provide guidelines for how the flag should be adapted were new states to be added to the Union. In 1795, to mark the admission of Vermont and Kentucky in 1791 and 1792, respectively, Congress passed a resolution to add two new stars and stripes to the flag. It was this 15-starred-and-striped version that flew during the War of 1812.

It was also during this war that the nation's future national anthem—an ode to the flag—was penned. On the morning of September 14, 1814, the lawyer Francis Scott Key wrote the words to "The Star-Spangled Banner" after watching the British bombardment of Fort McHenry all night long. Key, viewing the attack from a British vessel in the Chesapeake Bay, woke in the morning to find, despite the all-night attack, "that our flag was still there." Key's words, published just a few days after the battle, helped begin the process of unifying the country around the flag. As the Smithsonian Museum of American History notes, "Key transformed the official emblem into something familiar and evocative, a symbol that Americans could connect with and claim as their own. The flag . . . became a representation of the country's values and the ideals for which it stands."[6]

As the nation continued to expand, Congress, realizing the impracticalities of adding a stripe for each joining state, declared in 1818 that the flag would once again have 13 stripes—one for each of the original colonies—but that a new star would be added for

[5] *Journals of the Continental Congress, 1774–1789*, Vol. 18 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1910), 984.
[6] "Symbols of a New Nation," Smithsonian Institution, http://amhistory.si.edu/starspangledbanner/symbols-of-a-new-nation.aspx.

each new state. This star would be added to the flag on the Fourth of July holiday following the state's admission to the Union. Between 1818 and 1861, a total of 16 new states entered the Union, with the result that a new version of the flag was issued several years in a row as the western territories gained statehood.

As the country moved toward civil war, many in the South suggested that the American flag be retired when war broke out. Then-US Senator and soon-to-be President of the Confederacy Jefferson Davis made such an argument on the floor of the US Senate in early January 1861, just a few weeks after seven Southern states had issued declarations of secession from the Union:

> My pride is that that flag [the flag of the United States] shall not be set between contending brothers, and that, when it shall no longer be the common flag of the country, it shall be folded up and laid away like a vesture no longer used; that it shall be kept as a sacred memento of the past, to which each of us can make a pilgrimage, and remember the glorious days in which we were born.[7]

Davis suggestion was not taken, and in many ways the flag became *more* important to the Union as a result of the war, with many in the North viewing the flag as a symbol of their defense of the whole American Republic against the offenses of the southern states (whose stars remained on the flag).

According to Whitney Smith, the founding editor of *The Flag Bulletin*, it was in the midst of the Civil War that the cult of the flag began. During this time, he notes, "The flag was everywhere. Every school flew a flag and prior to that there is only one known instance—in 1817—of a school flying an American flag. Union soldiers even carried miniature flags called Bible flags, small enough to fit in the Bible they would take with them to the battlefield. The start of the Civil War was the beginning of the sense we have today of the American flag as an everyday object and of something that belongs to everyone."[8]

It was also during the Civil War that the flag became known as "Old Glory," a name bestowed upon it by William Driver, a Massachusetts-born resident of Nashville, Tennessee who had been given a homemade version of the flag by his mother in the 1820s. Driver displayed the flag on his whaler boat and for special holidays at his home in Nashville. During the War, he hid the flag from the Confederates, unfurling it again when the city came under the control of federal troops.

The Modern Flag

Following the Civil War, the flag's popularity continued to grow. Veterans groups organized across the country and displayed the flag during their parades. One such group,

[7] Jefferson Davis, *Speech of the Hon. Jefferson Davis, of Mississippi, Delivered in the United States Senate, on the 10th day of January, 1861, Upon the Message of the President of the United States, on the Condition of Things in South Carolina* (Baltimore: John Murphy & Co., 1861), 7.
[8] Leepson, *Flag: An American Biography*, 91–92.

the Grand Army of the Republic, led by General John A. Logan, instituted Decoration Day (later known as Memorial Day), a time set aside to decorate the graves of the fallen and to "raise above them the dear old flag they saved."[9] Even in those states that had replaced the stars and stripes with Confederate flags, Old Glory proved to be reconciliatory, as shown by Gilbert H. Bates's four-month journey through the South carrying an American flag in 1868. Though many in the North thought that the former Confederates would take umbrage, Bates (a former soldier in the Union Army) and his flag were welcomed with warm receptions wherever he went in the war-torn South. In Richmond, for example, he was greeted by celebratory cannon fire and 500 residents of the former capital of the Confederacy.

The centennial celebration in 1876 increased fervor for the flag, as cities across the country became covered in red, white, and blue to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Flag Day soon became its own cause for celebration, with the unofficial holiday achieving widespread popularity in the 1890s. (See below for a complete history of Flag Day.)

On October 21, 1892, schools across the country celebrated Columbus Day, and with it inaugurated what would become the national Pledge of Allegiance. Written by Francis Bellamy, an editor of *The Youth's Companion*, the Pledge was to be used by schools at their flag-raising ceremonies.[10] Though the Pledge was only officially recognized by Congress in 1942, it quickly became popular in American schools, with many states adopting it for daily school exercises.

It was not until 1912, though, that the flag that Americans pledged allegiance to became standardized across the nation. Indeed, according to a government study undertaken in 1907—the year Oklahoma joined the union, constituting the flag's 46th star—federal agencies were flying 66 different versions of the American flag, with varying sizes, proportions, and arrangements of stars. In 1912, President Howard Taft signed Executive Order 1637 finally prescribing the exact proportions and dimensions of flags flown by the US government.

Two years later President Woodrow Wilson issued a proclamation officially establishing June 14 as a national Flag Day. In 1923, at the behest of the American Legion, representatives from nearly 70 patriotic organizations and governmental agencies met together in Washington, DC to create the National Flag Code. The Code set guidelines for flag usage, and was eventually adopted by Congress in 1942.

The last stars were added to the flag on July 4, 1960, following the statehoods of Alaska and Hawaii in 1958 and 1959, respectively. The new 50-starred version was

[9] John A. Logan, General Orders No. 11, May 5, 1868, recorded in the *Journal of the Fiftieth National Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1916), 304. For a history of Memorial Day and selected readings, visit www.whatsoproudlywehail.org/curriculum/the-american-calendar/the-meaning-of-memorial-day-2.

[10] See the text of the Pledge of Allegiance below.

designed by an Ohio high school student, Robert G. Heft, who created the flag for a class history project. When President Dwight D. Eisenhower set up a commission to design the new flag, Heft's congressman presented the student's flag to the committee—and they, in turn, passed it along to the president. It is this flag that, as of July 4, 2007, became the longest-serving flag of the United States.

The Origins and Traditions of Flag Day

On June 14, 1777, while finalizing the draft of the Articles of Confederation, the Second Continental Congress passed a resolution "That the flag of the thirteen United States be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white: that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation."

One hundred and 39 years and 24 iterations of the flag later,[11] in 1916, President Woodrow Wilson issued a presidential proclamation that officially established June 14 as Flag Day to commemorate the 1777 resolution:

> It has . . . seemed to me fitting that I should call your attention to the approach of the anniversary of the day upon which the flag of the United States was adopted by the Congress . . . and to suggest to you that it should this year and in the years to come be given special significance as a day of renewal and reminder, a day upon which we should direct our minds with a special desire of renewal to thoughts of the ideals and principles of which we have sought to make our great Government the embodiment.[12]

In 1949, Congress formalized Wilson's wish, passing legislation that officially requests the president to issue a proclamation each year "calling on United States Government officials to display the flag of the United States on all Government buildings on Flag Day; and urging the people of the United States to observe Flag Day as the anniversary of the adoption on June 14, 1777, by the Continental Congress of the Stars and Stripes as the official flag of the United States."[13]

Although it took 139 years from the flag's creation for a national Flag Day to be proclaimed, many organizations and cities celebrated the day long before. Such celebrations rose in popularity shortly after the Civil War, and by the 1890s were common in cities across America. Indeed, it is in part due to their popularity that it is so difficult to single out one celebration as the first instance of Flag Day.

One of the earliest claims, though, comes from a celebration held in Hartford, Connecticut in the summer of 1861. Charles Dudley Warner, the editor of the *Hartford Evening Press*, urged the city's citizens to celebrate "a day of feasting and jollity. And let the great feature of it be a general display of American flags." The flag, he continued, "is our dearest symbol of nationality . . . to keep it full high advanced is our highest pride; to strike at it is to arouse all the pride of the nation to defend it."[14]

Schools across the nation also began to hold Flag Day programs in the 1860s in order to introduce immigrant children to American symbols, a practice that spread to their own communities.

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[11] See Appendix 2 for a timeline showing the addition of each state's star to the flag.
[12] Woodrow Wilson, Proclamation 1335 – Flag Day, May 30, 1916, see below.
[13] 36 USC 110, www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/36/110.
[14] Editorial, *Hartford Evening Press*, June 10, 1861, in Adam Goodheart, "Unhappy Flag Day," *New York Times*, June 13, 2011, http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/06/13/unhappy-flag-day/.

On June 14, 1877, Boston held a celebration in honor of the 100th anniversary of Congress's first flag resolution. At the celebration, held at the Old South Meeting House—where the Boston Tea Party had begun—Boston Mayor Frederick O. Prince presided over an unveiling of the original Star-Spangled Banner Francis Scott Key had seen flying over Fort McHenry; citizens then sang the words to Key's ode to the flag.

A few years later, a young school teacher in Waubeka, Wisconsin by the name of Bernard J. Cigrand began advocating for a nationwide celebration of the flag. In 1885, when he was 19 years old, Cigrand asked his students at the one-room schoolhouse he taught at to write essays on what the American flag meant to them. The following year, Cigrand himself took to the papers, writing in a Chicago newspaper about the need for Flag Day. Though he soon left teaching in order to become a dentist, Cigrand wrote many more articles and gave hundreds of speeches advocating for a holiday to honor the flag.

One of the most widely recognized claims is by Professor George Bolch, the principal of a free kindergarten for poor children in New York City. On June 14, 1889, Bolch organized ceremonies at his school to mark the anniversary of the 1777 resolution. Purportedly, this event drew attention from the New York Department of Education, prompting the state legislature to pass a law that public schools should hold similar celebrations for Lincoln's birthday, Washington's birthday, Memorial Day, and Flag Day.

Yet another tale of Flag Day's origins comes from Pennsylvania, where Elizabeth Duane Gillespie, president of the Society of Colonial Dames and direct descendant of Benjamin Franklin, tried to get the city of Philadelphia to name June 14 as Flag Day in 1893. Eventually, in 1937, Pennsylvania did establish Flag Day as a legal holiday. Today, it remains the only state to officially celebrate Flag Day as a state holiday.

Regardless of where the tradition began, by the mid-1890s Flag Day had become a popular event. Governors issued proclamations supporting the celebration of Flag Day in their jurisdictions. Veterans groups and schools were among the first to embrace the holiday as an opportunity to promote patriotism.

Flag Day remained popular well into the 20th century, especially during the national crises of World War I and II and the Cold War. In 1966, Congress even called upon the president to issue a proclamation declaring the week of Flag Day to be National Flag Week.

In 2012, President Barack Obama carried on this tradition in his Flag Day and National Flag Week proclamation, emphasizing the importance of the flag as an American emblem:

> As we reflect on our heritage, let us remember that our destiny is stitched together like those 50 stars and 13 stripes. In red, white, and blue, we see the spirit of a Nation,

the resilience of our Union, and the promise of a future forged in common purpose and dedication to the principles that have always kept America strong.[15]

[15] Barack Obama, "Flag Day and National Flag Week, 2012," June 11, 2012, www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2012/06/11/presidential-proclamation-flag-day-and-national-flag-week-2012.

Address at Flag Day Exercises

WOODROW WILSON

President Woodrow Wilson (1856–1924) gave two major speeches about Flag Day and the American flag. Although delivered only one year apart, they differed greatly in tone and content. Both are reproduced here. On June 14, 1915, in the first of these speeches, Wilson addressed a crowd—including members of his Cabinet—in front of the Treasury Department, at a ceremony paying tribute to the flag.

What, according to Wilson, is the meaning of Flag Day and the American flag? Why does he emphasize history and experience over principles and sentiments? What does he mean by saying "the real experience and life of a nation lies with the great multitude of unknown men" who are engaged "in the great struggle of daily life"? What does Wilson think is the difference between the Fourth of July and Flag Day, and what do their celebrations require? What does it mean to "wear [the flag] in your heart"? What does Wilson mean when he says, "the heart of America shall interpret the heart of the world"? Is the flag, according to Wilson, a national emblem or (also) a universal one?

I know of nothing more difficult than to render an adequate tribute to the emblem of our nation. For those of us who have shared that nation's life and felt the beat of its pulse it must be considered a matter of impossibility to express the great things which that emblem embodies. I venture to say that a great many things are said about the flag which very few people stop to analyze. For me the flag does not express a mere body of vague sentiment. The flag of the United States has not been created by rhetorical sentences in declarations of independence and in bills of rights. It has been created by the experience of a great people, and nothing is written upon it that has not been written by their life. It is the embodiment, not of a sentiment, but of a history, and no man can rightly serve under that flag who has not caught some of the meaning of that history.

Experience, ladies and gentlemen, is made by men and women. National experience is the product of those who do the living under that flag. It is their living that has created its significance. You do not create the meaning of a national life by any literary exposition of it, but by the actual daily endeavors of a great people to do the tasks of the day and live up to the ideals of honesty and righteousness and just conduct. And as we think of these things, our tribute is to those men who have created this experience. Many of them are known by name to all the world,—statesmen, soldiers, merchants, masters of industry, men of letters and of thought who have coined our hearts into action or into words. Of these men we feel that they have shown us the way. They have not been afraid to go before. They have known that they were speaking the thoughts of a great people when they led that great people along the paths of achievement. There was not a single swashbuckler among them. They were men of sober, quiet thought, the more effective because there was no bluster in it. They were men who thought along the lines of duty, not along the lines of self-aggrandizement. They were men, in short, who thought of the people whom they served and not of themselves.

But while we think of these men and do honor to them as to those who have shown us the way, let us not forget that the real experience and life of a nation lies with the great multitude of unknown men. It lies with those men whose names are never in the headlines of newspapers, those men who know the heat and pain and desperate loss of hope that sometimes comes in the great struggle of daily life; not the men who stand on the side and comment, not the men who merely try to interpret the great struggle, but the men who are engaged in the struggle. They constitute the body of the nation. This flag is the essence of their daily endeavors. This flag does not express any more than what they are and what they desire to be.

As I think of the life of this great nation it seems to me that we sometimes look to the wrong places for its sources. We look to the noisy places where men are talking in the market place; we look to where men are expressing their individual opinions; we look to where partisans are expressing passion: instead of trying to attune our ears to that voiceless mass of men who merely go about their daily tasks, try to be honorable, try to serve the people they love, try to live worthy of the great communities to which they belong. These are the breath of the nation's nostrils; these are the sinew of its might.

How can any man presume to interpret the emblem of the United States, the emblem of what we would fain be among the family of the nations, and find it incumbent upon us to be in the daily round of routine duty? This is Flag Day, but that only means that it is a day when we are to recall the things which we should do every day of our lives. There are no days of special patriotism. There are no days when we should be more patriotic than on other days. We celebrate the Fourth of July merely because the great enterprise of liberty was started on the Fourth of July in America, but the great enterprise of liberty was not begun in America. It is illustrated by the blood of thousands of martyrs who lived and died before the great experiment on this side of the water. The Fourth of July merely marks the day when we consecrated ourselves as a nation to this high thing which we pretend to serve. The benefit of a day like this is merely in turning away from the things that distract us, turning away from the things that touch us personally and absorb our interest in the hours of daily work. We remind ourselves of those things that are greater than we are, of those principles by which we believe our hearts to be elevated, of the more difficult things that we must undertake in these days of perplexity when a man's judgment is safest only when it follows the line of principle.

I am solemnized in the presence of such a day. I would not undertake to speak your thoughts. You must interpret them for me. But I do feel that back, not only of every public official, but of every man and woman of the United States, there marches that great host which has brought us to the present day; the host that has never forgotten the vision which it saw at the birth of the nation; the host which always responds to the dictates of humanity and of liberty; the host that will always constitute the strength and the great body of friends of every man who does his duty to the United States.

I am sorry that you do not wear a little flag of the Union every day instead of some days. I can only ask you, if you lose the physical emblem, to be sure that you wear it in your heart, and the heart of America shall interpret the heart of the world.

Proclamation 1335
Flag Day, 1916

WOODROW WILSON

Less than a year after his speech about the flag as an emblem that reflects back our national history and experience (see last selection), President Woodrow Wilson (1856–1924) was thinking differently about the importance of the flag. It was becoming increasingly clear that American troops would soon be drawn into the world war raging in Europe, and deep divisions of sympathy had emerged among the American people, some partial to Britain and France, others to Germany. Against this background, on May 30, 1916, President Wilson officially proclaimed June 14 "Flag Day" as a commemoration of the "Stars and Stripes," which had been adopted as the national flag on June 14, 1777.

How do Wilson's remarks about the flag here differ in tone and message from his speech of 1915? How do you explain the difference? Are the two views of the meaning of Flag Day—and of the flag—compatible with each other? What does Wilson here take to be the relation of America to other nations?

My Fellow Countrymen:

Many circumstances have recently conspired to turn our thoughts to a critical examination of the conditions of our national life, of the influences which have seemed to threaten to divide us in interest and sympathy, of forces within and forces without that seemed likely to draw us away from the happy traditions of united purpose and action of which we have been so proud, It has therefore seemed to me fitting that I should call your attention to the approach of the anniversary of the day upon which the flag of the United States was adopted by the Congress as the emblem of the Union, and to suggest to you that it should this year and in the years to come be given special significance as a day of renewal and reminder, a day upon which we should direct our minds with a special desire of renewal to thoughts of the ideals and principles of which we have sought to make our great Government the embodiment.

I therefore suggest and request that throughout the nation and if possible in every community the fourteenth day of June be observed as FLAG DAY with special patriotic exercises, at which means shall be taken to give significant expression to our thoughtful love of America, our comprehension of the great mission of liberty and justice to which we have devoted ourselves as a people, our pride in the history and our enthusiasm for the political programme of the nation, our determination to make it greater and purer with each generation, and our resolution to demonstrate to all the world its vital union in sentiment and purpose, accepting only those as true compatriots who feel as we do the compulsion of this supreme allegiance. Let us on that day rededicate ourselves to the nation, "one and inseparable" from which every thought that is not worthy of our fathers' first vows in independence, liberty, and right shall be excluded and in which we shall

stand with united hearts, for an America which no man can corrupt, no influence draw away from its ideals, no force divide against itself,—a nation signally distinguished among all the nations of mankind for its clear, individual conception alike of its duties and its privileges, its obligations and its rights.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Address on Flag Day

WOODROW WILSON

In this address on June 14, 1916, two weeks after his presidential proclamation regarding Flag Day (see last selection), President Woodrow Wilson (1856–1924) celebrated the first national Flag Day at a ceremony held near the Washington Monument. Earlier in the day, he led a "Preparedness Parade" in which some 66,000 marchers took part.

What is the purpose of this speech? What, according to the speech, is the purpose of this Flag Day? What threats does Wilson seek to address? What sentiments and deeds does he seek to mobilize against them? What does Wilson now take to be the significance of the flag? How are the ideas and ideals he here associates with the flag connected to those about which he spoke a year earlier?

Mr. Secretary, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I have not come here this afternoon with the purpose of delivering to you an elaborate address. It seems to me that the day is sufficiently eloquent already with the meaning which it should convey to us. The spectacle of the morning has been a very moving spectacle indeed—an almost unpremeditated outpouring of thousands of sober citizens to manifest their interest in the safety of the country and the sacredness of the flag which is its emblem.

I need not remind you how much sentiment has been poured out in honor of the flag of the United States. Sometimes we have been charged with being a very sentimental people, fond of expressing in general rhetorical phrases principles not sufficiently defined in action, and I dare say there have been times of happy and careless ease in this country when all that it has been necessary to do for the honor of the flag was to put our sentiments into poetic expressions, into the words that for the time being satisfied our hearts.

But this is not a day of sentiment. Sentiment is a propulsive power, but it does not propel in the way that is serviceable to the Nation, unless it have a definite purpose before it. This is not merely a day of sentiment. This is a day of purpose.

It is an eloquent symbol of the unity of our history that upon this monument which commemorates the man who did most to establish the American Union we should have hoisted those stars that have so multiplied since his time, associated with those lines of red and white, which mean all that is pure in our purpose and all that is red in our blood in the service of a Nation whose history has been full of inspiration because of his example.

But Washington was one of the least sentimental men that America has ever produced. The thing that thrills me about Washington is that he is impatient of any sentiment that has not got definite purpose in it. His letters run along the lines of action, not merely along the mere lines of sentiment, and the most inspiring times that this Nation has ever seen have been the times when sentiment had to be translated into action.

Apparently this Nation is again and again and again to be tested, and always tested in the same way. The last supreme test this nation went through was the test of the Civil War.

You know how deep that cut. You know what exigent issues of life were at issue in that struggle. You know how two great sections of this Union seemed to be moving in opposite directions, and for a long time it was questionable whether that flag represented any one united purpose in America. And you know how deep that struggle cut into the sentiments of this people and how there came a whole generation following that great struggle when men's hearts were bitter and sore and memories hurt as well as exalted, and how it seemed as if a rift had come in the hearts of the people of America.

And you know how that ended. While it seemed a tune of terror, it has turned out a proof of the validity of our hope. Where are now the divisions of sentiment which cut us asunder at the time of the Civil War? Did you not see the Blue and the Gray mingled this morning in the procession? Did not you see the sons of a subsequent generation walking together in happy comradeship? Was there any contradiction of feeling or division of sentiment evident there for a moment?

Nothing cuts so deep as a civil war, and yet all the wounds of that war have been healed not only, but the very passion of that war seems to have contributed to the strength of national feeling which now moves us as a single body politic.

And yet again the test is applied, my fellow countrymen, a new sort of division of feeling has sprung up among us. You know that we are derived in our citizenship from every nation in the world. It is not singular that sentiment should be disturbed by what is going on the other side of the water, but while sentiment may be disturbed, loyalty ought not to be.

I want to be scrupulously just, my fellow citizens, in assessing the circumstances of this day, and I am sure that you wish with me to deal out with an even hand the praise and the blame of this day of test.

I believe that the vast majority of those men whose lineage is directly derived from the nations now at war are just as loyal to the flag of the United States as any native citizen of this beloved land, but there are some men of that extraction who are not; and they, not only in past months, but at the present time, are doing their best to undermine the influence of the Government of the United States in the interest of matters which are foreign to us and which are not derived from the questions of our own politics.

There is disloyalty active in the United States, and it must be absolutely crushed. It proceeds from a minority, a very small minority, but a very active and subtle minority. It works underground, but it also shows its ugly head where we can see it; and there are those at this moment who are trying to levy a species of political blackmail, saying, "Do what we wish in the interest of foreign sentiment or we will wreak our vengeance at the polls."

That is the sort of thing against which the American Nation will turn with a might and triumph of sentiment which will teach these gentlemen once for all that loyalty to this flag is the first test of tolerance in the United States.

That is the lesson that I have come to remind you of on this day—no mere sentiment. It runs into your daily life and conversation. Are you going yourselves, individually and collectively, to see to it that no man is tolerated who does not do honor to that flag?

It is not a matter of force. It is not a matter, that is to say, of physical force. It is a matter of a greater force than that which is physical. It is a matter of spiritual force. It is to be achieved as we think, as we purpose, as we believe, and when the world finally learns that America is indivisible, then the world will learn how truly and profoundly great and powerful America is.

I realize personally, my fellow citizens, the peculiar significance of the flag of the United States at this time, because there was a day not many years ago when, although I thought I knew what the flag stood for, it had not penetrated my whole consciousness as it has now.

If you could have gone with me through the space of the last two years, and could have felt the subtle impact of intrigue and sedition and have realized with me that those to whom you have intrusted authority are trustees not only of the power, but of the very spirit and purpose of the United States, you would realize with me the solemnity with which I look upon the sublime symbol of our unity and power.

I want you to share that consciousness with me. I want you to realize that in what I am saying I am merely your spokesman, merely trying to interpret your thoughts, merely trying to put into inadequate words the purpose that is in your hearts. I regard this day as a day of rededication to all the ideals of the United States.

I took the liberty a few weeks ago to ask our fellow citizens all over the United States to gather together in celebration of this day, the anniversary of the adoption of our present flag as the emblem of the Nation. I had no legal right to declare it a holiday, I had no legal right to ask for the cessation of business, but when you read the papers tomorrow morning, I think you will see that authority was not necessary; that the people of the country were waiting for an opportunity to cease their ordinary business and gather together in united demonstration of their feeling as a Nation.

It was a very happy thought that led the committee of gentlemen who had charge of the demonstration of the forenoon to choose the 14th of June for the parade which most of us have witnessed. It is a tiresome thing, my fellow citizens, to stand for hours and see a parade go by, but I want to take you into this secret: It was not half as tiresome as the inauguration parade.

The inauguration parade is a very interesting thing, but it is painfully interesting to the man who is being inaugurated, because there then lie ahead of him the four years of responsibility whose horoscope cannot be cast by any man.

But to-day was interesting because the inauguration parade of the day of my inauguration is more than three years gone by. I have gone through deep waters with you in the meantime.

This parade was not a demonstration in honor of any man. It was an outpouring of people to demonstrate a great national sentiment. I was not the object of it. I was one citizen among millions whose heart beat in unison with it.

I felt caught up and buoyed along by the great stream of human purpose which seemed to flow there in front of me by the stand by the White House, and I shall go away from this meeting, as I came away from that parade, with all the deepest purposes of my heart renewed, and as I see the winds lovingly unfold the beautiful lines of our great flag I shall seem to see a hand pointing the way of duty no matter how hard, no matter how long, which we shall tread while we vindicate the glory and honor of the United States.

Proclamation 2614
Flag Day, 1944

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

On May 3, 1944, with the United States already deeply engaged in World War II and preparing quietly for the next month's Normandy invasion that would turn the tide of war in Europe, President Franklin D. Roosevelt (1882–1945) issued this proclamation for the observance of Flag Day on June 14, 1944. His thoughts about the day and about the flag deserve to be compared to those of President Woodrow Wilson before him (see above) and to those of Presidents Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush after him (see below).

What new meanings does Roosevelt ascribe to the American flag? How is that meaning expressed in the larger world? How can the same flag be "a flag of battles" and "a flag of peace"? Are there times when the flag, to be a flag of peace, must first be a flag of battles? When Roosevelt calls for displaying our flag with "the flags of all the United Nations which fight beside us," does he see the American flag—and the republic for which it stands—as unique or as one among many flags and nations?

For many years June 14 has been set aside as Flag Day, observed throughout the Nation as a day of earnest rededication to those high principles of humanity and civilization which constitute the foundations of the Republic.

It is not necessary to recite that the stars and stripes of our flag symbolize the patriotic and loyal unity of one hundred and thirty-five million people in a widely diversified land. Nor is it necessary to dwell on the struggles through which we have marched, under that flag, to our present great part in the world's affairs. What we are, and what we do, speak of those things far more eloquently than any words.

Ours is a flag of battles. On the ships of our Navy, in the vanguard of our soldiers and marines, it is carrying liberation and succor into stricken lands. It is carrying our message of promise and freedom into all corners of the world.

Ours is a flag of peace. Under its protection, men have found refuge from oppression. Under its promise, men have found release from hatreds and prejudice, from exploitation and persecution. It is the flag under which men and women of varied heritage, creed, and race may work and live or, if need be, fight and die together as only free men and women can.

Let us then display our flag proudly, knowing that it symbolizes the strong and constructive ideals—the democratic ideals—which we oppose to the evil of our enemies. Let us display our flag, and the flags of all the United Nations which fight beside us, to symbolize our joint brotherhood, our joint dedication, under God, to the cause of unity and the freedom of men.

Now, therefore, I, Franklin D. Roosevelt, President of the United States of America, do hereby ask that on Flag Day, June 14, 1944, the people of our Nation honor especially the members of the armed forces—men and women equally—whose unfaltering devotion to our national ideals has given the Nation's flag a new and hopeful meaning for those struggling against oppression in lands still held by our enemies.

I direct the officials of the Federal government and I request the officials of the State and local governments to have our colors displayed on all public buildings on Flag Day, and I urge the people of the United States on that day to fly the American flag from their homes, and to arrange, where feasible, for joint displays of the emblems of the freedom-loving United Nations without whose staunch collaboration we could not have hoped for victory.

Remarks at a Flag Day Ceremony

RONALD REAGAN

In the decades following World War II, world affairs were dominated by the Cold War—and the threat of nuclear war—between the United States and its Western and Asian allies and the Soviet Union and its allies. But during and after the unsuccessful war in Vietnam (which ended in 1975), American public opinion was divided about America's role in the world, and for many Americans, patriotism itself was under suspicion. It was against this background that Ronald Reagan (1911–2004) came to the presidency, determined to restore American honor abroad and patriotic sentiment at home.

The idea of an annual "Pause for the Pledge" had been conceived in 1980 at Baltimore's Star-Spangled Banner Flag House. In 1985, President Reagan signed legislation recognizing "Pause for the Pledge" as part of National Flag Day activities: at 7:00 pm (EDT) on June 14, all Americans are invited to place their hands over their hearts and face our flag in a simultaneous recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance. In these (excerpted) remarks at Fort McHenry, delivered on June 14, 1985, President Reagan marked the 100th anniversary of the first Flag Day ceremony in a program sponsored by the National Flag Day Foundation.[16]

What, according to Reagan, is the primary meaning of the flag? What does Reagan mean by "freedom"? Why does he mention the letter from the women from the labor camp in the Soviet Union? Does the content of the speech offer any insight into why he "always get[s] a chill up and down my spine when I say the Pledge of Allegiance"? What is the point of pledging allegiance to the flag? With what thoughts and feelings do you recite it?

Thank you all for that welcome, and thank you, Senator Mathias. Governor Hughes, Mayor Schaefer, and Members of the Congress who are here, I appreciate their warm welcome, and Don Schaefer, I know you're the mayor, but I understand that just the other day the Earl of Baltimore[17] returned to the city. It is great to be here in the home of the Baltimore Orioles.

I don't know about you, but I always get a chill up and down my spine when I say that Pledge of Allegiance, and I hope that everyone here will join us and Americans all across the country when we pause for that pledge tonight. You've been given the time in which we will all do that across the Nation—reaffirm our thankfulness, our love, and our loyalty to our blessed and beautiful land.

[16] *In this speech, Reagan honors Bernard J. Cigrand as the father of Flag Day. However, there are many other claims to the first official observance of Flag Day. For more on the history of Flag Day, see "The Origins and Traditions of Flag Day" above.*

[17] *Earl Sidney Weaver (1930–2013), Hall-of-Fame Baltimore Orioles manager.*

This flag that we salute today is a replica of one that flew through the night, as you know, 171 years ago during the bombardment of Fort McHenry signaling defiance to the British and hope and inspiration to Francis Scott Key. Some historians have called the War of 1812 the second war of independence, the crucial test of our young republic as it fought for its life against what was then the strongest nation on Earth. By the end of the summer of 1814, the British had already taken our capital and burned the White House as the Senator told you. Baltimore was the next target in their grand design to divide our forces and crush this newly independent nation of upstart colonies. All that stood between the British and Baltimore, all that stood between America and defeat, was this fort and its guns blocking their entry into Baltimore Harbor.

The British fleet of warships moved within 2 miles of the fort and began a bombardment that was to last for 25 hours. Through the dark hours of the night, the rockets fired and the bombs exploded and a young American patriot named Key, held captive aboard a British ship, watched anxiously for some proof, some sign, that liberty would prevail.

You can imagine his joy when the next morning, in the dawn's early light, he looked out and saw the banner still flying—a little tattered and torn and worse for wear, but still flying proudly above the ramparts. Fort McHenry and the brave men manning it had withstood the assault. Baltimore was saved. The United States, this great experiment in human freedom, as George Washington described it, would endure.

Thinking back to those times, one realizes that our democracy is so strong because it was forged in the fires of adversity. In those dark days of the war it must have been easy to give in to despair. It truly was a perilous night for our new nation. But our forefathers were motivated by something bigger than themselves. From the harsh winter of Valley Forge to the blazing night above Fort McHenry, those patriot soldiers were sustained by the ideal of human freedom.

Through the hardships and the setbacks, they kept their eyes on that ideal and that purpose, just as through the smoke of battle they kept a lookout for the flag. But with the birth of our nation, the cause of human freedom had become forever tied to that flag and its survival.

As the American Republic grew and prospered and new stars were added to the flag, the ideal of freedom grew and prospered. As our country spread across the continent, millions of the dispossessed, the persecuted, the tired, the hungry, and poor flocked to our shores. And the human energies unleashed in this land of liberty were like those never before seen in this world.

From the mountains of Kentucky to the shores of California to the Sea of Tranquility on the Moon, our pioneers carried our flag before them, a symbol of the indomitable spirit of a free people. And let us never forget that in honoring our flag, we honor the American men and women who have courageously fought and died for it over the last

200 years—patriots who set an ideal above any consideration of self and who suffered for it the greatest hardships. Our flag flies free today because of their sacrifice.

And today we mark the 100th anniversary of the first Flag Day ceremony. It was a small and modest ceremony honoring the anniversary of the creation of our flag, a "Flag Birthday," as they called it, conducted by a young schoolteacher and his students at the Stony Hill School in Wisconsin. The teacher's name was Bernard Cigrand, and through his subsequent efforts, he helped establish the national observance of Flag Day. His granddaughter, Mrs. Elroya Cigrand Brown, is with us today to help us celebrate. Congratulations, Mrs. Brown.

We have a few other distinguished relatives with us today—the great-great-great-granddaughter of Francis Scott Key, Mrs. Elizabeth Blunt Wainwright, and her two sons, Andrew and Peter. Mrs. Wainwright, it's been many years since your ancestor wrote the stirring poem that's become our national anthem. Now, with that same spirit of self-reliance, a private sector initiative called the Patriots of Fort McHenry has been formed to refurbish this historic monument. I commend the ingenuity and patriotism of the business and civic leaders that are undertaking this important event.

As we mark the 100th "Flag Birthday," the ideals for which our flag stands still challenge our nation. And today, as before, we strive to reach the full potential of freedom, to put things right, and open wide the door of the American opportunity society so that all of our citizens can walk through.

The great American experiment in freedom and democracy has really just begun. Celebrations such as this remind us of the terrible hardships our forefathers willingly endured for their beliefs. And they challenge us to match that greatness of spirit in our own time.

These anniversaries remind us that freedom is not a resting place, but a constant goal spurring us on to ever-greater achievements. America has always recognized our historic responsibility to lead the march of freedom. Since our revolution, the first democratic revolution, and the founding of our republic, America has been a hope and inspiration to the oppressed and tyrannized the world over. . . .

[F]reedom's story is still being written. The brave defense of Fort McHenry by our patriot army was one of its first chapters. But the story will continue as long as there are tyrants and dictators who would deny their people their unalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

I would interject here, right now—I have a letter which I treasure very much. It is a full letter. It is on a slip of paper only 2 1/2 inches long and just under an inch in height. But on that is penned a letter, which can only be read with a magnifying glass, and then, in my case, had to be translated, and there are 10 names affixed in signature to that tiny letter. It was smuggled out of a labor camp in the Soviet Union. It was signed by 10 women in that camp who have gone through hunger strikes in their desire for freedom.

And the reason they wrote me was to tell me that we, in the United States, represented to them the hope that one day there would be freedom throughout the world. I'm going to keep that letter for as long as I live.

You know, the story, as I say, will continue. Every time we place our hand over our heart and pledge allegiance to the flag, we'll be reminded that our most precious inheritance is freedom and that history has bestowed on our nation the unique responsibility for its protection.

When the commanding officer of Fort McHenry commissioned the original Star-Spangled Banner, the one that was later to bring so much hope to Francis Scott Key, he ordered one that would be, in his words, "so large that the British will have no difficulty in seeing it from a distance." Today the flag we so proudly hail still sends a message to any distance that the spirit of a free people is unconquerable and that our democratic nation will always remain "the land of the free and the home of the brave."

Proclamation 7573
Flag Day, 2002

GEORGE W. BUSH

On June 7, 2002, with the attacks of September 11, 2001 still fresh in memory and with the nation at war, President George W. Bush (b. 1946) issued this Flag Day proclamation. His thoughts about the day and about the flag are usefully compared with those of his predecessors (see above selections).

What, according to Bush, is the meaning of the American flag today? Have the new circumstances facing the United States since 9/11 changed the meaning or purpose of Flag Day? How do you explain the spontaneous and widespread appearance, after 9/11, of American flags—"on cars and clothing, houses and hard hats"? What does that display tell us about the meaning of the flag? Does it continue to have the same meaning for us as time passes and 9/11 becomes a more distant memory? Are we at risk of taking for granted the flag and what it stands for? In what way might honoring Flag Day help reduce such a risk?

The American flag is a beacon of hope, a symbol of enduring freedom, and an emblem of unity. Many have given their lives in its defense, and countless men and women have worked to ensure that Old Glory continues to stand for the ideals of freedom, justice, and equal opportunity for all. Our flag symbolizes the purpose and resolve of our Nation, first expressed by our Founders who triumphed against great odds to establish this country.

Today, as we face the challenges of a new era, our flag reminds us that freedom will prevail over oppression and that good will overcome evil. Following the attacks of September 11, Americans embraced a renewed sense of the meaning and purpose of our flag. The unforgettable images of our Nation's colors flying defiantly over the debris of the World Trade Center inspired our country with a healing hope, uniting our people in purpose and consoling those who had suffered great loss. At the Pentagon, an American flag was hung from the building's damaged walls, expressing our collective resolve to rebuild and move forward. And earlier this year, during the Opening Ceremonies of the Winter Olympic Games in Salt Lake City, Americans, joined by peace-loving people from around the world, paid tribute to the tattered flag that had been recovered from the ruins of the World Trade Center.

As we reflect on what our flag represents, we recall the words of President Woodrow Wilson, who said just weeks before the onset of World War I: "My dream is that, as the years go on and the world knows more and more of America, it . . . will turn to America for those moral inspirations which lie at the basis of all freedom . . . that America will

come into the full light of the day when all shall know that she puts human rights above all other rights, and that her flag is the flag, not only of America, but of humanity."[18]

The flag that inspired Francis Scott Key to write our National Anthem 188 years ago still energizes and inspires the American spirit. Since September 11, we have seen our Nation's flag appear everywhere—on cars and clothing, houses and hard hats—showing our country's commitment to always remember those who lost their lives and to remain unremitting in the pursuit of justice.

Today, in Afghanistan and around the world, brave men and women are serving under our flag, fighting to preserve freedom and win the war against terrorism. All Americans are profoundly grateful for their service and their sacrifice. We also recognize and commend the contributions of our veterans who have bravely defended our Nation's founding principles throughout our history. The image of six marines raising the flag on the top of Mount Suribachi at Iwo Jima will always remind us that the struggle for liberty is a story of courage, sacrifice, and commitment to the unshakeable belief in freedom's promise.

On Flag Day, we remember the struggles and successes for which our flag stands. And we look to the flag as an everlasting symbol of our commitment to a world of peace, a Nation of principle, and a people of unity.

To commemorate the adoption of our flag, the Congress, by joint resolution approved August 3, 1949, as amended (63 Stat. 492), designated June 14 of each year as "Flag Day" and requested that the President issue an annual proclamation calling for its observance and for the display of the Flag of the United States on all Federal Government buildings. The Congress also requested, by joint resolution approved June 9, 1966, as amended (80 Stat. 194), that the President annually issue a proclamation designating the week in which June 14 occurs as "National Flag Week" and calling upon all citizens of the United States to display the flag during that week.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim June 14, 2002, as Flag Day and the week beginning June 9, 2002, as National Flag Week. I direct the appropriate officials to display the flag on all Federal Government buildings during that week, and I urge all Americans to observe Flag Day and National Flag Week by flying the Stars and Stripes from their homes and other suitable places. I also call upon the people of the United States to observe with pride and all due ceremony those days from Flag Day through Independence Day, also set aside by the Congress (89 Stat. 211), as a time to honor America, to celebrate our heritage in public gatherings and activities, and to publicly recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

[18] *See Woodrow Wilson, "The Meaning of Liberty," July 4, 1914,* *www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=65381*.

The Meaning of Flag Day

AMY A. KASS AND LEON R. KASS

In this op-ed from June 2011, Amy A. Kass (b. 1940) and Leon R. Kass (b. 1939), educators and co-editors of What So Proudly We Hail, *connect the unusual character of the Flag Day holiday with the unusual nature of the American flag and the American republic. What, according to the authors, is unusual about Flag Day? About the flag? About the nation over which it flies? Why do the authors think that our shared ideas and principles are not sufficient to attach us to the American republic? Why do the universality of our principles and the diversity of our population make necessary and desirable our common respect for our singular and separate flag?*

Flag Day is unusual. Commemorating the birthday of the American flag, adopted in the midst of the American Revolution by the Second Continental Congress, Flag Day is not an official federal holiday. Instead, by an act of Congress passed in 1949, the president is merely "requested to issue each year a proclamation, calling on United States Government officials to display the flag of the United States on all Government buildings on Flag Day; and urging the people of the United States to observe Flag Day as the anniversary of the adoption on June 14, 1777."[19] President Obama has again honored that request, as have all his predecessors since President Truman.

Like its birthday, the American flag is unusual, both in looks and significance. Its composition symbolically reflects both the enduring idea and ideal of *E Pluribus Unum*, as well as our evolving national history. As everyone knows, the 13 stripes, alternating red and white, stand for the 13 original colonies and states; each of the 50 stars, white on a field of blue, stands for one of the current 50 states; the constellation of 50 stars standing for the United States as a whole—one out of many. As each new state was added to the Union, the number of stars increased in parallel, but the 13 stripes and the overall structure and colors have (almost always) remained the same. There have been 27 different "official" versions of the American flag, from the so-called Betsy Ross flag of 1777, to the (unique) 15-star, 15-stripe flag about which Francis Scott Key wrote his famous poem, to the current and longest-used flag, adopted on July 4, 1960, after Hawaii was admitted to the Union.

The flag first served mainly as a military ensign, maritime symbol, or mark of American territory. It began to acquire its iconic character only when it became the symbol of the Union, after the Confederate firing on Fort Sumter in April 1861. Its standing among us was further increased with the composition in 1892, by Francis Bellamy, of the Pledge of Allegiance, first recited by school children across America later that year in celebration of Columbus Day. In 1931, more than a century after it was written and only after much debate, Congress made "The Star-Spangled Banner" our national anthem—an exceptional anthem for an exceptional nation: The anthem of no other major nation, as far as we know, is about the national flag.

[19] *36 USC § 110 - Flag Day, www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/36/110.*

As with other nations, the flag is the preeminent symbol of our nation (more so than the other two symbols: the eagle and the Great Seal of the United States). It is displayed from public buildings, private homes, ships at sea, and embassies abroad, always in a manner governed by defined protocol. It is waved and saluted on ceremonial occasions, lowered to half-staff to mark the deaths of national leaders or national tragedies, and draped over the coffins of those who have fallen in the nation's defense. Most of us obey the (unenforced) law that prohibits turning the flag into an article of clothing or otherwise desecrating the flag. Flag burning, though said by the Supreme Court to be a form of protected "speech," raises the ire of most of our fellow citizens—and quite properly so. For the flag, as symbol of the nation, has a meaning and a function beyond what individual citizens make of it.

The nation over which Old Glory flies is also highly unusual—indeed, exceptional. Alone among the nations of the world, it was self-consciously founded on a set of universal principles, stated as self-evident truths in the Declaration of Independence (equality, individual rights, consent of the governed), and given operative life in the polity established by the Constitution. We Americans are the privileged heirs of a way of life that has offered the blessings of freedom and dignity to millions of people of all races, ethnicities, and religions, extolling the possibility of individual achievement as far as individual talent and effort can take it. And we remain a shining example of self-government and a beacon of hope for oppressed and miserable people all over the world. This is hardly accidental. The very universality of the American principles, applicable to and affirmable by any human being, means that anyone can become in spirit an American, even before coming to these shores. Americans may choose to live in France or China, but we can never become French or Chinese; but anyone can become fully American, simply by embracing our principles—and also by swearing allegiance to the flag and to the Republic for which it stands.

Paradoxically, it is precisely the universality of American principles and ideals—and the heterogeneity of the American people—that makes respect for the flag so necessary and desirable. The universal philosophical principles can command the assent of the mind. But they cannot by themselves attach the loyalties of the heart. For that we need symbols and songs, stories and speeches. We need holidays and rituals, shared times for remembering and appreciating. We need ordered respite from commerce and amusement—and politicking—for expressions of communal gratitude: for the privilege of living in a republic that enables us to live and work, love and play, freely and with dignity; for the blessing of living under "a grand old flag . . . the emblem of the land I love, the home of the free and the brave."

2

The Flag as Symbol

The Star-Spangled Banner

FRANCIS SCOTT KEY

Francis Scott Key (1779–1843), Washington lawyer and amateur poet, was inspired to pen the verses of "The Star-Spangled Banner" by the unlikely success of American troops resisting the British attack on Baltimore's Fort McHenry on September 13, 1814, two days after the burning of the capital. Nearly all American schoolchildren are taught the words of Key's first stanza, now our national anthem, and for the rest of their lives they hear it sung on patriotic holidays and at sporting events. Rarely, however, do we attend to the words. Many whose hearts are stirred by hearing the anthem sung probably could not tell you what it literally means or what Key intended to convey.

What is the meaning of the poem's opening question: "O! say can you see by the dawn's early light / What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming"? How does it differ from the question that concludes the first stanza: "O! say does that star-spangled banner yet wave / O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?" Why, according to the song, is the waving banner important? Why sing a song about a flag? The last stanza turns from the present war to the future. For what does it call? What relation does the song suggest between the flag and the motto "In God is our trust"? What is the connection between freedom and courage—between being "the land of the free" and being "the home of the brave"? What does it say about the United States that our national anthem is about our flag?

O! 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 thro' 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 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 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!

O! thus be it ever, when freemen shall stand
Between their loved 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 preserved 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!

Address to the Brooklyn 14th Regiment

HENRY WARD BEECHER

As noted in our "Short History of the American Flag" (above), it was the Civil War that gave the flag its iconic national status. And the appeal to the flag began early in the war. Henry Ward Beecher (1813–87), a prominent 19th-century American clergyman, social reformer, abolitionist, and brother of Harriet Beecher Stowe, made these (excerpted) remarks to the Brooklyn 14th Regiment, bound for the battlefield in 1861.

Why is the flag not just a "painted rag"? What, according to Beecher, does the flag symbolize? How, concretely, does it do so? Imagine yourself a member of the Brooklyn 14th, bound for battle in the Civil War: What is your reaction to this speech and its view of the national flag?

> "Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth."—Psalms 60:4

From the earliest periods nations seem to have gone forth to war under some banner. Sometimes it has been merely the pennon[20] of a leader, and was only a rallying signal. So, doubtless, began the habit of carrying banners, to direct men in the confusion of conflict, that the leader might gather his followers around him when he himself was liable to be lost out of their sight.

Later in the history of nations the banner acquired other uses and peculiar significance from the parties, the orders, the houses, or governments, that adopted it. At length, as consolidated governments drank up into themselves all these lesser independent authorities, banners became significant chiefly of national authority. And thus in our day every people has its peculiar flag. There is no civilized nation without its banner.

A thoughtful mind, when it sees a nation's flag, sees not the flag, but the nation itself. And whatever may be its symbols, its insignia, he reads chiefly in the flag the government, the principles, the truths, the history, that belong to the nation that sets it forth. When the French tricolor rolls out to the wind, we see France. When the new-found Italian flag is unfurled, we see resurrected Italy. When the other three-colored Hungarian flag shall be lifted to the wind, we shall see in it the long buried, but never dead, principles of Hungarian liberty. When the united crosses of St. Andrew and St. George, on a fiery ground, set forth the banner of Old England, we see not the cloth merely; there rises up before the mind the idea of that monarchy.

This nation has a banner, too; and until recently it streamed abroad men saw day-break bursting on eyes. For until lately the American flag has been a symbol of Liberty, and men rejoiced in it. Not another flag on the globe had such an errand, or went forth

[20] *A long narrow banner or streamer borne upon a lance.*

upon the sea carrying everywhere, the world around, such hope to the captive, and such glorious tidings. The stars upon it were to the pining nations like the bright morning stars of God, and the stripes upon it were beams of morning light. As at early dawn the stars shine forth even while it grows light, and then as the sun advances that light breaks into banks and streaming lines of color, the glowing red and intense white striving together, and ribbing the horizon with bars effulgent, so, on the American flag, stars and beams of many-colored light shine out together. And wherever this flag comes, and men behold it, they see in its sacred emblazonry no ramping lions and no fierce eagle; no embattled castles, or insignia of imperial authority; they see symbols of light. It is the banner of Dawn. It means *Liberty*; and the galley-slave, the poor, oppressed conscript, the trodden-down creature of foreign despotism, sees in the American flag that very promise and prediction of God: "The people which sat in darkness saw a great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up. . . ."

In 1777, within a few days of one year after the Declaration of Independence, and two years and more after the war began, upon the 14th of June, the Congress of the Colonies, or the Confederated States, assembled, and ordained this glorious National Flag which we now hold and defend, and advanced it high before God and all men as the Flag of Liberty. It was no holiday flag, gorgeously emblazoned for gaiety or vanity. It was a solemn national signal. When that banner first unrolled to the sun, it was the national symbol of all those holy truths and purposes which brought together the Colonial American Congress! . . .

Our flag means, then, all that our fathers meant in the Revolutionary War; it means all that the Declaration of Independence meant; it means all that the Constitution of our people, organizing for justice, for liberty, and for happiness, meant. Our flag carries American ideas, American history and American feelings. Beginning with the Colonies, and coming down to our time, in its sacred heraldry, in its glorious insignia, it has gathered and stored chiefly this supreme idea: *Divine right of liberty in man*. Every color means liberty; every thread means liberty; every form of star and beam or stripe of light means liberty: not lawlessness, not license; but organized, institutional liberty,—liberty through law, and laws for liberty! . . .

Accept it, then, in all its fullness of meaning. It is not a painted rag. It is a whole national history. It is the Constitution. It is the government. It is the free people that stand in the government on the Constitution. Forget not what it means; and for the sake of its ideas, be true to your country's flag.

The Song of the Banner at Day-Break

WALT WHITMAN

In 1865, Walt Whitman (1819–92), already well known for Leaves of Grass *(1855), published* Drum-Taps, *a collection of Civil War poems, several of which—including this one—served as a rallying cry for the Union cause. "The Song of the Banner at Day-Break" comprises a conversation among a Poet (most likely Whitman), a Pennant and a Banner (the Stars and Stripes), a Child, and his Father on the subject of the war and the need to defend the nation's ideals.*

What is the child's reaction to the flag, and what is his yearning? Why does the father object? What is the teaching of the banner and pennant? What does the poet learn about the meaning of the flag, and how does he learn it? With whom do you identify in this poem? What have you learned from it about the meaning of the flag and the nation over which it flies?

Poet:
O a new song, a free song,
Flapping, flapping, flapping, flapping, by sounds, by voices clearer,
By the wind's voice and that of the drum,
By the banner's voice and child's voice and sea's voice, and father's voice,
Low on the ground and high in the air,
On the ground where father and child stand,
In the upward air where their eyes turn,
Where the banner at day-break is flapping.

Words! book-words! what are you?
Words no more, for hearken and see,
My song is there in the open air—and I must sing,
With the banner and pennant a-flapping.

I'll weave the chord and twine in,
Man's desire and babe's desire—I'll twine them in, I'll put in life;
I'll put the bayonet's flashing point—I'll let bullets and slugs whizz,
I'll pour the verse with streams of blood, full of volition, full of joy;
Then loosen, launch forth, to go and compete,
With the banner and pennant a-flapping.

Banner and Pennant:
Come up here, bard, bard;
Come up here, soul, soul;
Come up here, dear little child,
To fly in the clouds and winds with me, and play with the measureless light.

Child:
Father, what is that in the sky beckoning to me with long finger?
And what does it say to me all the while?

Father:
Nothing, my babe, you see in the sky;
And nothing at all to you it says. But look you, my babe,
Look at these dazzling things in the houses, and see you the money-shops opening;
And see you the vehicles preparing to crawl along the streets with goods:
These! ah these! how valued and toil’d for, these!
How envied by all the earth!

Poet:
Fresh and rosy red, the sun is mounting high;
On floats the sea in distant blue, careering through its channels;
On floats the wind over the breast of the sea, setting in toward land;
The great steady wind from west or west-by-south,
Floating so buoyant, with milk-white foam on the waters.

But I am not the sea, nor the red sun;
I am not the wind, with girlish laughter;
Not the immense wind which strengthens—not the wind which lashes;
Not the spirit that ever lashes its own body to terror and death:
But I am that which unseen comes and sings, sings, sings,
Which babbles in brooks and scoots in showers on the land;
Which the birds know in the woods, mornings and evenings,
And the shore-sands know, and the hissing wave, and that banner and pennant,
Aloft there flapping and flapping.

Child:
O father it is alive—it is full of people—it has children!
O now it seems to me it is talking to its children!
I hear it—it talks to me—O it is wonderful!
O it stretches—it spreads and runs so fast!—O my father,
It is so broad, it covers the whole sky!

Father:
Cease, cease, my foolish babe,
What you are saying is sorrowful to me—much it displeases me;
Behold with the rest, again I say—behold not banners and pennants aloft;
But the well-prepared pavements behold—and mark the solid-wall’d houses.

Banner and Pennant:
Speak to the child, O bard, out of Manhattan;
To our children all, or north or south of Manhattan,
Where our factory-engines hum, where our miners delve the ground,

Where our hoarse Niagara rumbles, where our prairie-plows are plowing;
Speak, O bard! point this day, leaving all the rest, to us over all—and yet we know not why;
For what are we, mere strips of cloth, profiting nothing,
Only flapping in the wind?

Poet:
I hear and see not strips of cloth alone,
I hear the tramp of armies, I hear the challenging sentry;
I hear the jubilant shouts of millions of men—I hear LIBERTY!
I hear the drums beat, and the trumpets blowing;
I myself move abroad, swift-rising, flying then;
I use the wings of the land-bird, and use the wings of the sea-bird, and look down as from a height,
I do not deny the precious results of peace—I see populous cities with wealth incalculable;
I see numberless farms—I see the farmers working in their fields or barns;
I see mechanics working—I see buildings everywhere founded, going up, or finish'd;
I see trains of cars swiftly speeding along railroad tracks, drawn by the locomotives;
I see the stores, depots, of Boston, Baltimore, Charleston, New Orleans;
I see far in the West the immense area of grain—I dwell awhile, hovering;
I pass to the lumber forests of the north, and again to the southern plantation, and again to California;
Sweeping the whole, I see the countless profit, the busy gatherings, earned wages,
See the identity formed out of thirty-six spacious and haughty States, (and many more to come;)
See forts on the shores of harbors—see ships sailing in and out,
Then over all, (aye! aye!) my little and lengthen'd pennant shaped like a sword,
Runs swiftly up, indicating war and defiance—And now the halyards have rais'd it,
Side of my banner broad and blue—side of my starry banner,
Discarding peace over all the sea and land.

Banner and Pennant:
Yet louder, higher, stronger, bard! yet farther, wider cleave!
No longer let our children deem us riches and peace alone;
We can be terror and carnage also, and are so now;
Not now are we any one of these spacious and haughty States, (nor any five, nor ten;)
Nor market nor depot are we, nor money-bank in the city;
But these, and all, and the brown and spreading land, and the mines below, are ours;
And the shores of the sea are ours, and the rivers great and small,
And the fields they moisten are ours, and the crops and the fruits are ours;
Bays and channels and ships sailing in and out, are ours—and we over all,
Over the area spread below, the three millions of square miles—the capitals,
The thirty-five millions of people—O bard! in life and death supreme,
We, even we, from this day flaunt out masterful, high up above,

Not for the present alone, for a thousand years, chanting through you,
This song to the soul of one poor little child.

Child:
O my father, I like not the houses;
They will never to me be anything—nor do I like money;
But to mount up there I would like, O father dear—that banner I like;
That pennant I would be, and must be.

Father:
Child of mine, you fill me with anguish;
To be that pennant would be too fearful;
Little you know what it is this day, and henceforth forever;
It is to gain nothing, but risk and defy everything,
Forward to stand in front of wars—and O, such wars!—what have you to do with them?
With passions of demons, slaughter, premature death?

Poet:
Demons and death then I sing;
Put in all, aye all will I—sword-shaped pennant for war, and banner so broad and blue,
And a pleasure new and ecstatic, and the prattled yearning of children,
Blent with the sounds of the peaceful land, and the liquid wash of the sea;
And the icy cool of the far, far north, with rustling cedars and pines;
And the whirr of drums, and the sound of soldiers marching, and the hot sun shining south;
And the beach-waves combing over the beach on my eastern shore, and my western shore the same;
And all between those shores, and my ever running Mississippi, with bends and chutes,
And my Illinois fields, and my Kansas fields, and my fields of Missouri;
The CONTINENT—devoting the whole identity, without reserving an atom,
Pour in! whelm that which asks, which sings, with all, and the yield of all.

Banner and Pennant:
Aye all! for ever, for all!
From sea to sea, north and south, east and west,
Fusing and holding, claiming, devouring the whole;
No more with tender lip, nor musical labial sound,
But, out of the night emerging for good, our voice persuasive no more,
Croaking like crows here in the wind.

Poet:
My limbs, my veins dilate;
The blood of the world has fill’d me full—my theme is clear at last:
—Banner so broad, advancing out of the night, I sing you haughty and resolute;
I burst through where I waited long, too long, deafen’d and blinded;
My sight, my hearing and tongue, are come to me, (a little child taught me;)

I hear from above, O pennant of war, your ironical call and demand;
Insensate! insensate! (yet I at any rate chant you,) O banner!
Not houses of peace are you, nor any nor all their prosperity, (if need be, you shall again have every one of those houses to destroy them;
You thought not to destroy those valuable houses, standing fast, full of comfort, built with money;
May they stand fast, then? Not an hour, unless you, above them and all, stand fast;)
—O banner! nor money so precious are you, nor farm produce you, nor the material good nutriment,
Nor excellent stores, nor landed on wharves from the ships;
Not the superb ships, with sail-power or steam-power, fetching and carrying cargoes,
Nor machinery, vehicles, trade, nor revenues—But you, as henceforth I see you,
Running up out of the night, bringing your cluster of stars, (ever-enlarging stars;)
Divider of day-break you, cutting the air, touch'd by the sun, measuring the sky,
(Passionately seen and yearn'd for by one poor little child,
While others remain busy, or smartly talking, forever teaching thrift, thrift;)
O you up there! O pennant! where you undulate like a snake, hissing so curious,
Out of reach—an idea only—yet furiously fought for, risking bloody death—loved by me!
So loved! O you banner leading the day, with stars brought from the night!
Valueless, object of eyes, over all and demanding all—O banner and pennant!
I too leave the rest—great as it is, it is nothing—houses, machines are nothing—I see them not:
I see but you, O warlike pennant! O banner so broad, with stripes, I sing you only,
Flapping up there in the wind.

Barbara Frietchie

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

American poet John Greenleaf Whittier (1807–92) wrote this poem to commemorate the Maryland Unionist Barbara Fritchie (or Frietchie, as he spells it) (1766–1862), who supposedly waved the American flag at Confederate general Stonewall Jackson's troops as they passed by her home in Frederick, Maryland, on the way to Antietam. The veracity of the story is doubted, but Whittier, an ardent abolitionist and founding contributor to the Atlantic*, turned it into a notable poem. Fritchie's house still stands, and when Winston Churchill visited it during World War II, he recited the poem from memory.*

What moved Barbara Frietchie? What moved Stonewall Jackson? How does the crisp, vivid, and rhymed character of the verse contribute to the mood and meaning of the poem? Why does the poet honor Barbara Frietchie? What, for the poet, is the meaning of the flag?

Up from the meadows rich with corn,
Clear in the cool September morn,

The clustered spires of Frederick stand
Green-walled by the hills of Maryland.

Round about them orchards sweep,
Apple- and peach-tree fruited deep,

Fair as a garden of the Lord
To the eyes of the famished rebel horde,

On that pleasant morn of the early fall
When Lee marched over the mountain-wall,—

Over the mountains winding down,
Horse and foot, into Frederick town.

Forty flags with their silver stars,
Forty flags with their crimson bars,

Flapped in the morning wind: the sun
Of noon looked down, and saw not one.

Up rose old Barbara Frietchie then,
Bowed with her fourscore years and ten;

Bravest of all in Frederick town,

She took up the flag the men hauled down;

In her attic-window the staff she set,
To show that one heart was loyal yet.

Up the street came the rebel tread,
Stonewall Jackson riding ahead.

Under his slouched hat left and right
He glanced: the old flag met his sight.

"Halt!"—the dust-brown ranks stood fast.
"Fire!"—out blazed the rifle-blast.

It shivered the window, pane and sash;
It rent the banner with seam and gash.

Quick, as it fell, from the broken staff
Dame Barbara snatched the silken scarf;

She leaned far out on the window-sill,
And shook it forth with a royal will.

"Shoot, if you must, this old gray head,
But spare your country's flag," she said.

A shade of sadness, a blush of shame,
Over the face of the leader came;

The nobler nature within him stirred
To life at that woman's deed and word:

"Who touches a hair of yon gray head
Dies like a dog! March on!" he said.

All day long through Frederick street
Sounded the tread of marching feet:

All day long that free flag tossed
Over the heads of the rebel host.

Ever its torn folds rose and fell
On the loyal winds that loved it wall;

And through the hill-gaps sunset light
Shone over it with a warm good-night.

Barbara Frietchie’s work is o’er,
And the Rebel rides on his raids no more.

Honor to her! and let a tear
Fall, for her sake, on Stonewall’s bier.

Over Barbara Frietchie’s grave
Flag of Freedom and Union, wave!

Peace and order and beauty draw
Round thy symbol of light and law;

And ever the stars above look down
On thy stars below in Frederick town!

From *The Red Badge of Courage*

STEPHEN CRANE

In The Red Badge of Courage *(1895), American author Stephen Crane (1871–1900) tells the story of Henry Fleming, a young private in the Union Army during the Civil War. Henry had grown up "dream[ing] of battles all his life—of vague and bloody conflicts that had thrilled him with their sweep and fire"—and joined the (fictional) 304th New York Regiment to experience war firsthand. However, during his first battle, convinced that the Confederates had won the day, he fled from the field and deserted his regiment. This selection takes place near the end of the book, after Henry has returned to his regiment. The 304th has just been ordered to charge the Confederate line—an apparent suicide mission to divert a Confederate attack—and Henry must face battle once again.*

How does Henry Fleming regard the Union flag? Why does he acquire "a despairing fondness for this flag which was near him"? What role does this attachment play in Henry's conduct in the battle? More generally, what effect does the flag have on the ebb and flow of the fighting? Why the great effort to capture the enemy's flag? What is the point of carrying flags into battle? What does the flag contribute to the courage and sacrifice of the soldiers, here and elsewhere?

The youth stared at the land in front of him. Its foliages now seemed to veil powers and horrors. He was unaware of the machinery of orders that started the charge, although from the corners of his eyes he saw an officer, who looked like a boy a-horseback, come galloping, waving his hat. Suddenly he felt a straining and heaving among the men. The line fell slowly forward like a toppling wall, and, with a convulsive gasp that was intended for a cheer, the regiment began its journey. The youth was pushed and jostled for a moment before he understood the movement at all, but directly he lunged ahead and began to run.

He fixed his eye upon a distant and prominent clump of trees where he had concluded the enemy were to be met, and he ran toward it as toward a goal. He had believed throughout that it was a mere question of getting over an unpleasant matter as quickly as possible, and he ran desperately, as if pursued for a murder. His face was drawn hard and tight with the stress of his endeavor. His eyes were fixed in a lurid glare. And with his soiled and disordered dress, his red and inflamed features surmounted by the dingy rag with its spot of blood, his wildly swinging rifle and banging accouterments, he looked to be an insane soldier.

As the regiment swung from its position out into a cleared space the woods and thickets before it awakened. Yellow flames leaped toward it from many directions. The forest made a tremendous objection.

The line lurched straight for a moment. Then the right wing swung forward; it in turn was surpassed by the left. Afterward the center careered to the front until the regiment

was a wedge-shaped mass, but an instant later the opposition of the bushes, trees, and uneven places on the ground split the command and scattered it into detached clusters.

The youth, light-footed, was unconsciously in advance. His eyes still kept note of the clump of trees. From all places near it the clannish yell of the enemy could be heard. The little flames of rifles leaped from it. The song of the bullets was in the air and shells snarled among the treetops. One tumbled directly into the middle of a hurrying group and exploded in crimson fury. There was an instant's spectacle of a man, almost over it, throwing up his hands to shield his eyes.

Other men, punched by bullets, fell in grotesque agonies. The regiment left a coherent trail of bodies.

They had passed into a clearer atmosphere. There was an effect like a revelation in the new appearance of the landscape. Some men working madly at a battery were plain to them, and the opposing infantry's lines were defined by the gray walls and fringes of smoke.

It seemed to the youth that he saw everything. Each blade of the green grass was bold and clear. He thought that he was aware of every change in the thin, transparent vapor that floated idly in sheets. The brown or gray trunks of the trees showed each roughness of their surfaces. And the men of the regiment, with their starting eyes and sweating faces, running madly, or falling, as if thrown headlong, to queer, heaped-up corpses—all were comprehended. His mind took a mechanical but firm impression, so that afterward everything was pictured and explained to him, save why he himself was there.

But there was a frenzy made from this furious rush. The men, pitching forward insanely, had burst into cheerings, moblike and barbaric, but tuned in strange keys that can arouse the dullard and the stoic. It made a mad enthusiasm that, it seemed, would be incapable of checking itself before granite and brass. There was the delirium that encounters despair and death, and is heedless and blind to the odds. It is a temporary but sublime absence of selfishness. And because it was of this order was the reason, perhaps, why the youth wondered, afterward, what reasons he could have had for being there.

Presently the straining pace ate up the energies of the men. As if by agreement, the leaders began to slacken their speed. The volleys directed against them had had a seeming windlike effect. The regiment snorted and blew. Among some stolid trees it began to falter and hesitate. The men, staring intently, began to wait for some of the distant walls of smoke to move and disclose to them the scene. Since much of their strength and their breath had vanished, they returned to caution. They were become men again.

The youth had a vague belief that he had run miles, and he thought, in a way, that he was now in some new and unknown land.

The moment the regiment ceased its advance the protesting splutter of musketry became a steadied roar. Long and accurate fringes of smoke spread out. From the top of a small hill came level belchings of yellow flame that caused an inhuman whistling in the air.

The men, halted, had opportunity to see some of their comrades dropping with moans and shrieks. A few lay under foot, still or wailing. And now for an instant the men stood, their rifles slack in their hands, and watched the regiment dwindle. They appeared dazed and stupid. This spectacle seemed to paralyze them, overcome them with a fatal fascination. They stared woodenly at the sights, and, lowering their eyes, looked from face to face. It was a strange pause, and a strange silence.

Then, above the sounds of the outside commotion, arose the roar of the lieutenant. He strode suddenly forth, his infantile features black with rage.

"Come on, yeh fools!" he bellowed. "Come on! Yeh can't stay here. Yeh must come on." He said more, but much of it could not be understood.

He started rapidly forward, with his head turned toward the men. "Come on," he was shouting. The men stared with blank and yokel-like eyes at him. He was obliged to halt and retrace his steps. He stood then with his back to the enemy and delivered gigantic curses into the faces of the men. His body vibrated from the weight and force of his imprecations. And he could string oaths with the facility of a maiden who strings beads.

The friend of the youth aroused. Lurching suddenly forward and dropping to his knees, he fired an angry shot at the persistent woods. This action awakened the men. They huddled no more like sheep. They seemed suddenly to bethink themselves of their weapons, and at once commenced firing. Belabored by their officers, they began to move forward. The regiment, involved like a cart involved in mud and muddle, started unevenly with many jolts and jerks. The men stopped now every few paces to fire and load, and in this manner moved slowly on from trees to trees.

The flaming opposition in their front grew with their advance until it seemed that all forward ways were barred by the thin leaping tongues, and off to the right an ominous demonstration could sometimes be dimly discerned. The smoke lately generated was in confusing clouds that made it difficult for the regiment to proceed with intelligence. As he passed through each curling mass the youth wondered what would confront him on the farther side.

The command went painfully forward until an open space interposed between them and the lurid lines. Here, crouching and cowering behind some trees, the men clung with desperation, as if threatened by a wave. They looked wild-eyed, and as if amazed at this furious disturbance they had stirred. In the storm there was an ironical expression of their importance. The faces of the men, too, showed a lack of a certain feeling of responsibility for being there. It was as if they had been driven. It was the dominant animal failing to

remember in the supreme moments the forceful causes of various superficial qualities. The whole affair seemed incomprehensible to many of them.

As they halted thus the lieutenant again began to bellow profanely. Regardless of the vindictive threats of the bullets, he went about coaxing, berating, and bedamning. His lips, that were habitually in a soft and childlike curve, were now writhed into unholy contortions. He swore by all possible deities.

Once he grabbed the youth by the arm. "Come on, yeh lunkhead!" he roared. "Come on! We'll all git killed if we stay here. We've on'y got t' go across that lot. An' then"—the remainder of his idea disappeared in a blue haze of curses.

The youth stretched forth his arm. "Cross there?" His mouth was puckered in doubt and awe.

"Certainly. Jest 'cross th' lot! We can't stay here," screamed the lieutenant. He poked his face close to the youth and waved his bandaged hand. "Come on!" Presently he grappled with him as if for a wrestling bout. It was as if he planned to drag the youth by the ear on to the assault.

The private felt a sudden unspeakable indignation against his officer. He wrenched fiercely and shook him off.

"Come on yerself, then," he yelled. There was a bitter challenge in his voice.

They galloped together down the regimental front. The friend scrambled after them. In front of the colors the three men began to bawl: "Come on! come on!" They danced and gyrated like tortured savages.

The flag, obedient to these appeals, bended its glittering form and swept toward them. The men wavered in indecision for a moment, and then with a long, wailful cry the dilapidated regiment surged forward and began its new journey.

Over the field went the scurrying mass. It was a handful of men splattered into the faces of the enemy. Toward it instantly sprang the yellow tongues. A vast quantity of blue smoke hung before them. A mighty banging made ears valueless.

The youth ran like a madman to reach the woods before a bullet could discover him. He ducked his head low, like a football player. In his haste his eyes almost closed, and the scene was a wild blur. Pulsating saliva stood at the corners of his mouth.

Within him, as he hurled himself forward, was born a love, a despairing fondness for this flag which was near him. It was a creation of beauty and invulnerability. It was a goddess, radiant, that bended its form with an imperious gesture to him. It was a woman, red and white, hating and loving, that called him with the voice of his hopes. Because no

harm could come to it he endowed it with power. He kept near, as if it could be a saver of lives, and an imploring cry went from his mind.

In the mad scramble he was aware that the color sergeant flinched suddenly, as if struck by a bludgeon. He faltered, and then became motionless, save for his quivering knees.

He made a spring and a clutch at the pole. At the same instant his friend grabbed it from the other side. They jerked at it, stout and furious, but the color sergeant was dead, and the corpse would not relinquish its trust. For a moment there was a grim encounter. The dead man, swinging with bended back, seemed to be obstinately tugging, in ludicrous and awful ways, for the possession of the flag.

It was past in an instant of time. They wrenched the flag furiously from the dead man, and, as they turned again, the corpse swayed forward with bowed head. One arm swung high, and the curved hand fell with heavy protest on the friend's unheeding shoulder.

When the two youths turned with the flag they saw that much of the regiment had crumbled away, and the dejected remnant was coming slowly back. The men, having hurled themselves in projectile fashion, had presently expended their forces. They slowly retreated, with their faces still toward the spluttering woods, and their hot rifles still replying to the din. Several officers were giving orders, their voices keyed to screams.

"Where in hell yeh goin'?" the lieutenant was asking in a sarcastic howl. And a red-bearded officer, whose voice of triple brass could plainly be heard, was commanding: "Shoot into 'em! Shoot into 'em, Gawd damn their souls!" There was a *mêlée* of screeches, in which the men were ordered to do conflicting and impossible things.

The youth and his friend had a small scuffle over the flag. "Give it t' me!" "No, let me keep it!" Each felt satisfied with the other's possession of it, but each felt bound to declare, by an offer to carry the emblem, his willingness to further risk himself. The youth roughly pushed his friend away.

The regiment fell back to the stolid trees. There it halted for a moment to blaze at some dark forms that had begun to steal upon its track. Presently it resumed its march again, curving among the tree trunks. By the time the depleted regiment had again reached the first open space they were receiving a fast and merciless fire. There seemed to be mobs all about them.

The greater part of the men, discouraged, their spirits worn by the turmoil, acted as if stunned. They accepted the pelting of the bullets with bowed and weary heads. It was of no purpose to strive against walls. It was of no use to batter themselves against granite. And from this consciousness that they had attempted to conquer an unconquerable thing there seemed to arise a feeling that they had been betrayed. They glowered with bent

brows, but dangerously, upon some of the officers, more particularly upon the red-bearded one with the voice of triple brass.

However, the rear of the regiment was fringed with men, who continued to shoot irritably at the advancing foes. They seemed resolved to make every trouble. The youthful lieutenant was perhaps the last man in the disordered mass. His forgotten back was toward the enemy. He had been shot in the arm. It hung straight and rigid. Occasionally he would cease to remember it, and be about to emphasize an oath with a sweeping gesture. The multiplied pain caused him to swear with incredible power.

The youth went along with slipping, uncertain feet. He kept watchful eyes rearward. A scowl of mortification and rage was upon his face. He had thought of a fine revenge upon the officer who had referred to him and his fellows as mule drivers. But he saw that it could not come to pass. His dreams had collapsed when the mule drivers, dwindling rapidly, had wavered and hesitated on the little clearing, and then had recoiled. And now the retreat of the mule drivers was a march of shame to him.

A dagger-pointed gaze from without his blackened face was held toward the enemy, but his greater hatred was riveted upon the man, who, not knowing him, had called him a mule driver.

When he knew that he and his comrades had failed to do anything in successful ways that might bring the little pangs of a kind of remorse upon the officer, the youth allowed the rage of the baffled to possess him. This cold officer upon a monument, who dropped epithets unconcernedly down, would be finer as a dead man, he thought. So grievous did he think it that he could never possess the secret right to taunt truly in answer.

He had pictured red letters of curious revenge. "We *are* mule drivers, are we?" And now he was compelled to throw them away.

He presently wrapped his heart in the cloak of his pride and kept the flag erect. He harangued his fellows, pushing against their chests with his free hand. To those he knew well he made frantic appeals, beseeching them by name. Between him and the lieutenant, scolding and near to losing his mind with rage, there was felt a subtle fellowship and equality. They supported each other in all manner of hoarse, howling protests.

But the regiment was a machine run down. The two men babbled at a forceless thing. The soldiers who had heart to go slowly were continually shaken in their resolves by a knowledge that comrades were slipping with speed back to the lines. It was difficult to think of reputation when others were thinking of skins. Wounded men were left crying on this black journey.

The smoke fringes and flames blustered always. The youth, peering once through a sudden rift in a cloud, saw a brown mass of troops, interwoven and magnified until they appeared to be thousands. A fierce-hued flag flashed before his vision.

Immediately, as if the uplifting of the smoke had been prearranged, the discovered troops burst into a rasping yell, and a hundred flames jetted toward the retreating band. A rolling gray cloud again interposed as the regiment doggedly replied. The youth had to depend again upon his misused ears, which were trembling and buzzing from the *mêlée* of musketry and yells.

The way seemed eternal. In the clouded haze men became panic stricken with the thought that the regiment had lost its path, and was proceeding in a perilous direction. Once the men who headed the wild procession turned and came pushing back against their comrades, screaming that they were being fired upon from points which they had considered to be toward their own lines. At this cry a hysterical fear and dismay beset the troops. A soldier, who heretofore had been ambitious to make the regiment into a wise little band that would proceed calmly amid the huge-appearing difficulties, suddenly sank down and buried his face in his arms with an air of bowing to a doom. From another a shrill lamentation rang out filled with profane allusions to a general. Men ran hither and thither, seeking with their eyes roads of escape. With serene regularity, as if controlled by a schedule, bullets buffed into men.

The youth walked stolidly into the midst of the mob, and with his flag in his hands took a stand as if he expected an attempt to push him to the ground. He unconsciously assumed the attitude of the color bearer in the fight of the preceding day. He passed over his brow a hand that trembled. His breath did not come freely. He was choking during this small wait for the crisis.

His friend came to him. "Well, Henry, I guess this is good-by—John."

"Oh, shut up, you damned fool!" replied the youth, and he would not look at the other.

The officers labored like politicians to beat the mass into a proper circle to face the menaces. The ground was uneven and torn. The men curled into depressions and fitted themselves snugly behind whatever would frustrate a bullet.

The youth noted with vague surprise that the lieutenant was standing mutely with his legs far apart and his sword held in the manner of a cane. The youth wondered what had happened to his vocal organs that he no more cursed.

There was something curious in this little intent pause of the lieutenant. He was like a babe which, having wept its fill, raises its eyes and fixes upon a distant toy. He was engrossed in this contemplation, and the soft under lip quivered from self-whispered words.

Some lazy and ignorant smoke curled slowly. The men, hiding from the bullets, waited anxiously for it to lift and disclose the plight of the regiment.

The silent ranks were suddenly thrilled by the eager voice of the youthful lieutenant bawling out: "Here they come! Right onto us, b'Gawd!" His further words were lost in a roar of wicked thunder from the men's rifles.

The youth's eyes had instantly turned in the direction indicated by the awakened and agitated lieutenant, and he had seen the haze of treachery disclosing a body of soldiers of the enemy. They were so near that he could see their features. There was a recognition as he looked at the types of faces. Also he perceived with dim amazement that their uniforms were rather gay in effect, being light gray, accented with a brilliant-hued facing. Moreover, the clothes seemed new.

These troops had apparently been going forward with caution, their rifles held in readiness, when the youthful lieutenant had discovered them and their movement had been interrupted by the volley from the blue regiment. From the moment's glimpse, it was derived that they had been unaware of the proximity of their dark-suited foes or had mistaken the direction. Almost instantly they were shut utterly from the youth's sight by the smoke from the energetic rifles of his companions. He strained his vision to learn the accomplishment of the volley, but the smoke hung before him.

The two bodies of troops exchanged blows in the manner of a pair of boxers. The fast angry firings went back and forth. The men in blue were intent with the despair of their circumstances and they seized upon the revenge to be had at close range. Their thunder swelled loud and valiant. Their curving front bristled with flashes and the place resounded with the clangor of their ramrods. The youth ducked and dodged for a time and achieved a few unsatisfactory views of the enemy. There appeared to be many of them and they were replying swiftly. They seemed moving toward the blue regiment, step by step. He seated himself gloomily on the ground with his flag between his knees.

As he noted the vicious, wolflike temper of his comrades he had a sweet thought that if the enemy was about to swallow the regimental broom as a large prisoner, it could at least have the consolation of going down with bristles forward.

But the blows of the antagonist began to grow more weak. Fewer bullets ripped the air, and finally, when the men slackened to learn of the fight, they could see only dark, floating smoke. The regiment lay still and gazed. Presently some chance whim came to the pestering blur, and it began to coil heavily away. The men saw a ground vacant of fighters. It would have been an empty stage if it were not for a few corpses that lay thrown and twisted into fantastic shapes upon the sward.[21]

At sight of this tableau, many of the men in blue sprang from behind their covers and made an ungainly dance of joy. Their eyes burned and a hoarse cheer of elation broke from their dry lips.

It had begun to seem to them that events were trying to prove that they were impotent. These little battles had evidently endeavored to demonstrate that the men could

[21] *An expanse of short grass.*

not fight well. When on the verge of submission to these opinions, the small duel had showed them that the proportions were not impossible, and by it they had revenged themselves upon their misgivings and upon the foe.

The impetus of enthusiasm was theirs again. They gazed about them with looks of uplifted pride, feeling new trust in the grim, always confident weapons in their hands. And they were men. . . .

[The regiment returns to the fortified position of its army, where they are ridiculed by the other soldiers for turning back before the victory was complete. However, the colonel commends Henry and his friend for their valor, fortifying them for the next battle.]

The colonel came running along the back of the line. There were other officers following him. "We must charge'm!" they shouted. "We must charge'm!" they cried with resentful voices, as if anticipating a rebellion against this plan by the men.

The youth, upon hearing the shouts, began to study the distance between him and the enemy. He made vague calculations. He saw that to be firm soldiers they must go forward. It would be death to stay in the present place, and with all the circumstances to go backward would exalt too many others. Their hope was to push the galling foes away from the fence.

He expected that his companions, weary and stiffened, would have to be driven to this assault, but as he turned toward them he perceived with a certain surprise that they were giving quick and unqualified expressions of assent. There was an ominous, clanging overture to the charge when the shafts of the bayonets rattled upon the rifle barrels. At the yelled words of command the soldiers sprang forward in eager leaps. There was new and unexpected force in the movement of the regiment. A knowledge of its faded and jaded condition made the charge appear like a paroxysm, a display of the strength that comes before a final feebleness. The men scampered in insane fever of haste, racing as if to achieve a sudden success before an exhilarating fluid should leave them. It was a blind and despairing rush by the collection of men in dusty and tattered blue, over a green sward and under a sapphire sky, toward a fence, dimly outlined in smoke, from behind which sputtered the fierce rifles of enemies.

The youth kept the bright colors to the front. He was waving his free arm in furious circles, the while shrieking mad calls and appeals, urging on those that did not need to be urged, for it seemed that the mob of blue men hurling themselves on the dangerous group of rifles were again grown suddenly wild with an enthusiasm of unselfishness. From the many firings starting toward them, it looked as if they would merely succeed in making a great sprinkling of corpses on the grass between their former position and the fence. But they were in a state of frenzy, perhaps because of forgotten vanities, and it made an exhibition of sublime recklessness. There was no obvious questioning, nor figurings, nor diagrams. There was, apparently, no considered loopholes. It appeared that the swift wings of their desires would have shattered against the iron gates of the impossible.

He himself felt the daring spirit of a savage religion-mad. He was capable of profound sacrifices, a tremendous death. He had no time for dissections, but he knew that he thought of the bullets only as things that could prevent him from reaching the place of his endeavor. There were subtle flashings of joy within him that thus should be his mind.

He strained all his strength. His eyesight was shaken and dazzled by the tension of thought and muscle. He did not see anything excepting the mist of smoke gashed by the little knives of fire, but he knew that in it lay the aged fence of a vanished farmer protecting the snuggled bodies of the gray men.

As he ran a thought of the shock of contact gleamed in his mind. He expected a great concussion when the two bodies of troops crashed together. This became a part of his wild battle madness. He could feel the onward swing of the regiment about him and he conceived of a thunderous, crushing blow that would prostrate the resistance and spread consternation and amazement for miles. The flying regiment was going to have a catapultian effect. This dream made him run faster among his comrades, who were giving vent to hoarse and frantic cheers.

But presently he could see that many of the men in gray did not intend to abide the blow. The smoke, rolling, disclosed men who ran, their faces still turned. These grew to a crowd, who retired stubbornly. Individuals wheeled frequently to send a bullet at the blue wave.

But at one part of the line there was a grim and obdurate group that made no movement. They were settled firmly down behind posts and rails. A flag, ruffled and fierce, waved over them and their rifles dinned fiercely.

The blue whirl of men got very near, until it seemed that in truth there would be a close and frightful scuffle. There was an expressed disdain in the opposition of the little group, that changed the meaning of the cheers of the men in blue. They became yells of wrath, directed, personal. The cries of the two parties were now in sound an interchange of scathing insults.

They in blue showed their teeth; their eyes shone all white. They launched themselves as at the throats of those who stood resisting. The space between dwindled to an insignificant distance.

The youth had centered the gaze of his soul upon that other flag. Its possession would be high pride. It would express bloody minglings, near blows. He had a gigantic hatred for those who made great difficulties and complications. They caused it to be as a craved treasure of mythology, hung amid tasks and contrivances of danger.

He plunged like a mad horse at it. He was resolved it should not escape if wild blows and darings of blows could seize it. His own emblem, quivering and aflare, was winging toward the other. It seemed there would shortly be an encounter of strange beaks and claws, as of eagles.

The swirling body of blue men came to a sudden halt at close and disastrous range and roared a swift volley. The group in gray was split and broken by this fire, but its riddled body still fought. The men in blue yelled again and rushed in upon it.

The youth, in his leapings, saw, as through a mist, a picture of four or five men stretched upon the ground or writhing upon their knees with bowed heads as if they had been stricken by bolts from the sky. Tottering among them was the rival color bearer, whom the youth saw had been bitten vitally by the bullets of the last formidable volley. He perceived this man fighting a last struggle, the struggle of one whose legs are grasped by demons. It was a ghastly battle. Over his face was the bleach of death, but set upon it was the dark and hard lines of desperate purpose. With this terrible grin of resolution he hugged his precious flag to him and was stumbling and staggering in his design to go the way that led to safety for it.

But his wounds always made it seem that his feet were retarded, held, and he fought a grim fight, as with invisible ghouls fastened greedily upon his limbs. Those in advance of the scampering blue men, howling cheers, leaped at the fence. The despair of the lost was in his eyes as he glanced back at them.

The youth's friend went over the obstruction in a tumbling heap and sprang at the flag as a panther at prey. He pulled at it and, wrenching it free, swung up its red brilliancy with a mad cry of exultation even as the color bearer, gasping, lurched over in a final throe and, stiffening convulsively, turned his dead face to the ground. There was much blood upon the grass blades.

At the place of success there began more wild clamorings of cheers. The men gesticulated and bellowed in an ecstasy. When they spoke it was as if they considered their listener to be a mile away. What hats and caps were left to them they often slung high in the air.

At one part of the line four men had been swooped upon, and they now sat as prisoners. Some blue men were about them in an eager and curious circle. The soldiers had trapped strange birds, and there was an examination. A flurry of fast questions was in the air.

One of the prisoners was nursing a superficial wound in the foot. He cuddled it, baby-wise, but he looked up from it often to curse with an astonishing utter abandon straight at the noses of his captors. He consigned them to red regions; he called upon the pestilential wrath of strange gods. And with it all he was singularly free from recognition of the finer points of the conduct of prisoners of war. It was as if a clumsy clod had trod upon his toe and he conceived it to be his privilege, his duty, to use deep, resentful oaths.

Another, who was a boy in years, took his plight with great calmness and apparent good nature. He conversed with the men in blue, studying their faces with his bright and keen eyes. They spoke of battles and conditions. There was an acute interest in all their

faces during this exchange of view points. It seemed a great satisfaction to hear voices from where all had been darkness and speculation.

The third captive sat with a morose countenance. He preserved a stoical and cold attitude. To all advances he made one reply without variation, "Ah, go t' hell!"

The last of the four was always silent and, for the most part, kept his face turned in unmolested directions. From the views the youth received he seemed to be in a state of absolute dejection. Shame was upon him, and with it profound regret that he was, perhaps, no more to be counted in the ranks of his fellows. The youth could detect no expression that would allow him to believe that the other was giving a thought to his narrowed future, the pictured dungeons, perhaps, and starvations and brutalities, liable to the imagination. All to be seen was shame for captivity and regret for the right to antagonize.

After the men had celebrated sufficiently they settled down behind the old rail fence, on the opposite side to the one from which their foes had been driven. A few shot perfunctorily at distant marks.

There was some long grass. The youth nestled in it and rested, making a convenient rail support the flag. His friend, jubilant and glorified, holding his treasure with vanity, came to him there. They sat side by side and congratulated each other.

The Color Guard

CHARLES W. HARWOOD

Little is known about the life of Massachusetts-born Charles W. Harwood (1871–95), but his children's poem about the flag was once widely anthologized. It appeared in 1894 in The Youth's Companion, *a Boston-published magazine for children that existed for over 100 years (1827–1929). In 1892, the magazine published the first copy of the Pledge of Allegiance, written by staff member Francis Bellamy (see below). Harwood's poem especially addresses children living in the post-Civil War period.*

What is a "color guard," and what is its function? Who, finally, must guard the colors, and why does it matter? What does Harwood mean by saying of the flag, "Children, it is yours *to love!"? What does it mean to regard it "as the gift from God above"? What responsibility do you think children, then and now, have toward the flag? How might teachers nurture that responsibility?*

There were waving hands and banners, as the crowded car rolled by,
There were shouts from merry children ringing to the summer sky;
Then a strain of music rose and swelled and pealed along the street,
As their gay, tumultuous clamor melted in a chorus sweet:

O 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!

Ah, the starry flag is glorious, and the children love it, too;
And the land is safe and happy where the children's hearts are true.
How their youthful ardor thrilled me, as the revelation came
That the Guard is ever changing, but the flag remains the same.

We were born too late for glory, but we still in memory keep
Stirring echoes from the battlefields where warrior fathers sleep,
We have held the flag as ours, but, lo! the years are passing by,
And a newer generation waves the Stars and Stripes on high.

Better thus! for now the rancors of the strife no more appal;
And the children know no faction, and the flag belongs to all.
Be it so! We yield the prestige, for the New Guard comes apace,
With the strength of youthful millions, loyal purpose in its face.

Flag of peace or flag of battle! Children, it is *yours* to love!
Will you honor and defend it, as the gift of God above?
Ah! the children's hearts are loyal! From a myriad array

North and South there comes the answer, as it came that summer day:

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.

The Namesake

WILLA CATHER

This story (1907) by Willa Cather (1873–1947) is about how an American expatriate discovers the meaning of his home country. Lyon Hartwell, the son of an American artist, born abroad and now himself a sculptor living in Paris, habitually entertains his fellow Americans, all the while working on a memorial statue of his late uncle, his namesake, who was killed in the Civil War while still in his teens.

Cather's story describes a rare episode of self-revelation, as Hartwell tells his compatriots of his epiphany about American identity. How does Hartwell's insight come? What does he discover? Crucial to his experience is his encounter with his namesake's copy of Virgil's Aeneid, *inside of which his uncle drew the federal flag and inscribed the opening two lines of "The Star-Spangled Banner." How and why is Hartwell moved by this encounter? What, for Hartwell, is the relation of the flag to the republic for which it stands? What is the relation of the flag to our—and to your—American identity?*

Seven of us, students, sat one evening in Hartwell's studio on the Boulevard St. Michel. We were all fellow-countrymen; one from New Hampshire, one from Colorado, another from Nevada, several from the farm lands of the Middle West, and I myself from California. Lyon Hartwell, though born abroad, was simply, as every one knew, "from America." He seemed, almost more than any other one living man, to mean all of it—from ocean to ocean. When he was in Paris, his studio was always open to the seven of us who were there that evening, and we intruded upon his leisure as often as we thought permissible.

Although we were within the terms of the easiest of all intimacies, and although the great sculptor, even when he was more than usually silent, was at all times the most gravely cordial of hosts, yet, on that long remembered evening, as the sunlight died on the burnished brown of the horse-chestnuts below the windows, a perceptible dullness yawned through our conversation.

We were, indeed, somewhat low in spirit, for one of our number, Charley Bentley, was leaving us indefinitely, in response to an imperative summons from home. To-morrow his studio, just across the hall from Hartwell's, was to pass into other hands, and Bentley's luggage was even now piled in discouraged resignation before his door. The various bales and boxes seemed literally to weigh upon us as we sat in his neighbor's hospitable rooms, drearily putting in the time until he should leave us to catch the ten o'clock express for Dieppe.

The day we had got through very comfortably, for Bentley made it the occasion of a somewhat pretentious luncheon at Maxim's. There had been twelve of us at table, and the two young Poles were thirsty, the Gascon so fabulously entertaining, that it was near upon five o'clock when we put down our liqueur glasses for the last time, and the red,

perspiring waiter, having pocketed the reward of his arduous and protracted services, bowed us affably to the door, flourishing his napkin and brushing back the streaks of wet, black hair from his rosy forehead. Our guests having betaken themselves belated to their respective engagements, the rest of us returned with Bentley—only to be confronted by the depressing array before his door. A glance about his denuded rooms had sufficed to chill the glow of the afternoon, and we fled across the hall in a body and begged Lyon Hartwell to take us in.

Bentley had said very little about it, but we all knew what it meant to him to be called home. Each of us knew what it would mean to himself, and each had felt something of that quickened sense of opportunity which comes at seeing another man in any way counted out of the race. Never had the game seemed so enchanting, the chance to play it such a piece of unmerited, unbelievable good fortune.

It must have been, I think, about the middle of October, for I remember that the sycamores were almost bare in the Luxembourg Gardens that morning, and the terrace about the queens of France were strewn with crackling brown leaves. The fat red roses, out the summer long on the stand of the old flower woman at the corner, had given place to dahlias and purple asters. First glimpses of autumn toilettes flashed from the carriages; wonderful little bonnets nodded at one along the Champs-Elysées; and in the Quarter an occasional feather boa, red or black or white, brushed one's coat sleeve in the gay twilight of the early evening. The crisp, sunny autumn air was all day full of the stir of people and carriages and of the cheer of salutations; greetings of the students, returned brown and bearded from their holiday, gossip of people come back from Trouville, from St. Valery, from Dieppe, from all over Brittany and the Norman coast. Everywhere was the joyousness of return, the taking up again of life and work and play.

I had felt ever since early morning that this was the saddest of all possible seasons for saying good-by to that old, old city of youth, and to that little corner of it on the south shore which since the Dark Ages themselves—yes, and before—has been so peculiarly the land of the young.

I can recall our very postures as we lounged about Hartwell's rooms that evening, with Bentley making occasional hurried trips to his desolated workrooms across the hall—as if haunted by a feeling of having forgotten something—or stopping to poke nervously at his *perroquets*, which he had bequeathed to Hartwell, gilt cage and all. Our host himself sat on the couch, his big, bronze-like shoulders backed up against the window, his shaggy head, beaked nose, and long chin cut clean against the gray light.

Our drowsing interest, in so far as it could be said to be fixed upon anything, was centered upon Hartwell's new figure, which stood on the block ready to be cast in bronze, intended as a monument for some American battlefield. He called it "The Color Sergeant." It was the figure of a young soldier running, clutching the folds of a flag, the staff of which had been shot away. We had known it in all the stages of its growth, and the splendid action and feeling of the thing had come to have a kind of special significance for the half dozen of us who often gathered at Hartwell's rooms—though, in

truth, there was as much to dishearten one as to inflame, in the case of a man who had done so much in a field so amazingly difficult; who had thrown up in bronze all the restless, teeming force of that adventurous wave still climbing westward in our own land across the waters. We recalled his "Scout," his "Pioneer," his "Gold Seekers," and those monuments in which he had invested one and another of the heroes of the Civil War with such convincing dignity and power.

"Where in the world does he get the heat to make an idea like that carry?" Bentley remarked morosely, scowling at the clay figure. "Hang me, Hartwell, if I don't think it's just because you're not really an American at all, that you can look at it like that."

The big man shifted uneasily against the window. "Yes," he replied smiling, "perhaps there is something in that. My citizenship was somewhat belated and emotional in its flowering. I've half a mind to tell you about it, Bentley." He rose uncertainly, and, after hesitating a moment, went back into his workroom, where he began fumbling among the litter in the corners.

At the prospect of any sort of personal expression from Hartwell, we glanced questioningly at one another; for although he made us feel that he liked to have us about, we were always held at a distance by a certain diffidence of his. There were rare occasions—when he was in the heat of work or of ideas—when he forgot to be shy, but they were so exceptional that no flattery was quite so seductive as being taken for a moment into Hartwell's confidence. Even in the matter of opinions—the commonest of currency in our circle—he was niggardly and prone to qualify. No man ever guarded his mystery more effectually. There was a singular, intense spell, therefore, about those few evenings when he had broken through this excessive modesty, or shyness, or melancholy, and had, as it were, committed himself.

When Hartwell returned from the back room, he brought with him an unframed canvas which he put on an easel near his clay figure. We drew close about it, for the darkness was rapidly coming on. Despite the dullness of the light, we instantly recognized the boy of Hartwell's "Color Sergeant." It was the portrait of a very handsome lad in uniform, standing beside a charger impossibly rearing. Not only in his radiant countenance and flashing eyes, but in every line of his young body there was an energy, a gallantry, a joy of life, that arrested and challenged one.

"Yes, that's where I got the notion," Hartwell remarked, wandering back to his seat in the window. "I've wanted to do it for years, but I've never felt quite sure of myself. I was afraid of missing it. He was an uncle of mine, my father's half-brother, and I was named for him. He was killed in one of the big battles of Sixty-four, when I was a child. I never saw him—never knew him until he had been dead for twenty years. And then, one night, I came to know him as we sometimes do living persons—intimately, in a single moment."

He paused to knock the ashes out of his short pipe, refilled it, and puffed at it thoughtfully for a few moments with his hands on his knees. Then, settling back heavily

among the cushions and looking absently out of the window, he began his story. As he proceeded further and further into the experience which he was trying to convey to us, his voice sank so low and was sometimes so charged with feeling, that I almost thought he had forgotten our presence and was remembering aloud. Even Bentley forgot his nervousness in astonishment and sat breathless under the spell of the man's thus breathing his memories out into the dusk.

"It was just fifteen years ago this last spring that I first went home, and Bentley's having to cut away like this brings it all back to me.

"I was born, you know, in Italy. My father was a sculptor, though I dare say you've not heard of him. He was one of those first fellows who went over after Story and Powers,—went to Italy for 'Art,' quite simply; to lift from its native bough the willing, iridescent bird. Their story is told, informingly enough, by some of those ingenuous marble things at the Metropolitan. My father came over some time before the outbreak of the Civil War, and was regarded as a renegade by his family because he did not go home to enter the army. His half-brother, the only child of my grandfather's second marriage, enlisted at fifteen and was killed the next year. I was ten years old when the news of his death reached us. My mother died the following winter, and I was sent away to a Jesuit school, while my father, already ill himself, stayed on at Rome, chipping away at his Indian maidens and marble goddesses, still gloomily seeking the thing for which he had made himself the most unhappy of exiles.

"He died when I was fourteen, but even before that I had been put to work under an Italian sculptor. He had an almost morbid desire that I should carry on his work, under, as he often pointed out to me, conditions so much more auspicious. He left me in the charge of his one intimate friend, an American gentleman in the consulate at Rome, and his instructions were that I was to be educated there and to live there until I was twenty-one. After I was of age, I came to Paris and studied under one master after another until I was nearly thirty. Then, almost for the first time, I was confronted by a duty which was not my pleasure.

"My grandfather's death, at an advanced age, left an invalid maiden sister of my father's quite alone in the world. She had suffered for years from a cerebral disease, a slow decay of the faculties which rendered her almost helpless. I decided to go to America and, if possible, bring her back to Paris, where I seemed on my way toward what my poor father had wished for me.

"On my arrival at my father's birthplace, however, I found that this was not to be thought of. To tear this timid, feeble, shrinking creature, doubly aged by years and illness, from the spot where she had been rooted for a lifetime, would have been little short of brutality. To leave her to the care of strangers seemed equally heartless. There was clearly nothing for me to do but to remain and wait for that slow and painless malady to run its course. I was there something over two years.

"My grandfather's home, his father's homestead before him, lay on the high banks of a river in Western Pennsylvania. The little town twelve miles down the stream, whither my great-grandfather used to drive his ox-wagon on market days, had become, in two generations, one of the largest manufacturing cities in the world. For hundreds of miles about us the gentle hill slopes were honeycombed with gas wells and coal shafts; oil derricks creaked in every valley and meadow; the brooks were sluggish and discolored with crude petroleum, and the air was impregnated by its searching odor. The great glass and iron manufactories had come up and up the river almost to our very door; their smoky exhalations brooded over us, and their crashing was always in our ears. I was plunged into the very incandescence of human energy. But, though my nerves tingled with the feverish, passionate endeavor which snapped in the very air about me, none of these great arteries seemed to feed me; this tumultuous life did not warm me. On every side were the great muddy rivers, the ragged mountains from which the timber was being ruthlessly torn away, the vast tracts of wild country, and the gulches that were like wounds in the earth; everywhere the glare of that relentless energy which followed me like a searchlight and seemed to scorch and consume me. I could only hide myself in the tangled garden, where the dropping of a leaf or the whistle of a bird was the only incident.

"The Hartwell homestead had been sold away little by little, until all that remained of it was garden and orchard. The house, a square brick structure, stood in the midst of a great garden which sloped toward the river, ending in a grassy bank which fell some forty feet to the water's edge. The garden was now little more than a tangle of neglected shrubbery; damp, rank, and of that intense blue-green peculiar to vegetation in smoky places where the sun shines but rarely, and the mists form early in the evening and hang late in the morning.

"I shall never forget it as I saw it first, when I arrived there in the chill of a backward June. The long, rank grass, thick and soft and falling in billows, was always wet until midday. The gravel walks were bordered with great lilac-bushes, mock-orange, and bridal-wreath. Back of the house was a neglected rose garden, surrounded by a low stone wall over which the long suckers trailed and matted. They had wound their pink, thorny tentacles, layer upon layer, about the lock and the hinges of the rusty iron gate. Even the porches of the house, and the very windows, were damp and heavy with growth: wistaria, clematis, honeysuckle, and trumpet vine. The garden was grown up with trees, especially that part of it which lay above the river. The bark of the old locusts was blackened by the smoke that crept continually up the valley, and their feathery foliage, so merry in its movement and so yellow and joyous in its color, seemed peculiarly precious under that somber sky. There were sycamores and copper beeches; gnarled apple-trees, too old to bear; and fall pear-trees, hung with a sharp, hard fruit in October; all with a leafage singularly rich and luxuriant, and peculiarly vivid in color. The oaks about the house had been old trees when my great-grandfather built his cabin there, more than a century before, and this garden was almost the only spot for miles along the river where any of the original forest growth still survived. The smoke from the mills was fatal to trees of the larger sort, and even these had the look of doomed things—bent a little toward the town and seemed to wait with head inclined before that on-coming, shrieking force.

"About the river, too, there was a strange hush, a tragic submission—it was so leaden and sullen in its color, and it flowed so soundlessly forever past our door.

"I sat there every evening, on the high veranda overlooking it, watching the dim outlines of the steep hills on the other shore, the flicker of the lights on the island, where there was a boat-house, and listening to the call of the boatmen through the mist. The mist came as certainly as night, whitened by moonshine or starshine. The tin water-pipes went splash, splash, with it all evening, and the wind, when it rose at all, was little more than a sighing of the old boughs and a troubled breath in the heavy grasses.

"At first it was to think of my distant friends and my old life that I used to sit there; but after awhile it was simply to watch the days and weeks go by, like the river which seemed to carry them away.

"Within the house I was never at home. Month followed month, and yet I could feel no sense of kinship with anything there. Under the roof where my father and grandfather were born, I remained utterly detached. The somber rooms never spoke to me, the old furniture never seemed tinctured with race. This portrait of my boy uncle was the only thing to which I could draw near, the only link with anything I had ever known before.

"There is a good deal of my father in the face, but it is my father transformed and glorified; his hesitating discontent drowned in a kind of triumph. From my first day in that house, I continually turned to this handsome kinsman of mine, wondering in what terms he had lived and had his hope; what he had found there to look like that, to bound at one, after all those years, so joyously out of the canvas.

"From the timid, clouded old woman over whose life I had come to watch, I learned that in the backyard, near the old rose garden, there was a locust-tree which my uncle had planted. After his death, while it was still a slender sapling, his mother had a seat built round it, and she used to sit there on summer evenings. His grave was under the apple-trees in the old orchard.

"My aunt could tell me little more than this. There were days when she seemed not to remember him at all.

"It was from an old soldier in the village that I learned the boy's story. Lyon was, the old man told me, but fourteen when the first enlistment occurred, but was even then eager to go. He was in the court-house square every evening to watch the recruits at their drill, and when the home company was ordered off he rode into the city on his pony to see the men board the train and to wave them good-by. The next year he spent at home with a tutor, but when he was fifteen he held his parents to their promise and went into the army. He was color sergeant of his regiment and fell in a charge upon the breastworks of a fort about a year after his enlistment.

"The veteran showed me an account of this charge which had been written for the village paper by one of my uncle's comrades who had seen his part in the engagement. It

seems that as his company were running at full speed across the bottom lands toward the fortified hill, a shell burst over them. This comrade, running beside my uncle, saw the colors waver and sink as if falling, and looked to see that the boy's hand and forearm had been torn away by the exploding shrapnel. The boy, he thought, did not realize the extent of his injury, for he laughed, shouted something which his comrade did not catch, caught the flag in his left hand, and ran on up the hill. They went splendidly up over the breastworks, but just as my uncle, his colors flying, reached the top of the embankment, a second shell carried away his left arm at the arm-pit, and he fell over the wall with the flag settling about him.

"It was because this story was ever present with me, because I was unable to shake it off, that I began to read such books as my grandfather had collected upon the Civil War. I found that this war was fought largely by boys, that more men enlisted at eighteen than at any other age. When I thought of those battlefields—and I thought of them much in those days—there was always that glory of youth above them, that impetuous, generous passion stirring the long lines on the march, the blue battalions in the plain. The bugle, whenever I have heard it since, has always seemed to me the very golden throat of that boyhood which spent itself so gaily, so incredibly.

"I used often to wonder how it was that this uncle of mine, who seemed to have possessed all the charm and brilliancy allotted to his family and to have lived up its vitality in one splendid hour, had left so little trace in the house where he was born and where he had awaited his destiny. Look as I would, I could find no letters from him, no clothing or books that might have been his. He had been dead but twenty years, and yet nothing seemed to have survived except the tree he had planted. It seemed incredible and cruel that no physical memory of him should linger to be cherished among his kindred,—nothing but the dull image in the brain of that aged sister. I used to pace the garden walks in the evening, wondering that no breath of his, no echo of his laugh, of his call to his pony or his whistle to his dogs, should linger about those shaded paths where the pale roses exhaled their dewy, country smell. Sometimes, in the dim starlight, I have thought that I heard on the grasses beside me the stir of a footfall lighter than my own, and under the black arch of the lilacs I have fancied that he bore me company.

"There was, I found, one day in the year for which my old aunt waited, and which stood out from the months that were all of a sameness to her. On the thirtieth of May she insisted that I should bring down the big flag from the attic and run it up upon the tall flagstaff beside Lyon's tree in the garden. Later in the morning she went with me to carry some of the garden flowers to the grave in the orchard,—a grave scarcely larger than a child's.

"I had noticed, when I was hunting for the flag in the attic, a leather trunk with my own name stamped upon it, but was unable to find the key. My aunt was all day less apathetic than usual; she seemed to realize more clearly who I was, and to wish me to be with her. I did not have an opportunity to return to the attic until after dinner that evening, when I carried a lamp up-stairs and easily forced the lock of the trunk. I found all the things that I had looked for; put away, doubtless, by his mother, and still smelling faintly

of lavender and rose leaves; his clothes, his exercise books, his letters from the army, his first boots, his riding-whip, some of his toys, even. I took them out and replaced them gently. As I was about to shut the lid, I picked up a copy of the *Æneid*, on the fly-leaf of which was written in a slanting, boyish hand,

Lyon Hartwell, January, 1862.

He had gone to the wars in Sixty-three, I remembered.

"My uncle, I gathered, was none too apt at his Latin, for the pages were dog-eared and rubbed and interlined, the margins mottled with pencil sketches— bugles, stacked bayonets, and artillery carriages. In the act of putting the book down, I happened to run over the pages to the end, and on the fly-leaf at the back I saw his name again, and a drawing—with his initials and a date—of the Federal flag; above it, written in a kind of arch and in the same unformed hand:

'Oh, say, can you see by the dawn's early light
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming?'

It was a stiff, wooden sketch, not unlike a detail from some Egyptian inscription, but, the moment I saw it, wind and color seemed to touch it. I caught up the book, blew out the lamp, and rushed down into the garden.

"I seemed, somehow, at last to have known him; to have been with him in that careless, unconscious moment and to have known him as he was then.

"As I sat there in the rush of this realization, the wind began to rise, stirring the light foliage of the locust over my head and bringing, fresher than before, the woody odor of the pale roses that overran the little neglected garden. Then, as it grew stronger, it brought the sound of something sighing and stirring over my head in the perfumed darkness.

"I thought of that sad one of the Destinies who, as the Greeks believed, watched from birth over those marked for a violent or untimely death. Oh, I could see him, there in the shine of the morning, his book idly on his knee, his flashing eyes looking straight before him, and at his side that grave figure, hidden in her draperies, her eyes following his, but seeing so much farther—seeing what he never saw, that great moment at the end, when he swayed above his comrades on the earthen wall.

"All the while, the bunting I had run up in the morning flapped fold against fold, heaving and tossing softly in the dark—against a sky so black with rain clouds that I could see above me only the blur of something in soft, troubled motion.

"The experience of that night, coming so overwhelmingly to a man so dead, almost rent me in pieces. It was the same feeling that artists know when we, rarely, achieve truth in our work; the feeling of union with some great force, of purpose and security, of being glad that we have lived. For the first time I felt the pull of race and blood and kindred,

and felt beating within me things that had not begun with me. It was as if the earth under my feet had grasped and rooted me, and were pouring its essence into me. I sat there until the dawn of morning, and all night long my life seemed to be pouring out of me and running into the ground."

Hartwell drew a long breath that lifted his heavy shoulders, and then let them fall again. He shifted a little and faced more squarely the scattered, silent company before him. The darkness had made us almost invisible to each other, and, except for the occasional red circuit of a cigarette end traveling upward from the arm of a chair, he might have supposed us all asleep.

"And so," Hartwell added thoughtfully, "I naturally feel an interest in fellows who are going home. It's always an experience."

No one said anything, and in a moment there was a loud rap at the door,—the concierge, come to take down Bentley's luggage and to announce that the cab was below. Bentley got his hat and coat, enjoined Hartwell to take good care of his *perroquets*, gave each of us a grip of the hand, and went briskly down the long flights of stairs. We followed him into the street, calling our good wishes, and saw him start on his drive across the lighted city to the Gare St. Lazare.

The Stars and Stripes Forever

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA

This patriotic American march is widely considered the magnum opus of composer John Philip Sousa (1854–1932). Young Sousa grew up on military music. As a child, he enjoyed hearing the Civil War military bands that frequently played in Washington, DC as well as his father's trombone in the US Marine Band. Sousa followed in his father's footsteps, enlisting as an apprentice violinist and eventually becoming bandleader. Later he formed his own band, the Sousa Band, which toured for 39 years and entertained millions of people.

Sousa composed his famous march on Christmas Day, 1896 while at sea, returning from a trip to Europe. While on vacation, he had learned that his close friend and manager of the Sousa Band, David Blakely, had died. Sousa and his wife immediately booked the next ship back to New York, where he began work on the march. In his autobiography, Marching Along, *Sousa said the song was about the feeling of coming home to America and how "in a foreign country the sight of the Stars and Stripes seems the most glorious in the world." The march was designated the official National March of the United States of America in 1987.*

Although not as familiar as the music itself, Sousa wrote lyrics for the march. What does it mean to say, of the Stars and Stripes, that it is "the flag of flags"? Can this view be justified? What does it mean to say "by their might, and by their right / It waves forever"? Is "forever" a wish, a hope, a goal, or a certainty? How does hearing the march make you feel? Does this song—words and music—add to your understanding of, and your attachment to, the flag?

For a musical rendition, watch the "The President's Own" US Marine Band perform Sousa's march on March, 3, 2009, in the John Philip Sousa Band Hall at the Marine Barracks Annex in Washington, DC: www.youtube.com/watch?v=a-7XWhyvIpE.

Let martial note in triumph float
And liberty extend its mighty hand
A flag appears 'mid thunderous cheers,
The banner of the Western land.
The emblem of the brave and true
Its folds protect no tyrant crew;
The red and white and starry blue
Is freedom's shield and hope.

Other nations may deem their flags the best
And cheer them with fervid elation,
But the flag of the North and South and West
Is the flag of flags, the flag of Freedom's nation.

Hurrah for the flag of the free,
May it wave as our standard forever,
The gem of the land and the sea,
The banner of the right.
Let despots remember the day
When our fathers with mighty endeavor,
Proclaimed as they marched to the fray
That by their might, and by their right
It waves forever.

Let eagle shriek from lofty peak,
The never-ending watchword of our land;
Let summer breeze waft through the trees
The echo of the chorus grand.
Sing out for liberty and light,
Sing out for freedom and the right.
Sing out for Union and its might,
O patriotic sons.

Other nations may deem their flags the best
And cheer them with fervid elation,
But the flag of the North and South and West
Is the flag of flags, the flag of Freedom's nation.

Hurrah for the flag of the free,
May it wave as our standard forever,
The gem of the land and the sea,
The banner of the right.
Let despots remember the day
When our fathers with mighty endeavor,
Proclaimed as they marched to the fray,
That by their might, and by their right
It waves forever.

The Flag Goes By

HENRY HOLCOMB BENNETT

Henry Holcomb Bennett (1863–1924), an Ohio-born author and poet, moved west after graduating from Kenyon College to work in the railroad business before returning to his hometown of Chillicothe as a journalist. By 1897, he left journalism to focus on more creative writing, including short stories and poems, often illustrating his own works (he was a landscape painter as well). His nonfiction work included essays about military life, Ohio history, and ornithology. Bennett's most famous work remains this patriotic poem, first published in The Youth's Companion *on January 13, 1898. It was immediately included in several students' readers around the turn of the century.*

What is the mood of the poem? The first and last verses differ in only one line. What according to the poem happens to the bystanders to convert their experience from "A flash of color beneath the sky" to "loyal hearts are beating high"? Why does Bennett begin by commanding us to remove our hats as the flag passes by? What thoughts and feelings does the passing flag—both in the poem and in your lived experience—arouse in you?

Hats off!
Along the street there comes
A blare of bugles, a ruffle of drums,
A flash of color beneath the sky:
Hats off!
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;
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;

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
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
A blare of bugles, a ruffle of drums;
And loyal hearts are beating high:
Hats off!
The flag is passing by!

I Am an American

ELIAS LIEBERMAN

Elias Lieberman (1883–1969), American poet and educator, was a Russian Jew who emigrated to the United States with his family at the age of seven. After graduating from the City College of New York in 1903, he began working as an English teacher at a public school. Lieberman went on to earn his M.A. and Ph.D. from New York University, serving also as editor of Puck, The American Hebrew, *and the* Scholastic. *He later worked for the New York Board of Education, as an associate superintendent of schools in charge of the junior high school division. His most famous poem, "I Am an American," was published in 1916 by the popular periodical* Everybody's. *The poem soon became a favorite, recited at graduation ceremonies and American Legion meetings.*

The heritage and lineage of the speakers in the poem's two verses are greatly different. Do you think the speakers are intended to be two different people or two "voices" of the same person? Which ancestry is "truer" or "more important"? What does the father mean by saying of the flag, "It is the emblem of the promised land*"? By calling it "the hope of humanity"? Does the flag for a new immigrant mean the same thing as it does for the native born? Who appreciates it more? Do you think there is a necessary connection between appreciating the flag and being "an American"?*

I am an American.
My father belongs to the Sons of the Revolution;
My mother, to the Colonial Dames.
One of my ancestors pitched tea overboard in Boston Harbor;
Another stood his ground with Warren;[22]
Another hungered with Washington at Valley Forge.
My forefathers were America in the making:
They spoke in her council halls;
They died on her battle-fields;
They commanded her ships;
They cleared her forests.
Dawns reddened and paled.
Staunch hearts of mine beat fast at each new star
In the nation's flag.
Keen eyes of mine foresaw her greater glory:
The sweep of her seas,
The plenty of her plains,
The man-hives in her billion-wired cities.
Every drop of blood in me holds a heritage of patriotism.
I am proud of my past.

[22] *Joseph Warren (1741–75), an American doctor and patriot who played a leading role in the American Revolution. Warren was killed in combat during the Battle of Bunker's Hill.*

I am an American.
I am an American.
My father was an atom of dust,
My mother a straw in the wind,
To His Serene Majesty.
One of my ancestors died in the mines of Siberia;
Another was crippled for life by twenty blows of the knut;[23]
Another was killed defending his home during the massacres.
The history of my ancestors is a trail of blood
To the palace-gate of the Great White Czar.
But then the dream came—
The dream of America.
In the light of the Liberty torch
The atom of dust became a man
And the straw in the wind became a woman
For the first time.
"See," said my father, pointing to the flag that fluttered near,
"That flag of stars and stripes is yours;
It is the emblem of the promised land,
It means, my son, the hope of humanity.
Live for it—die for it!"
Under the open sky of my new country I swore to do so;
And every drop of blood in me will keep that vow.
I am proud of my future.
I am an American.

[23] *In imperial Russia, a whip used to inflict punishment, often causing death.*

You're a Grand Old Flag

GEORGE M. COHAN

The original lyrics for this George M. Cohan (1878–1942) favorite, written for his 1906 stage musical George Washington Jr.*, were inspired by a chance encounter Cohan had with a Civil War veteran who fought at Gettysburg. Driving on a country road, Cohan offered a ride to an old man who, once seated in the vehicle, began to reminisce about his war days. Cohan noticed the vet held a tattered flag. "It was all for this," the veteran told Cohan. "She's a grand old rag." Cohan thought it was a terrific line, and made it the original title of his song. So many objected to calling the flag a "rag," however, that he changed the words, renaming the song "You're a Grand Old Flag."*

Would the song produce the same effect had Cohan stuck to the original "grand old rag"? What makes the flag not just a painted rag? What is "grand" about the old flag? What does Cohan mean by saying, "Ev'ry time I see it waving, / There's a chill runs up my back that makes me glad I'm what I am"? What is the meaning of the last couplet of the chorus?

For a musical rendition, watch James Cagney perform the song at http://fan.tcm.com/_James-Cagney-You39re-a-Grand-Old-Flag/video/1146300/66470.html.

There's a feeling comes a-stealing, and it sets my brain a-reeling,
When I'm list'ning to the music of a military band.
Any tune like "Yankee Doodle" simply sets me off my noodle,
It's that patriotic something that no one can understand.
"Way down south, in the land of cotton," melody untiring,
Ain't that inspiring!
Hurrah! Hurrah! We'll join the jubilee,
And that's going some
For the Yankees, by gum!
Red, White and Blue,
I am for you,
Honest, you're a grand old flag!

(Chorus)
You're a grand old flag,
You're a high-flying flag,
And forever in peace may you wave.
You're the emblem of
The land I love.
The home of the free and the brave.

Ev'ry heart beats true

Under Red, White and Blue,
Where there's never a boast or brag.
But should auld acquaintance be forgot,
Keep your eye on the grand old flag.

I'm no cranky hanky panky, I'm a dead square, honest Yankee,
And I'm mighty proud of that old flag that flies for Uncle Sam.
Though I don't believe in raving ev'ry time I see it waving,
There's a chill runs up my back that makes me glad I'm what I am.
Here's a land with a million soldiers, that's if we should need 'em,
We'll fight for freedom!
Hurrah! Hurrah! For every Yankee tar
And old G.A.R.,[24] ev'ry stripe, ev'ry star.
Red, White and Blue,
Hats off to you
Honest, you're a grand old flag!

[24] *General Army of the Republic, a fraternal organization founded in 1866 and composed of veterans of the Union Army, US Navy, and Marines who served in the Civil War.*

Ragged Old Flag

JOHNNY CASH

American country singer Johnny Cash (1932–2003) released this spoken-word tribute to the flag (and its title album) in 1974 as a response to the widespread disillusionment that followed the Vietnam War and the Watergate scandal. What is the mood of the poem? Why is the old flag ragged? What does the ragged old flag mean to the old man? Why does he take pride in it? Does the poem move you to do so too?

For a musical rendition, listen to Cash perform the song on PBS in 1993 at www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vgpp0V7sDbE.

Read the lyrics online at www.metrolyrics.com/ragged-old-flag-lyrics-johnny-cash.html.

Raising the Flag on Iwo Jima

BILL D. ROSS

Iowa-born Bill D. Ross (1921–1994) was a journalist who became a US Marine Corps combat correspondent in World War II, later writing two books on campaigns for islands in the Pacific. This selection is taken from "The Men of Suribachi and Two Flags," a chapter in his 1985 book, Iwo Jima: Legacy of Valor. *Ross went ashore with the Marines at Iwo Jima with a rifle and a typewriter.*

At 9:00 am on February 19, 1944, the first of eventually 30,000 Marines landed on the Japanese island of Iwo Jima, beginning what would become one of the bloodiest battles of World War II. By the end of the 35-day engagement, over 26,000 Americans had been killed or wounded, while the Japanese dead numbered 22,000. Four days after the initial invasion, on February 23, Marines climbed to the top of Mount Suribachi on the southern tip of the island, from which the rest of the island could be seen. Here they raised an American flag, and, during the second flag-raising, Associated Press photographer Joe Rosenthal captured the moment in his iconic photograph, which was later transformed into a sculpture for the Marine Corps War Memorial in Arlington, Virginia.[25]

What did the planting of the flag mean to the Marines at Iwo Jima? Why would they have run the risk of replacing the smaller flag with the larger? What was the meaning of the picture of the planting of the flag for those back home? What does it mean for us today? Why is this image so moving?

D-plus three was George Washington's Birthday, a national holiday back home, but on Iwo few men remembered or cared. Overnight, the weather had turned miserable. A torrential cold rain soaked men to the skin, and jelled with the coarse volcanic ash to clog and jam weapons.

Meteorologists at Makalapa had warned about the weather at Iwo this time of the year. Their studies found that major storms often buffeted the island, that the skies were clear only twenty percent of the time, that forty-five percent of the days were cloudy, twenty-seven percent partly cloudy, and nine percent rainy. Now the heavy rain was driven by a twenty-knot gale that whipped up a pounding nine-foot surf. At 10:20 a.m., the beaches were closed again; it was useless to try to land reinforcements and supplies. Angry clouds hung below five hundred feet and hid Suribachi's crest.

But a battle can't wait for weather. At eight o'clock, despite the wind and the rain, the attack against Suribachi started again.

[25] *To view Rosenthal's picture, see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:WW2_Iwo_Jima_flag_raising.jpg; for a video of the historic flag-raising, captured by Marine Corps photographer Bill Genaust, see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Raising_the_Flag_on_Iwo_Jima_(color).ogg.*

Tanks couldn't move in the hub-deep slush; artillery didn't fire because targets couldn't be spotted; there was no air support or naval shelling. So it was another dirty job for the infantry. They shivered under the driving rain and moved out against the dreadful terrain and the desperate, determined foe estimated by "Harry the Horse" Liversedge's intelligence officers to number six hundred still alive.[26]

Drenched Marines assaulted foxhole after foxhole, pillbox after pillbox, bunker after bunker with rifle fire, grenades, flamethrowers, and demolitions. It was slow and dangerous work, but they made steady progress. An eleven-man patrol worked partway up the steep, rocky slopes searching for a route to the summit; naval gunfire and air strikes had wiped out existing trails.

While [Colonel Chandler] Johnson's men cleared out opposition around the eastern side of the volcano and battled up the slippery sides, [Lieutenant Colonel Charles E.] Shepard's battalion bolstered the line in the center. [Lieutenant Colonel Jackson] Butterfield's outfit still slugged around the western side, bent on final encirclement of the fortress.

At 6:30 p.m., the push was halted for the day. Opposition had been heavy, but it had come in wild flurries, not in the sustained fighting that had marked previous days. In some ways the weather helped the Marines, exhausted from three days of bloody battle. With the near-zero visibility and curtains of rain, Japanese artillery and mortar fire were sharply reduced, not only around Suribachi, but across the entire island.

And it was now becoming apparent that the assault had taken its toll on the defenders and cut deeply into their ability to hold the mountain much longer.

Night was relatively quiet on the lines. No infiltrators. No savage firefights. The weather improved, and once again the beachhead was operational. Men, equipment, and supplies came ashore. Casualties were evacuated.

Offshore, aboard the *Auburn*, where General [Holland] Smith now had his headquarters, losses were tallied. They were far worse than he expected, and, like President [Franklin D.] Roosevelt, he shuddered. In three days they amounted to 4,574 men killed and wounded. In the push to take the airstrip, and in the fighting for the high ground around the quarry, the Fourth Division had lost 2,517 on the beaches. The Fifth Division, on Green Beach and in the push to conquer Suribachi, had lost 2,057.

Chandler Johnson was busy long before dawn of D-plus four, briefing his company commanders on the day's plan of action. He was determined that Marines would be atop the volcano by sundown, and was trying to figure out the best way to get there. Shortly after daybreak he ordered out the first patrols. At eight o'clock, he sent a runner for First Lieutenant Harold Schrier, who had taken command of Wells's platoon during the night.

[26] *Brigadier General Harry Bluett Liversedge (1894–1951), a US Marine who commanded the 28th Marine Regiment during the Battle of Iwo Jima.*

He pointed out to Schrier a possible route up the slopes. His orders were simple: "Take the platoon up the hill, and put this on top."

Johnson handed him a small flag—it measured fifty-four by twenty-eight inches—that First Lieutenant George G. Wells, the battalion adjutant, had brought ashore in a map case from the transport *Missoula*. Wells knew it would be wanted when the summit was taken.

Scouts from D and F Companies already were on the steep sides looking for a path to the crest and feeling out resistance. Sergeant Sherman B. Watson and three privates were surprised at how easy the ascent was going—once out of the sliding rocks near the base the footing was good. George Mercer, who came from a small Iowa town, was amazed at the quiet. Louis Charlo, an Indian from Montana's sheep country, glanced over his shoulder at the spectacular view. Theodore White, a Kansas wheat farmer, expected that "all hell would break loose at any minute." So far they had met no resistance, and within forty minutes they were on the crest, peering into the cone. Still no Japanese, but they spotted several machine guns with neat stacks of ammunition nearby. It was 9:40 a.m. They scampered and slid down the slope to make their report.

Lieutenant Schrier, a lanky twenty-four-year-old veteran of a disbanded Marine Raider Battalion, was ready to move out with his men. They had stocked up with ammunition, replenished supplies of hand grenades and demolition charges, and flamethrowers were full of fuel. A radioman and two stretcher teams joined the forty-man patrol. So did Louis R. Lowery, a twenty-five-year-old staff sergeant photographer for *Leatherneck*, the official Marines Corps magazine.

They left in single file, moving at a fast clip until the climbing became steeper. They passed a Marine howitzer with two men sprawled across the weapon—it had taken a direct hit from artillery—as well as several dead Japanese, one of whom wore bright orange sneakers. As the slope steepened, the men stopped every few minutes for breath. Flankers went out to guard the column. At times when climbing became difficult, the ascent was on hands and knees. Several threatening cave entrances were passed, but there was no fire; nor were any live Japanese seen.

Marines below watched in astonishment. Offshore, men tracked the snake-like column through binoculars. One sailor on a transport said: "Those guys should be getting flight pay."

Schrier crested the summit first and called a halt. In thirty minutes the patrol had climbed half-a-thousand feet up what had been a death-dealing mountain for four days. Not a shot had been fired, not a man hurt. He peered into the crater, saw the unmanned machine guns, several destroyed rocket launchers, a number of mortar pits, and five artillery pieces. "Where the hell are the Nips?" he muttered aloud, and signaled the rest of the men to follow.

Harold Snyder, the sergeant who was "looking forward to this fight," was next over the lip. Harold Keller, the careful corporal from Brooklyn, Iowa, followed. Right behind was "Chick" Robeson, the platoon's teen-age "baby"; then came the scholar corporal, Robert Leader. They felt they were in the eye of a hurricane: it was all too quiet—an eerie, frightening, almost deathly stillness. One man urinated into the cone. "This is what I think of you sonsabitches," he said.

Sergeant [Ernest] Thomas and about half the patrol, weapons primed for firing, stood silhouetted on the skyline atop the rim. Others probed down the crater's sides looking for Japanese. Several men scouted for something on which to raise the flag.

Keller saw the first enemy. "The Nip started to climb out of a deep hole with his back to me," he said in telling of the action. "I fired three times from the hip and he dropped out of sight." The rifle fire triggered an immediate torrent of grenades from several camouflaged cave mouths, and the Marines answered with bullets and grenades of their own in a short-lived scrimmage that ended as quickly as it had begun.

While the melee was at its height, two men—Leader and Private First Class Leo J. Rozek—had found a seven-foot length of iron pipe from a rainwater cistern, and they attached the flag to it. No one in the patrol bothered to check the time, but thousands of men below, and aboard the ships of the offshore armada, knew to the minute when it happened.

It was 10:31 a.m., February 23, 1945. An instant in history.

"There goes the flag!" shouted the Marines at the base of Suribachi.

Those on the beaches, who were aware of what was happening and could see it, cheered the sight with their own shouts of jubilation. Ships' radios crackled with news of the momentous event and flashed it to those in the fleet who couldn't see it. General [Tadamichi] Kuribayashi, if he saw Marines atop the mountain, must have known the end for Suribachi's defenders was at hand—something the Japanese on the volcano already knew.

Lou Lowery focused his Rollecord camera to capture the historic moment: the raising of the first flag on Iwo Jima. Robeson, crouching at the cameraman's side, refused to be in the picture; he "didn't want to be a Hollywood Marine." As the flag blew almost horizontal to the rocky ground, four members of the platoon were photographed: Schrier, Thomas, [Corporal Charles W.] Lindberg, and Private First Class James R. Nicel, a replacement who had joined the outfit that morning.

As Lowery clicked the shutter, a Japanese leaped from a cave and opened fire on him and Robeson. He missed. Robeson didn't; his BAR[27] cut the enemy down in midstride. The body was grasped by its feet and dragged into the cave. An officer sprang from the

[27] *Browning Automatic Rifle.*

entrance, snarling and swinging a broken sword in a giant half arc. Howard Snyder squeezed the trigger of his Colt .45. It misfired and the sergeant ducked for his life. A rifle burst from Private First Class Clarence B. Garrett stopped the one-man charge. But this was just the start.

Grenades came like hailstones from several caves. Marines sprayed the mouths with rifles and grenades, then flamethrowers moved in to burn the openings, and demolition blasts closed many almost as soon as they were flamed.

Lowery leaped to escape a grenade's explosion, and rolled and skidded fifty feet down the steepest slope. He was unhurt, and the camera, with its precious roll of film, was undamaged. His photo coverage of the campaign became an historical treasure in Marines Corps archives. After the war he stayed with *Leatherneck*, first as a six-striper sergeant and then as its civilian photographer director, until his retirement in 1982.

The frantic mini-battle was over in minutes. Within half an hour, Suribachi's commanding summit was serving the Marines as it had the Japanese—as an observation post. High-powered binoculars and electronic detection devices were in place, spotting enemy artillery whenever it fired anywhere on the island.

Lieutenant Schrier was puzzled as the platoon scouted the crater and nearby slopes for enemy positions. He wondered why the brief, sharp counterattack—the last organized resistance on Suribachi—hadn't come the instant the Marines moved over the crest. "We'd have been real dead ducks," he said. "They could've killed us all."

That afternoon, Sergeant Thomas and ten men inspected the cave from which the last attack had come. It burrowed nearly a hundred yards into the mountain; in it they found more than 150 dead Japanese. Most died by holding hand grenades to their stomachs and pulling the pins. Demolitions men blew the entrance to kill the overpowering stench and to give the enemy an unmarked mass grave.

Among the litter of documents the Marines found in the crater was one indicating that, the night before, about one hundred troops had left in the darkness in an attempt to sneak through Marine lines and join General Kuribayashi's main forces in the north. Only a handful made it, and they probably died in the fighting for the second airstrip.

Colonel [Kanehiko] Atsuchi's[28] body was never found, nor were those of any of the other Japanese officers who most certainly were killed on the mountain with nearly two thousand of their men.

Several men on the beaches and near Suribachi's base, and at least one man aboard the hospital ship *Samaritan*, were more interested than most in the capture of the volcano's summit.

[28] *The Japanese commanding officer of Mount Suribachi.*

One was Chandler Johnson, watching from his CP [command post]. “Some sonuvabitch is going to want that flag,” he told his adjutant, “but he’s not going to get it. That’s our flag. Better find another one and get it up there and bring ours back.” A runner, a lisping corporal called “Wabbit,” was sent scampering to the beach to see what he could find.

Fate had placed two others on Green Beach when the flag was raised. One was General Smith, and the other was the Secretary of the Navy.

“Holland, this means a Marine Corps for another five hundred years,” [Secretary of the Navy James Vincent] Forrestal told the Old Warrior as they watched what was happening. “Howlin’ Mad” nodded, his eyes filled with tears. Neither knew in advance that the final push to the summit was underway. Forrestal was on the beachhead because, over strenuous objections from Admiral [Richmond K.] Turner, he wanted to be there.

General Smith was there to be close to his Marines, and to be with the Navy’s top man if anything happened; he didn’t want to be safely aboard ship if Forrestal was hit by enemy fire. The beach was far from quiet: twenty-three Marines had been killed within the hour a few yards from where the brass stood. With them were two admirals, two of Forrestal’s aides, and several reporters.

Forrestal wore khakis and a gray sweatshirt to break the cold, blustery wind. Both had steel helmets, were unarmed, and Smith wore a zippered combat jacket over fatigues. He chomped his omnipresent unlighted cigar and was “proud as hell to be wearing my Marine dungarees.”

Platoon Leader Wells was aboard the *Samaritan* and raising seven kinds of hell to get ashore despite his wounds. “By God,” he ranted, “they’re my men, I’m sure of it, and I want to be with them and dammit, I’m going to be.” An understanding doctor gave him a first-aid pack of sulfa and morphine, and the lieutenant hitched a ride on a press boat headed for shore to pick up correspondents’ news copy. He limped to the start of the path up Suribachi and found Chick Robeson and Private Robert E. Goode about to go to the top again. With arms around one another’s shoulders, the trio labored up the steep slope to join the valiant platoon.

Colonel Johnson professed to be livid when he heard Wells was back on the mountain. He wasn’t. “I was proud as hell of that young fighter,” he told a newsman, and Wells kept his platoon to finish the mop-up of the crater.

Private Charles S. Rodgers also had more than a casual interest in the flag-raising. He was nineteen, one of Johnson’s men, and had been seriously wounded by mortars on D-Day. From his cot on the deck of the hospital ship *Solace* he could barely see the flag and wanted to lift himself for a better view. He couldn’t make it, but he tried; his eyes misted and he was proud of the lump in his throat.

Joe Rosenthal was sorry he missed being with the platoon, but that's the way things often turn out. The thirty-three-year-old Associated Press photographer had been in the business a long time and knew, as he put it, "you win some, you lose some."

He'd been in the Pacific for a year, and had landed with the Marines at Guam and Peleliu, where he'd made a name for himself as a man who could make good pictures under fire. Before shipping out from AP's San Francisco bureau, he'd tried to enlist but none of the services would take him because of myopia so severe that he wore thick glasses, and had two extra sets with his photographic gear. He carried 150 pounds on a five-foot-five-inch frame and had a small mustache. Some friends said he resembled a French chef.

Rosenthal landed early D-Day afternoon on the Fourth Division's beaches and had made dozens of pictures of the fighting since then. He returned at sunset each day to the *Eldorado* to write captions and see that his negatives were aboard the courier flying boat to Guam, and to eat and sleep.

When he came ashore the morning of February 23, he trudged through the sand and up the terrace to Colonel Liversedge's command post. "Harry the Horse" told him Schrier's platoon already was on the summit, but Rosenthal decided to go up anyway; maybe he could get a panoramic shot of the island, or find something else worth shooting.

Two Marine photographers had the same idea, Sergeant William Genaust and Private Robert Campbell. Genaust was a motion picture cameraman with several rolls of sixteen-millimeter color film. Campbell had a Speed Graphic for black-and-white stills. The trio was about to begin the climb when "Wabbit" returned.

He was out of breath, but he had located another flag on LST 779[29] on the beachhead. It took several minutes to tell Ensign Alan S. Wood why he wanted it; with his excited, lisping speech he had trouble making himself understood. When Wood was able to decipher the Marine's mission, he gave him the ship's rarely used ceremonial flag. It was twice the size of the original, measuring eight feet by four feet, eight inches.

"Must be rough up there," the ensign said, as "Wabbit" nodded "yes" and took off in a dead run. He didn't want to catch hell from the colonel for being gone too long. Johnson immediately sent a man to the summit with the new flag, and he was there with several of the original flag-raisers when the trio of photographers arrived, huffing and puffing.

The new flag was immediately lashed to a longer length of pipe, and six Marines were having trouble shoving the staff into the rubble. The photographers watched for a moment and then scurried for positions to shoot the action.

[29] *A tank landing ship.*

Rosenthal frantically piled rocks to get better elevation to make his picture. He focused, and the Speed Graphic's shutter clicked just as the struggling Marines hoisted the new flag. He had preset the exposure at one four-hundredths of a second at between f/8 and f/11.

Genaust caught the action with his Bell & Howell Filmo, and was standing shoulder-to-shoulder with the AP man, shooting the identical and unforgettable scene in color on the few feet of color movie film that remained in his camera. As the second flag was raised, the first was simultaneously lowered. Campbell snapped his shutter at that instant, his photo showing both flags.

Rosenthal made two more pictures; one showing three Marines grasping the pipe after the large flag was raised; the other a group shot of the jubilant platoon with the Stars and Stripes snapping in the wind. He went down off the volcano and continued working until late afternoon, when he hitched a ride to the *Eldorado* for his nightly chores.

In his captions covering the day's shooting, the one for the flag-raising said: "Atop 550-foot Suribachi Yama, the volcano at the southwest tip of Iwo Jima, Marines of the Second Battalion, 28th Regiment, Fifth Marine Division, hoist the Stars and Stripes, signaling the capture of this key position."

When the press pouch arrived at Guam, and Rosenthal's negatives were processed, darkroom technicians knew immediately that the Suribachi photo was something very special. It didn't fit the pattern of a conventional news picture; the face of only one man was clearly visible, the rest were either hidden by hands and arms raising the flag, or their heads were turned.

But it was a masterpiece of instantaneous composition and lighting that captured the mood of the unfolding drama on Iwo Jima. Its stage-like setting and the powerful position of the men gave it the graven look of a posed statue; so much so, in fact, that cynics and critics of the Marine Corps later suggested the photo was staged.

Anyone on the island, friend or foe, could plainly see the second flag. It touched off new waves of cheers on the beaches, where unshaven and weary shore parties thumped one another on the back and shouted. Those on the front, their ranks already decimated by the hundreds, felt the battle was at last making some headway.

Whistles, horns, and bells rang out aboard the ships surrounding the island. The next day, when the photo appeared on front pages of virtually every newspaper in the States, it became an instant symbol for millions on the homefront—an indelible portrait of patriotism and determination.

It took days to track down the names of Rosenthal's flag-raisers, a frantic quest touched off by a clamor at home to identify the men. They were, from left to right, Private First Class Ira H. Hayes, a Pima Indian from Arizona; Private First Class Franklin R. Sousley, a Kentucky mountaineer; Sergeant Michael Strank, from central

Pennsylvania's coal country; Pharmacist's Mate Second Class John Bradley, from the farmlands of Wisconsin; Private First Class Rene A. Gagnon, of French-Canadian descent, from New Hampshire's Green Mountains; and Corporal Harlon Block, from the southernmost tip of Texas.

Sousley, Strank, and Block were killed before ever learning of their fame. Bradley was wounded and evacuated; only Hayes and Gagnon left the island physically unhurt, but both would die as alcoholics—a situation, friends said, brought on by their inabilities to cope with fame the two felt was undeserved.

Rosenthal became an overnight celebrity of sorts, albeit a confused one. When the Associated Press headquarters radioed congratulations on "the war's most memorable photo," he didn't know which one they were talking about; he'd made dozens of shots since D-Day. The picture won the 1945 Pulitzer Prize and was the official symbol of the Seventh War Bond Drive, when $220,000,000 in bonds were sold. It was later reproduced on a postage stamp and re-created in minute detail in the world's largest bronze statue, at the foot of Arlington National Cemetery, just across the Potomac River from Washington, D.C.

Bill Genaust never saw what he shot; he was killed a few days later making more footage of Marines in battle. But millions saw his film within days in movie theaters across the nation. Decades later it was being viewed by other millions almost daily in television documentaries. That Genaust was never given credit for the footage, and that he died still filming the action at Iwo, were sore spots with those who knew him. Lowery's and Campbell's pictures received scant attention, but they and Rosenthal remained friends.

And what of the forty men of the Third Platoon who first scaled Suribachi's summit? Four made it to the end of the battle; the others were killed or wounded before the island was conquered.

Suribachi's conquest cost the 28th Regiment 510 men in four days of fighting. Since D-Day, its total casualties—including those killed or wounded on the beaches before the assault on the volcano began—were 895, nearly thirty percent—and the battle for the island had just begun. The regiment stayed on and around Suribachi for another week, cleaning out die-hard Japanese, reorganizing and taking on new men, and refitting before swinging north.

Years later an official Marines Corps monograph summed up the capture of the fortress. "The Japanese had conducted an effective defense," it said. "Making maximum use of their artillery, mortars, and automatic weapons, they did not waste themselves in costly all-out counterattacks. Forcing the Marines to come to them, the enemy inflicted heavy casualties before being blasted or burned out of their fortifications."

Men who had been on the mountain thought the forty-seven words weren't enough to tell the story.

Raising the Flag

The short pieces in this selection are connected with three significant events in our nation's history at which the flag of the United States was officially and ceremoniously raised: the victory of the Union in the Civil War, the victory of the United States and its allies over Germany and her allies in World War II, and the first landing of human beings on the moon.

Think carefully about each occasion and its national and human significance. Although these events occurred at very different times and places, the flag raised was the same. Does the meaning of raising it also remain the same?

Executive Order—Ordering the Raising of the Flag and Other Commemorations at Fort Sumter

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

On April 14, 1865, as part of a celebration of the Union victory, Major General Robert Anderson (1805–71) raised the national flag in triumph over the battered remains of the fort—as ordered by President Abraham Lincoln earlier that spring.

GENERAL ORDERS, No. 50.
WAR DEPARTMENT
ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S OFFICE

Ordered, first. That at the hour of noon on the 14th day of April, 1865, Brevet Major-General Anderson will raise and plant upon the ruins of Fort Sumter, in Charleston Harbor, the same United States flag which floated over the battlements of that fort during the rebel assault, and which was lowered and saluted by him and the small force of his command when the works were evacuated on the 14th day of April, 1861.

Second. That the flag, when raised, be saluted by one hundred guns from Fort Sumter and by a national salute from every fort and rebel battery that fired upon Fort Sumter.

Third. That suitable ceremonies be had upon the occasion, under the direction of Major-General William T. Sherman, whose military operations compelled the rebels to evacuate Charleston, or, in his absence, under the charge of Major-General Q. A. Gillmore, commanding the department. Among the ceremonies will be the delivery of a public address by the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher.

Fourth. That the naval forces at Charleston and their commander on that station be invited to participate in the ceremonies of the occasion.

By order of the President of the United States.

* * *

Remarks at the Raising of the Flag over the US Group Control Council Headquarters in Berlin

HARRY S. TRUMAN

President Harry S. Truman (1884–1972) made these remarks shortly before 4:00 pm on July 20, 1945 in the courtyard at the headquarters buildings. The flag used was the same one that had flown over the Capitol in Washington when war was declared on Germany.

General Eisenhower, officers and men:

This is an historic occasion. We have conclusively proven that a free people can successfully look after the affairs of the world.

We are here today to raise the flag of victory over the capital of our greatest adversary. In doing that, we must remember that in raising that flag we are raising it in the name of the people of the United States, who are looking forward to a better world, a peaceful world, a world in which all the people will have an opportunity to enjoy the good things of life, and not just a few at the top.

Let us not forget that we are fighting for peace, and for the welfare of mankind. We are not fighting for conquest. There is not one piece of territory, or one thing of a monetary nature that we want out of this war. We want peace and prosperity for the world as a whole. We want to see the time come when we can do the things in peace that we have been able to do in war.

If we can put this tremendous machine of ours, which has made this victory possible, to work for peace we can look forward to the greatest age in the history of mankind. That is what we propose to do.

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On Raising the American Flag on the Moon

EDWIN E. ALDRIN JR.

On July 20, 1969, Apollo 11 astronauts Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin Jr. (b. 1930) and Neil Armstrong (1930–2012) raised the Stars and Stripes on the lunar surface. The flag-raising itself was a feat of American technical ingenuity: NASA scientists had to especially engineer the flag assembly kit to support the flag on the airless Moon and make it appear to fly as it would on Earth. Although Congress passed a law repudiating any claim of sovereignty over the Moon, some argued that a United Nations flag should have been displayed in addition to—or in place of—the American flag. Aldrin disagreed:

"I certainly felt that the American flag is what belonged there. It's a characteristic of previous explorations, to plant a symbol upon arriving at a new shore."

We didn't know the President [Richard Nixon] was going to telephone us on the moon until about 10 seconds before it happened. At that point the ground told us to move over in the vicinity of the flag. Then we heard the President. Being able to salute that flag was one of the more humble yet proud moments I've ever had. To be able to look at that American flag and know how much so many people had put of themselves and their work into getting it where it was. We sensed—we really did—this almost mystical unification of all people in the world at that moment.

3

Honoring the Flag

Pledge of Allegiance

FRANCIS BELLAMY

On October 21, 1892, schools across the country celebrated Columbus Day, and with it inaugurated what would become the national Pledge of Allegiance. Written by Francis Bellamy (1855–1931), a Baptist minister, Christian Socialist, and an editor of The Youth's Companion, *the Pledge was to be used by schools at their flag-raising ceremonies.*[30] *Though the Pledge was officially recognized by Congress only in 1942, it quickly became popular in American schools, with many states adopting it for daily school exercises. In 1954, by an act of Congress, signed by President Dwight D. Eisenhower on Flag Day, the words "under God" were added to the Pledge.*

If you have memorized the Pledge, try to write it down from memory without looking at the text. Do you have it right? Consider each line and key word. What does it mean to "pledge"? What is "Allegiance"? Why should students pledge allegiance to the flag? What is a "republic," and what distinguishes our republic? What is the relation between allegiance to the flag and allegiance to the republic? How important are these allegiances for being an American citizen?

I pledge Allegiance to the Flag
of the United States of America
and to the Republic for which it stands,
one Nation under God, indivisible,
with liberty and justice for all.

[30] *Bellamy's original version read: "I pledge allegiance to my Flag and the Republic for which it stands, one nation indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."*

From *Halter v. Nebraska*

JOHN M. HARLAN

This 1907 US Supreme Court case involves a Nebraska statute that prohibited desecration of the flag and banned its use for advertising purposes. Two Nebraska businessmen challenged the law after being convicted for using the flag to advertise their "Stars and Stripes" beer. The court upheld their conviction 8–1; Justice John Marshall Harlan (1833–1911), famous for his powerful dissents in the Civil Rights Cases *(1883) and* Plessy v. Ferguson *(1896), delivered the opinion of the court.*

On what grounds does Harlan support the Nebraska law prohibiting the use of the American flag in advertising? Why doesn't the court regard such use as protected by the First Amendment right of free speech? Do you agree that each state has "a duty . . . to encourage its people to love the Union"? Is the flag dishonored or desecrated by commercial use? By being worn on articles of clothing? Do these uses undermine patriotic sentiment and love of country? Why or why not?

From the earliest periods in the history of the human race, banners, standards, and ensigns have been adopted as symbols of the power and history of the peoples who bore them. It is not, then, remarkable that the American people, acting through the legislative branch of the government, early in their history, prescribed a flag as symbolical of the existence and sovereignty of the nation. Indeed, it would have been extraordinary if the government had started this country upon its marvelous career without giving it a flag to be recognized as the emblem of the American Republic. For that flag every true American has not simply an appreciation, but a deep affection. No American, nor any foreign-born person who enjoys the privileges of American citizenship, ever looks upon it without taking pride in the fact that he lives under this free government. Hence, it has often occurred that insults to a flag have been the cause of war, and indignities put upon it, in the presence of those who revere it, have often been resented and sometimes punished on the spot.

It may be said that, as the flag is an emblem of national sovereignty, it was for Congress alone, by appropriate legislation, to prohibit its use for illegitimate purposes. We cannot yield to this view. If Congress has not chosen to legislate on this subject, and if an enactment by it would supersede state laws of like character, it does not follow that, in the absence of national legislation, the state is without power to act. There are matters which, by legislation, may be brought within the exclusive control of the general government, but over which, in the absence of national legislation, the state may exert some control in the interest of its own people. For instance, it is well established that, in the absence of legislation by Congress, a state may, by different methods, improve and protect the navigation of a water way of the United States, wholly within the boundary of such state. So, a state may exert its power to strengthen the bonds of the Union, and therefore, to that end, may encourage patriotism and love of country among its people. When, by its legislation, the state encourages a feeling of patriotism towards the nation, it

necessarily encourages a like feeling towards the state. One who loves the Union will love the state in which he resides, and love both of the common country and of the state will diminish in proportion as respect for the flag is weakened. Therefore a state will be wanting in care for the well-being of its people if it ignores the fact that they regard the flag as a symbol of their country's power and prestige, and will be impatient if any open disrespect is shown towards it. By the statute in question the state has in substance declared that no one subject to its jurisdiction shall use the flag for purposes of trade and traffic,—a purpose wholly foreign to that for which it was provided by the nation. Such a use tends to degrade and cheapen the flag in the estimation of the people, as well as to defeat the object of maintaining it as an emblem of national power and national honor. And we cannot hold that any privilege of American citizenship or that any right of personal liberty is violated by a state enactment forbidding the flag to be used as an advertisement on a bottle of beer. It is familiar law that even the privileges of citizenship and the rights inhering in personal liberty are subject, in their enjoyment, to such reasonable restraints as may be required for the general good. Nor can we hold that anyone has a right of property which is violated by such an enactment as the one in question. If it be said that there is a right of property in the tangible thing upon which a representation of the flag has been placed, the answer is that such representation—which, in itself, cannot belong, as property, to an individual—has been placed on such thing in violation of law, and subject to the power of government to prohibit its use for purposes of advertisement.

Looking, then, at the provision relating to the placing of representations of the flag upon articles of merchandise for purposes of advertising, we are of the opinion that those who enacted the statute knew, what is known of all, that to every true American the flag is the symbol of the nation's power—the emblem of freedom in its truest, best sense. It is not extravagant to say that to all lovers of the country it signifies government resting on the consent of the governed; liberty regulated by law; the protection of the weak against the strong; security against the exercise of arbitrary power; and absolute safety for free institutions against foreign aggression. As the statute in question evidently had its origin in a purpose to cultivate a feeling of patriotism among the people of Nebraska, we are unwilling to adjudge that in legislation for that purpose the state erred in duty or has infringed the constitutional right of anyone. On the contrary, it may reasonably be affirmed that a duty rests upon each state in every legal way to encourage its people to love the Union with which the state is indissolubly connected.

From *Texas v. Johnson*

This selection consists of two opinions (both excerpted here) from the famous US Supreme Court flag-burning case of 1989, in which a split court (5–4) held that burning an American flag as political protest is a form of symbolic speech protected by the First Amendment. Five years earlier, Gregory Lee Johnson, a Communist activist, had burned a flag in front of the Dallas City Hall as a protest against Reagan administration policies. Johnson was tried and convicted under a Texas law outlawing flag desecration. The court overturned the conviction, and in so doing, invalidated similar laws in force in 48 of the 50 states. Justice William Brennan (1906–97) delivered the opinion of the court, emphasizing the supremacy of freedom of expression. In one of his most famous dissents, Chief Justice William Rehnquist (1924–2005) offered a passionate defense of the law, emphasizing the unique meaning of the flag.[31]

*Review both opinions carefully, and try to summarize the argument of each. Justice Brennan treats the flag as one of a number of "designated symbols," whose use in expression the government is improperly trying to regulate. Chief Justice Rehnquist denies that the flag is a merely "designated" symbol, but rather "*the *visible symbol embodying our Nation," for which our history has produced "uniquely deep awe and respect." Whose view seems to you more correct?*

Justice Brennan compares Johnson's burning of the flag with the British bombardment of the Star-Spangled Banner at Fort McHenry, and claims that it is the flag's and the nation's resilience to such attacks that the court is upholding. What do you think of this argument? Is he right in suggesting that "the flag's cherished place in our community will be strengthened, not weakened" by the court's opinion?

Chief Justice Rehnquist says that the flag "is not simply another 'idea' or 'point of view' competing for recognition in the marketplace of ideas," but a symbol that "millions and millions of Americans regard . . . with an almost mystical reverence," regardless of their personal beliefs. And he insists that flag-burning is not so much political speech as it is an "inarticulate grunt or roar that . . . is most likely to be indulged in not to express any particular idea, but to antagonize others." What do you think of these arguments? Is Rehnquist right when he claims that it is "one of the high purposes of a democratic society . . . to legislate against conduct that is regarded as evil and profoundly offensive to the majority of people—whether it is murder, embezzlement, pollution, or flag-burning"? Why might flag-burning be regarded as equivalent to the other offensive evils he mentions? How would you have decided this case?

[31] *The Supreme Court's decision provoked immediate public controversy. The US Congress passed a statute, the 1989 Flag Protection Act, making it a federal crime to desecrate the flag. That law was struck down by the same five-person majority of justices in* United States v. Eichman *(in an opinion also written by Justice Brennan).*

WILLIAM BRENNAN

The State . . . asserts an interest in preserving the flag as a symbol of nationhood and national unity. In *Spence*, we acknowledged that the government's interest in preserving the flag's special symbolic value "is directly related to expression in the context of activity" such as affixing a peace symbol to a flag. 418 U.S., at 414, n. 8. We are equally persuaded that this interest is related to expression in the case of Johnson's burning of the flag. The State, apparently, is concerned that such conduct will lead people to believe either that the flag does not stand for nationhood and national unity, but instead reflects other, less positive concepts, or that the concepts reflected in the flag do not in fact exist, that is, that we do not enjoy unity as a Nation. . . .

It remains to consider whether the State's interest in preserving the flag as a symbol of nationhood and national unity justifies Johnson's conviction.

As in *Spence*, "[w]e are confronted with a case of prosecution for the expression of an idea through activity," and "[a]ccordingly, we must examine with particular care the interests advanced by [petitioner] to support its prosecution." 418 U.S., at 411. Johnson was not, we add, prosecuted for the expression of just any idea; he was prosecuted for his expression of dissatisfaction with the policies of this country, expression situated at the core of our First Amendment values. See, e. g., *Boos v. Barry*, *supra*, at 318; *Frisby v. Schultz*, 487 U.S. 474, 479 (1988).

Moreover, Johnson was prosecuted because he knew that his politically charged expression would cause "serious offense." If he had burned the flag as a means of disposing of it because it was dirty or torn, he would not have been convicted of flag desecration under this Texas law: federal law designates burning as the preferred means of disposing of a flag "when it is in such condition that it is no longer a fitting emblem for display," 36 U.S.C. 176(k), and Texas has no quarrel with this means of disposal. The Texas law is thus not aimed at protecting the physical integrity of the flag in all circumstances, but is designed instead to protect it only against impairments that would cause serious offense to others. . . .

Whether Johnson's treatment of the flag violated Texas law thus depended on the likely communicative impact of his expressive conduct. Our decision in *Boos v. Barry*, *supra*, tells us that this restriction on Johnson's expression is content based. In *Boos*, we considered the constitutionality of a law prohibiting "the display of any sign within 500 feet of a foreign embassy if that sign tends to bring that foreign government into 'public odium' or 'public disrepute.'" Rejecting the argument that the law was content neutral because it was justified by "our international law obligation to shield diplomats from speech that offends their dignity," we held that "[t]he emotive impact of speech on its audience is not a 'secondary effect'" unrelated to the content of the expression itself.

According to the principles announced in *Boos*, Johnson's political expression was restricted because of the content of the message he conveyed. We must therefore subject

the State's asserted interest in preserving the special symbolic character of the flag to "the most exacting scrutiny."

Texas argues that its interest in preserving the flag as a symbol of nationhood and national unity survives this close analysis. Quoting extensively from the writings of this Court chronicling the flag's historic and symbolic role in our society, the State emphasizes the "'special place'" reserved for the flag in our Nation. The State's argument is not that it has an interest simply in maintaining the flag as a symbol of something, no matter what it symbolizes; indeed, if that were the State's position, it would be difficult to see how that interest is endangered by highly symbolic conduct such as Johnson's. Rather, the State's claim is that it has an interest in preserving the flag as a symbol of nationhood and national unity, a symbol with a determinate range of meanings. According to Texas, if one physically treats the flag in a way that would tend to cast doubt on either the idea that nationhood and national unity are the flag's referents or that national unity actually exists, the message conveyed thereby is a harmful one and therefore may be prohibited.

If there is a bedrock principle underlying the First Amendment, it is that the government may not prohibit the expression of an idea simply because society finds the idea itself offensive or disagreeable. . . .

We have not recognized an exception to this principle even where our flag has been involved. In *Street v. New York*, 394 U.S. 576 (1969), we held that a State may not criminally punish a person for uttering words critical of the flag. Rejecting the argument that the conviction could be sustained on the ground that Street had "failed to show the respect for our national symbol which may properly be demanded of every citizen," we concluded that "the constitutionally guaranteed 'freedom to be intellectually . . . diverse or even contrary,' and the 'right to differ as to things that touch the heart of the existing order,' encompass the freedom to express publicly one's opinions about our flag, including those opinions which are defiant or contemptuous." Id., at 593, quoting *Barnette*, 319 U.S., at 642. Nor may the government, we have held, compel conduct that would evince respect for the flag. "To sustain the compulsory flag salute we are required to say that a Bill of Rights which guards the individual's right to speak his own mind, left it open to public authorities to compel him to utter what is not in his mind."

In holding in *Barnette* that the Constitution did not leave this course open to the government, Justice Jackson described one of our society's defining principles in words deserving of their frequent repetition: "If there is any fixed star in our constitutional constellation, it is that no official, high or petty, can prescribe what shall be orthodox in politics, nationalism, religion, or other matters of opinion or force citizens to confess by word or act their faith therein." In *Spence*, we held that the same interest asserted by Texas here was insufficient to support a criminal conviction under a flag-misuse statute for the taping of a peace sign to an American flag. . . .

In short, nothing in our precedents suggests that a State may foster its own view of the flag by prohibiting expressive conduct relating to it. To bring its argument outside our

precedents, Texas attempts to convince us that even if its interest in preserving the flag's symbolic role does not allow it to prohibit words or some expressive conduct critical of the flag, it does permit it to forbid the outright destruction of the flag. . . . .

Texas' focus on the precise nature of Johnson's expression, moreover, misses the point of our prior decisions: their enduring lesson, that the government may not prohibit expression simply because it disagrees with its message, is not dependent on the particular mode in which one chooses to express an idea. If we were to hold that a State may forbid flag burning wherever it is likely to endanger the flag's symbolic role, but allow it wherever burning a flag promotes that role—as where, for example, a person ceremoniously burns a dirty flag—we would be saying that when it comes to impairing the flag's physical integrity, the flag itself may be used as a symbol—as a substitute for the written or spoken word or a "short cut from mind to mind"—only in one direction. We would be permitting a State to "prescribe what shall be orthodox" by saying that one may burn the flag to convey one's attitude toward it and its referents only if one does not endanger the flag's representation of nationhood and national unity. . . .

To conclude that the government may permit designated symbols to be used to communicate only a limited set of messages would be to enter territory having no discernible or defensible boundaries. Could the government, on this theory, prohibit the burning of state flags? Of copies of the Presidential seal? Of the Constitution? In evaluating these choices under the First Amendment, how would we decide which symbols were sufficiently special to warrant this unique status? To do so, we would be forced to consult our own political preferences, and impose them on the citizenry, in the very way that the First Amendment forbids us to do. See *Carey v. Brown*, 447 U.S., at 466–467.

There is, moreover, no indication—either in the text of the Constitution or in our cases interpreting it—that a separate juridical category exists for the American flag alone. Indeed, we would not be surprised to learn that the persons who framed our Constitution and wrote the Amendment that we now construe were not known for their reverence for the Union Jack. The First Amendment does not guarantee that other concepts virtually sacred to our Nation as a whole—such as the principle that discrimination on the basis of race is odious and destructive—will go unquestioned in the marketplace of ideas. See *Brandenburg v. Ohio*, 395 U.S. 444 (1969). We decline, therefore, to create for the flag an exception to the joust of principles protected by the First Amendment.

It is not the State's ends, but its means, to which we object. It cannot be gainsaid that there is a special place reserved for the flag in this Nation, and thus we do not doubt that the government has a legitimate interest in making efforts to "preserv[e] the national flag as an unalloyed symbol of our country." *Spence*, 418 U.S., at 412. We reject the suggestion, urged at oral argument by counsel for Johnson, that the government lacks "any state interest whatsoever" in regulating the manner in which the flag may be displayed. Congress has, for example, enacted precatory[32] regulations describing the proper treatment of the flag, see 36 U.S.C. 173–177, and we cast no doubt on the

[32] *Of, relating to, or expressing a wish or request.*

legitimacy of its interest in making such recommendations. To say that the government has an interest in encouraging proper treatment of the flag, however, is not to say that it may criminally punish a person for burning a flag as a means of political protest. "National unity as an end which officials may foster by persuasion and example is not in question. The problem is whether under our Constitution compulsion as here employed is a permissible means for its achievement." *Barnette*, 319 U.S., at 640.

We are fortified in today's conclusion by our conviction that forbidding criminal punishment for conduct such as Johnson's will not endanger the special role played by our flag or the feelings it inspires. To paraphrase Justice Holmes, we submit that nobody can suppose that this one gesture of an unknown man will change our Nation's attitude towards its flag. See *Abrams v. United States*, 250 U.S. 616, 628 (1919) (Holmes, J., dissenting). Indeed, Texas' argument that the burning of an American flag "'is an act having a high likelihood to cause a breach of the peace,'" Brief for Petitioner 31, quoting *Sutherland v. DeWulf*, 323 F. Supp. 740, 745 (SD Ill. 1971), and its statute's implicit assumption that physical mistreatment of the flag will lead to "serious offense," tend to confirm that the flag's special role is not in danger; if it were, no one would riot or take offense because a flag had been burned.

We are tempted to say, in fact, that the flag's deservedly cherished place in our community will be strengthened, not weakened, by our holding today. Our decision is a reaffirmation of the principles of freedom and inclusiveness that the flag best reflects, and of the conviction that our toleration of criticism such as Johnson's is a sign and source of our strength. Indeed, one of the proudest images of our flag, the one immortalized in our own national anthem, is of the bombardment it survived at Fort McHenry. It is the Nation's resilience, not its rigidity, that Texas sees reflected in the flag—and it is that resilience that we reassert today.

The way to preserve the flag's special role is not to punish those who feel differently about these matters. It is to persuade them that they are wrong. "To courageous, self-reliant men, with confidence in the power of free and fearless reasoning applied through the processes of popular government, no danger flowing from speech can be deemed clear and present, unless the incidence of the evil apprehended is so imminent that it may befall before there is opportunity for full discussion. If there be time to expose through discussion the falsehood and fallacies, to avert the evil by the processes of education, the remedy to be applied is more speech, not enforced silence." *Whitney v. California*, 274 U.S. 357, 377 (1927) (Brandeis, J., concurring). And, precisely because it is our flag that is involved, one's response to the flag burner may exploit the uniquely persuasive power of the flag itself. We can imagine no more appropriate response to burning a flag than waving one's own, no better way to counter a flag burner's message than by saluting the flag that burns, no surer means of preserving the dignity even of the flag that burned than by—as one witness here did—according its remains a respectful burial. We do not consecrate the flag by punishing its desecration, for in doing so we dilute the freedom that this cherished emblem represents.

WILLIAM REHNQUIST

In holding this Texas statute unconstitutional, the Court ignores Justice Holmes' familiar aphorism that "a page of history is worth a volume of logic." *New York Trust Co. v. Eisner*, 256 U.S. 345, 349 (1921). For more than 200 years, the American flag has occupied a unique position as the symbol of our Nation, a uniqueness that justifies a governmental prohibition against flag burning in the way respondent Johnson did here.

At the time of the American Revolution, the flag served to unify the Thirteen Colonies at home while obtaining recognition of national sovereignty abroad. Ralph Waldo Emerson's "Concord Hymn" describes the first skirmishes of the Revolutionary War in these lines:

> By the rude bridge that arched the flood
> Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
> Here once the embattled farmers stood
> And fired the shot heard round the world.

During that time, there were many colonial and regimental flags, adorned with such symbols as pine trees, beavers, anchors, and rattlesnakes, bearing slogans such as "Liberty or Death," "Hope," "An Appeal to Heaven," and "Don't Tread on Me." The first distinctive flag of the Colonies was the "Grand Union Flag"—with 13 stripes and a British flag in the left corner—which was flown for the first time on January 2, 1776, by troops of the Continental Army around Boston. By June 14, 1777, after we declared our independence from England, the Continental Congress resolved:

> That the flag of the thirteen United States be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white: that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation.

One immediate result of the flag's adoption was that American vessels harassing British shipping sailed under an authorized national flag. Without such a flag, the British could treat captured seamen as pirates and hang them summarily; with a national flag, such seamen were treated as prisoners of war.

During the War of 1812, British naval forces sailed up Chesapeake Bay and marched overland to sack and burn the city of Washington. They then sailed up the Patapsco River to invest the city of Baltimore, but to do so it was first necessary to reduce Fort McHenry in Baltimore Harbor. Francis Scott Key, a Washington lawyer, had been granted permission by the British to board one of their warships to negotiate the release of an American who had been taken prisoner. That night, waiting anxiously on the British ship, Key watched the British fleet firing on Fort McHenry. Finally, at daybreak, he saw the fort's American flag still flying; the British attack had failed. Intensely moved, he began to scribble on the back of an envelope the poem that became our national anthem . . . .

The American flag played a central role in our Nation's most tragic conflict, when the North fought against the South. The lowering of the American flag at Fort Sumter was

viewed as the start of the war. G. Preble, *History of the Flag of the United States of America* 453 (1880). The Southern States, to formalize their separation from the Union, adopted the "Stars and Bars" of the Confederacy. The Union troops marched to the sound of "Yes We'll Rally Round the Flag Boys, We'll Rally Once Again." President Abraham Lincoln refused proposals to remove from the American flag the stars representing the rebel States, because he considered the conflict not a war between two nations, but an attack by 11 States against the National Government. *Id.* at 411. By war's end, the American flag again flew over "an indestructible union, composed of indestructible states." *Texas v. White*, 7 Wall. 700, 725 (1869). . . .

In the First and Second World Wars, thousands of our countrymen died on foreign soil fighting for the American cause. At Iwo Jima in the Second World War, United States Marines fought hand to hand against thousands of Japanese. By the time the Marines reached the top of Mount Suribachi, they raised a piece of pipe upright and from one end fluttered a flag. That ascent had cost nearly 6,000 American lives. The Iwo Jima Memorial in Arlington National Cemetery memorializes that event. President Franklin Roosevelt authorized the use of the flag on labels, packages, cartons, and containers intended for export as lend-lease aid, in order to inform people in other countries of the United States' assistance. Presidential Proclamation No. 2605, 58 Stat. 1126.

During the Korean War, the successful amphibious landing of American troops at Inchon was marked by the raising of an American flag within an hour of the event. Impetus for the enactment of the Federal Flag Desecration Statute in 1967 came from the impact of flag burnings in the United States on troop morale in Vietnam. Representative L. Mendel Rivers, then Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, testified that

> The burning of the flag . . . has caused my mail to increase 100 percent from the boys in Vietnam, writing me and asking me what is going on in America. Desecration of the Flag, Hearings on H.R. 271 before Subcommittee No. 4 of the House Committee on the Judiciary, 90th Cong., 1st Sess., 189 (1967).

Representative Charles Wiggins stated:

> The public act of desecration of our flag tends to undermine the morale of American troops. That this finding is true can be attested by many Members who have received correspondence from servicemen expressing their shock and disgust of such conduct. 113 Cong. Rec. 16459 (1967).

The flag symbolizes the Nation in peace as well as in war. It signifies our national presence on battleships, airplanes, military installations, and public buildings from the United States Capitol to the thousands of county courthouses and city halls throughout the country. Two flags are prominently placed in our courtroom. Countless flags are placed by the graves of loved ones each year on what was first called Decoration Day, and is now called Memorial Day. The flag is traditionally placed on the casket of deceased members of the Armed Forces, and it is later given to the deceased's family. Congress has provided that the flag be flown at half-staff upon the death of the

President, Vice President, and other government officials "as a mark of respect to their memory." The flag identifies United States merchant ships, and "[t]he laws of the Union protect our commerce wherever the flag of the country may float." *United States v. Guthrie*, 17 How. 284, 309 (1855).

No other American symbol has been as universally honored as the flag. In 1931, Congress declared "The Star-Spangled Banner" to be our national anthem. 36 U.S.C. § 170. In 1949, Congress declared June 14th to be Flag Day. In 1987, John Philip Sousa's "The Stars and Stripes Forever" was designated as the national march. Pub. L. 101–186, 101 Stat. 1286. Congress has also established "The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag" and the manner of its deliverance. 36 U.S.C. § 172. The flag has appeared as the principal symbol on approximately 33 United States postal stamps and in the design of at least 43 more, more times than any other symbol. United States Postal Service, Definitive Mint Set 15 (1988).

Both Congress and the States have enacted numerous laws regulating misuse of the American flag. Until 1967, Congress left the regulation of misuse of the flag up to the States. Now, however, Title 18 U.S.C. § 700(a) provides that:

> Whoever knowingly casts contempt upon any flag of the United States by publicly mutilating, defacing, defiling, burning, or trampling upon it shall be fined not more than $1,000 or imprisoned for not more than one year, or both.

Congress has also prescribed, *inter alia*, detailed rules for the design of the flag, 4 U.S.C. § 1 the time and occasion of flag's display, 36 U.S.C. § 174 the position and manner of its display, § 175, respect for the flag, § 176, and conduct during hoisting, lowering, and passing of the flag, § 177. With the exception of Alaska and Wyoming, all of the States now have statutes prohibiting the burning of the flag. Most of the state statutes are patterned after the Uniform Flag Act of 1917, which in § 3 provides:

> No person shall publicly mutilate, deface, defile, defy, trample upon, or by word or act cast contempt upon any such flag, standard, color, ensign or shield. Proceedings of National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws 323-324 (1917).

Most were passed by the States at about the time of World War I. Rosenblatt, *Flag Desecration Statutes: History and Analysis*, 1972 Wash. U. L. Q. 193, 197.

The American flag, then, throughout more than 200 years of our history, has come to be the visible symbol embodying our Nation. It does not represent the views of any particular political party, and it does not represent any particular political philosophy. The flag is not simply another "idea" or "point of view" competing for recognition in the marketplace of ideas. Millions and millions of Americans regard it with an almost mystical reverence, regardless of what sort of social, political, or philosophical beliefs they may have. I cannot agree that the First Amendment invalidates the Act of Congress, and the laws of 48 of the 50 States, which make criminal the public burning of the flag.

More than 80 years ago, in *Halter v. Nebraska*, 205 U.S. 34 (1907), this Court upheld the constitutionality of a Nebraska statute that forbade the use of representations of the American flag for advertising purposes upon articles of merchandise. The Court there said:

> For that flag every true American has not simply an appreciation, but a deep affection. . . . Hence, it has often occurred that insults to a flag have been the cause of war, and indignities put upon it, in the presence of those who revere it, have often been resented and sometimes punished on the spot. *Id.* at 41. . . .

But the Court insists that the Texas statute prohibiting the public burning of the American flag infringes on respondent Johnson's freedom of expression. Such freedom, of course, is not absolute. . . . In *Chaplinsky v. New Hampshire*, 315 U.S. 568 (1942), a unanimous Court said:

> Allowing the broadest scope to the language and purpose of the Fourteenth Amendment, it is well understood that the right of free speech is not absolute at all times and under all circumstances. There are certain well defined and narrowly limited classes of speech, the prevention and punishment of which have never been thought to raise any Constitutional problem. These include the lewd and obscene, the profane, the libelous, and the insulting or "fighting" words—those which, by their very utterance, inflict injury or tend to incite an immediate breach of the peace. It has been well observed that such utterances are no essential part of any exposition of ideas, and are of such slight social value as a step to truth that any benefit that may be derived from them is clearly outweighed by the social interest in order and morality. *Id.* at 571–572 (footnotes omitted).

The Court upheld Chaplinsky's conviction under a state statute that made it unlawful to "address any offensive, derisive or annoying word to any person who is lawfully in any street or other public place." *Id.* at 569. Chaplinsky had told a local marshal, "You are a God damned racketeer" and a "damned Fascist and the whole government of Rochester are Fascists or agents of Fascists." *Ibid.*

Here it may equally well be said that the public burning of the American flag by Johnson was no essential part of any exposition of ideas, and at the same time it had a tendency to incite a breach of the peace. Johnson was free to make any verbal denunciation of the flag that he wished; indeed, he was free to burn the flag in private. He could publicly burn other symbols of the Government or effigies of political leaders. He did lead a march through the streets of Dallas, and conducted a rally in front of the Dallas City Hall. He engaged in a "die-in" to protest nuclear weapons. He shouted out various slogans during the march, including: "Reagan, Mondale which will it be? Either one means World War III"; "Ronald Reagan, killer of the hour, Perfect example of U.S. power"; and "red, white and blue, we spit on you, you stand for plunder, you will go under." Brief for Respondent 3. For none of these acts was he arrested or prosecuted; it was only when he proceeded to burn publicly an American flag stolen from its rightful owner that he violated the Texas statute.

The Court could not, and did not, say that Chaplinsky's utterances were not expressive phrases—they clearly and succinctly conveyed an extremely low opinion of the addressee. The same may be said of Johnson's public burning of the flag in this case; it obviously did convey Johnson's bitter dislike of his country. But his act, like Chaplinsky's provocative words, conveyed nothing that could not have been conveyed and was not conveyed just as forcefully in a dozen different ways. As with "fighting words," so with flag burning, for purposes of the First Amendment: It is

> no essential part of any exposition of ideas, and [is] of such slight social value as a step to truth that any benefit that may be derived from [it] is clearly outweighed by the public interest in avoiding a probable breach of the peace. The highest courts of several States have upheld state statutes prohibiting the public burning of the flag on the grounds that it is so inherently inflammatory that it may cause a breach of public order. . . .

The result of the Texas statute is obviously to deny one in Johnson's frame of mind one of many means of "symbolic speech." Far from being a case of "one picture being worth a thousand words," flag burning is the equivalent of an inarticulate grunt or roar that, it seems fair to say, is most likely to be indulged in not to express any particular idea, but to antagonize others. Only five years ago we said in *City Council of Los Angeles v. Taxpayers for Vincent,* 466 U.S. 789, 812 (1984), that "the First Amendment does not guarantee the right to employ every conceivable method of communication at all times and in all places." The Texas statute deprived Johnson of only one rather inarticulate symbolic form of protest—a form of protest that was profoundly offensive to many—and left him with a full panoply of other symbols and every conceivable form of verbal expression to express his deep disapproval of national policy. Thus, in no way can it be said that Texas is punishing him because his hearers—or any other group of people—were profoundly opposed to the message that he sought to convey. Such opposition is no proper basis for restricting speech or expression under the First Amendment. It was Johnson's use of this particular symbol, and not the idea that he sought to convey by it or by his many other expressions, for which he was punished. . . .

But the Court today will have none of this. The uniquely deep awe and respect for our flag felt by virtually all of us are bundled off under the rubric of "designated symbols," *ante* at 417, that the First Amendment prohibits the government from "establishing." But the government has not "established" this feeling; 200 years of history have done that. The government is simply recognizing as a fact the profound regard for the American flag created by that history when it enacts statutes prohibiting the disrespectful public burning of the flag.

The Court concludes its opinion with a regrettably patronizing civics lecture, presumably addressed to the Members of both Houses of Congress, the members of the 48 state legislatures that enacted prohibitions against flag burning, and the troops fighting under that flag in Vietnam who objected to its being burned:

> The way to preserve the flag's special role is not to punish those who feel differently about these matters. It is to persuade them that they are wrong. *Ante* at 419.

The Court's role as the final expositor of the Constitution is well established, but its role as a platonic guardian admonishing those responsible to public opinion as if they were truant schoolchildren has no similar place in our system of government. The cry of "no taxation without representation" animated those who revolted against the English Crown to found our Nation—the idea that those who submitted to government should have some say as to what kind of laws would be passed. Surely one of the high purposes of a democratic society is to legislate against conduct that is regarded as evil and profoundly offensive to the majority of people—whether it be murder, embezzlement, pollution, or flag-burning.

Our Constitution wisely places limits on powers of legislative majorities to act, but the declaration of such limits by this Court "is, at all times, a question of much delicacy, which ought seldom, if ever, to be decided in the affirmative, in a doubtful case." *Fletcher v. Peck*, 6 Cranch 87, 128 (1810) (Marshall, C. J.). Uncritical extension of constitutional protection to the burning of the flag risks the frustration of the very purpose for which organized governments are instituted. The Court decides that the American flag is just another symbol, about which not only must opinions pro and con be tolerated, but for which the most minimal public respect may not be enjoined. The government may conscript men into the Armed Forces where they must fight and perhaps die for the flag, but the government may not prohibit the public burning of the banner under which they fight. I would uphold the Texas statute as applied in this case.

The Pledge of Allegiance at the Hanoi Hilton

JOHN MCCAIN

*In response to the US Supreme Court decisions in the flag-burning cases (*Texas v. Johnson*, 1989,* United States v. Eichman*, 1990), Congress has considered amending the Constitution to prohibit physical desecration of the American flag. From 1995 to 2006, the proposed amendment passed the House of Representatives, but failed to obtain the necessary supermajority in the Senate, failing in 2006 by one vote. In the Senate debate of 2000, speaking in support of the Flag Protection Amendment, Senator John McCain (b. 1936) related this moving story about a fellow Vietnam prisoner of war who was severely beaten by guards for fashioning a makeshift American flag. (As a US Navy aviator in the Vietnam War, McCain had been shot down and seriously injured during a bombing mission over Hanoi in 1967. He remained a prisoner of war, experiencing torture, until 1973, having refused an out-of-sequence early repatriation.)*

How do you understand Mike Christian's sewing of the flag and the meaning it held for his cellmates? Explain why the North Vietnamese punished him. How are you moved by this story? Does this anecdote make a good "argument" for legislation—for a constitutional amendment—prohibiting the physical desecration of the American flag? Why or why not?

Mr. President, I rise today in support of Senate Joint Resolution 14. It is with great honor and reverence that I speak in support of this resolution, a bipartisan constitutional amendment to permit Congress to enact legislation prohibiting the physical desecration of the American flag.

Let me explain my support by recalling the sacrifice for flag and country of a prisoner of war I had the honor of serving with.

I spent 5 ½ years at the Hanoi Hilton.[33] In the early years of our imprisonment, the North Vietnamese kept us in solitary confinement of two or three to a cell. In 1971, the North Vietnamese moved us from these conditions of isolation into large rooms with as many as 30 to 40 men to a room. This was, as you can imagine, a wonderful change. And it was a direct result of the efforts of millions of Americans, led by people like Ross Perot, and Nancy and Ronald Reagan, on behalf of a few hundred POW's, 10,000 miles from home.

One of the men who moved into my cell was Mike Christian. Mike came from Selma, Alabama. He didn't wear a pair of shoes until he was 13 years old. At 17, he enlisted in the U.S. Navy. He later earned a commission. He became a Naval aviator, and was shot down and captured in 1967. Mike had a keen and deep appreciation for the opportunities

[33] *Read John McCain's firsthand account of his POW experience at www.whatsoproudlywehail.org/curriculum/the-american-calendar/prisoner-of-war-a-first-person-account.*

this country—and our military—provide for people who want to work and want to succeed.

The uniforms we wore in prison consisted of a blue short-sleeved shirt, trousers that looked like pajamas, and rubber sandals that were made out of automobile tires.

As part of the change in treatment, the Vietnamese allowed some prisoners to receive packages from home. In some of these packages were handkerchiefs, scarves and other items of clothing. Mike got himself a piece of white cloth and a piece of red cloth and fashioned himself a bamboo needle. Over a period of a couple of months, he sewed the American flag on the inside of his shirt.

Every afternoon, before we had a bowl of soup, we would hang Mike's shirt on the wall of our cell, and say the Pledge of Allegiance. I know that saying the Pledge of Allegiance may not seem the most important or meaningful part of our day now. But I can assure you that—for those men in that stark prison cell—it was indeed the most important and meaningful event of our day.

One day, the Vietnamese searched our cell and discovered Mike's shirt with the flag sewn inside, and removed it. That evening they returned, opened the door of the cell, called for Mike Christian to come out, closed the door of the cell, and for the benefit of all of us, beat Mike Christian severely.

Then they opened the door of the cell and threw him back inside. He was not in good shape. We tried to comfort and take care of him as well as we could. The cell in which we lived had a concrete slab in the middle on which we slept. Four naked light bulbs hung in each corner of the room.

After things quieted down, I went to lie down to go to sleep. As I did, I happened to look in the corner of the room. Sitting there beneath that dim light bulb, with a piece of white cloth, a piece of red cloth, another shirt and his bamboo needle, was my friend Mike Christian, sitting there, with his eyes almost shut from his beating, making another American flag. He was not making that flag because it made Mike Christian feel better. He was making that flag because he knew how important it was for us to be able to pledge our allegiance to our flag and our country.

From the Ashes Comes the Rebirth of Patriotism

WALTER BERNS

The ghastly terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 shocked our nation out of its complacency regarding peace and security within our borders and awakened us to new threats from a post-Cold War world that many people thought was no longer dangerous to us. As political leaders struggled to find the appropriate responses, the nation spontaneously displayed a surge of patriotic sentiment and expression. Less than one month after the attack, Walter Berns (b. 1919), distinguished political scientist, constitutional scholar, and author of Making Patriots *(2001), wrote this essay on the meaning of the new surge of patriotism and why we were now waving the flag. By his life as well as his scholarship, Berns was well prepared for the topic. He enlisted in the Navy before Pearl Harbor and served at sea during the entire course of World War II. Among his earliest memories is a 1926 Memorial Day parade down Chicago's Michigan Avenue and the impressive sight of aged Union veterans feebly carrying the regimental standards.*

What, according to Berns, explains the upsurge of American patriotism after 9/11? Why was it especially concentrated in displays of the flag? What are we doing when we honor the flag in the post-9/11 world? Is it only our enemies who can inspire such outpourings of national feeling and attachment to the flag?

The terrorist attacks of September 11 have inspired a greater outpouring of patriotism by the American people than have many previous wars, and numerous displays of the American flag symbolize that patriotism. The flag represents more than free speech; it reminds us of those who fought before us to preserve our freedom. . . .

To help us remember, we have a Memorial Day (Decoration Day when I was young), and the Lincoln, Vietnam, Korean, and (eventually) World War II memorials. To the same end, we have national cemeteries filled with the graves of patriots, and a national anthem composed during a long-past war. This nation was born in a war, and Abraham Lincoln referred to those who fought it as "the patriots of '76." We were "one people" then—we said so. We were made one because King George III and "our British brethren [were] deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity." What those foes did to rally patriotism in 1776, the terrorists did on September 11.

The signs of this upsurge are everywhere. The grass-roots response of the American people has been phenomenal, a display of bottom-up public patriotism unseen in this nation in at least half a century, slicing across boundaries of race, class, age, and gender. American flags fly from the antennas of battered pickup trucks, from stately Victorian porches, from office windows. An Indiana flag company reports it has never had this many orders, twenty-five times the norm, in its century-long existence.

The flag is everywhere, and so is the need of the people to display their love of country.

It was only a few years ago that the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that Americans were entitled to burn the flag, that they had a constitutional right to do so. Of course, the ruling did not deny Americans their constitutional right to fly the flag, and in September millions of people proceeded to do so. Those who did not own a flag rushed out to buy one, in such numbers that supplies were soon exhausted.

Grieving for Fellow Citizens

Americans are flying the flag again, and they are showing their patriotism in other ways. Told that blood was in short supply, they rushed to give their own; volunteers from around the country raced to the scene of devastation in New York with food, blankets, gas masks, whatever they thought was needed. Americans grieved for the dead there, in Washington, and in Pennsylvania as their own, and prayed for the bereaved left behind. It was as if they now remembered that, as St. Paul said in his Epistle to the Romans, we are "members one of another."

Americans had every reason to believe this. The terrorists did not discriminate; they killed them all: black, white, brown and Asian, rich and poor, old and young, Christian, Jew, Muslim, and infidel. Some of the victims were foreigners, but the rest were unhyphenated Americans, fellow citizens, if not personal friends or immediate neighbors.

Across the nation, there was no more talk of us and them, as in our usual political dialogue. The only "them" were the terrorists who, though it was certainly not their intent, united us. The terrorists unwittingly reminded us that this country is, as Lincoln said it was during the worst of wars, "the last, best hope of earth. . . ."

Now we are at war with them, and we certainly will not win easily. The people sense this, I suspect, and it is astonishing how they have reacted. Not since Pearl Harbor, and perhaps not even then, has there been anything like it.

There surely was nothing like it during the years of Korea, Vietnam, or even the Gulf War. Not then did crowds of people gather in the streets shouting, "USA, USA, USA!" And not in such numbers did they fly flags from front porches, balconies, and automobiles. Flying it is the readiest way of expressing their love of country, and this they did in the millions because, I believe, they realize that this country is threatened in a new way.

Inspiring a Sense of Duty

In 1776, Tom Paine spoke of "the summer soldier and sunshine patriot who will shrink from the service of their country." A few years later, and to the same effect, Alexander Hamilton said, "The industrious habits of the people of the present day, absorbed in the

pursuits of gain and devoted to the improvements of agriculture and commerce, are incompatible with the condition of a nation of soldiers."[34]

Paine and Hamilton had reason to be apprehensive. After all, we are a people endowed with certain inalienable rights, among them life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, a happiness that each of us defines for himself. Nothing is said about our duties; in fact, the only duty mentioned in the Declaration of Independence is the duty derived from the right to "throw off" the government that does not secure rights. Our duties are secondary and have to be cultivated, whereas our rights are primary.

So it is that our civil libertarians, of the Right and Left alike, see us not as citizens, but as autonomous individuals with the right to say what we please without regard to consequence. So it was that the Supreme Court, however narrow the majority, declared that we have a constitutional right to burn the flag. This was, in my view, a mistake of consequence because the flag, from the beginning, has been a means to cultivate patriotism, the ultimate duty.

The flag carried by the Continental Army in January 1776 had thirteen stripes and the British ensign in the upper left-hand corner. But after we declared our independence in July of that year, the Continental Congress resolved "the flag of the United States be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation," which is to say, a new kind of country.

Eventually, Congress declared the "Star-Spangled Banner" to be the national anthem, and June 14 to be Flag Day; later still, John Philip Sousa's "Stars and Stripes Forever" was designated the national march. As James Madison indicated in the forty-ninth *Federalist* treatise,[35] republican government especially requires public-spiritedness, and Congress obviously intended the celebration of the flag—on Flag Day, for example—to be one of the means of promoting it. And so it has been.

The Supreme Court, speaking through Justice William J. Brennan, ruled that the flag stands for freedom of expression (and burning it is one form of expression). But we who do not burn it pledge allegiance "to the flag, and to the republic for which it stands." The flag and republic obviously stand for more than freedom of speech (to say nothing of freedom of expression). I do not mean to belittle the importance of free speech; it is an essential feature of republican government. I only mean to say that the flag stands for everything the country stands for, and therefore Justice Brennan's understanding is partial or incomplete. It cannot explain why the flag is, as Brennan called it, "a cherished emblem."

Why We Wave the Flag

[34] *Read Thomas Paine's* The Crisis *No. 1 at What So Proudly We Hail: www.whatsoproudlywehail.org/curriculum/the-american-calendar/the-crisis-no-1. Read* Federalist *8 at http://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders/documents/a1_8_12s12.html.*

[35] *Read* Federalist *49 at http://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders/documents/v1ch2s19.html.*

Nor can it explain why millions of Americans fly the flag today, even as so many of us are removed from the rubble in New York and Washington, and the fields of Pennsylvania. The fact is, the flag is used to express what is in the hearts and minds of Americans.

We wave it on Flag Day and the Fourth of July, and see it displayed at the various war memorials on the Mall in the capital; on the battlefields at Bull Run and Antietam; at the cemeteries where those who fought and died are buried, not only in Arlington or Gettysburg, but in faraway places like Manila in the Philippines, at Cambridge in England, and above Omaha Beach in Normandy. The sight of the flag, especially in these places, evokes memories of past battles and of those who fought them, to whom we are indebted.

This country has had its share of summer soldiers and sunshine patriots, but they have been few compared with the millions of Americans who, over the course of our history, have been willing to put their lives at risk for its principles. We know little about these people save for that fact, and the knowledge that they must have wanted the country to endure. But we can deduce something else about them: that they felt obligated to their forebears and their posterity, the forebears because from them they had inherited a country worth fighting and dying for (this "inestimable jewel," as Lincoln said of it), and their posterity because, being related by nationality if not blood, they were anxious that those who came after might also enjoy freedom's benefits.

Now we are battling a new enemy, terrorists who hate us, and, in sermons and homilies, we are enjoined not to hate them in return. I doubt that many of us can do that. What we can do, and must do, is to continue to be what it is that causes them to hate us: a country with free markets, free speech, and, especially in this context, freedom of conscience.

That is what I believe Americans have in their minds as they wave the flag and shout, "USA, USA, USA."

From *Making Patriots*

WALTER BERNS

In his 2001 book, Making Patriots*, American political scientist Walter Berns (b. 1919) reflects on several difficulties, old and new, confronting the cultivation of patriotism in the American republic, and offers important suggestions for how these difficulties might be addressed. Telling stories is part of the answer. Here is one of his, taken from the epilogue of the book.*

How do you understand the ceremonial deed of the solitary Marine? In what sense does it "pay honor to my country"? Why does this story so move the diplomat? Does it move you? How and why?

The following story is told by a foreign diplomat who, as he explains, had occasion to visit the United States Embassy in the capital of his country.

* * *

"I arrived at a quarter to six, after official office hours, and was met by the Marine on guard at the entrance of the Chancery. He asked if I would mind waiting while he lowered the two American flags at the Embassy. What I witnessed over the next ten minutes so impressed me that I am now led to make this occurrence a part of my ongoing record of this distressing era.

"The Marine was dressed in a uniform which was spotless and neat; he walked with a measured tread from the entrance of the Chancery to the stainless steel flagpole before the Embassy and, almost reverently, lowered the flag to the level of his reach where he began to fold it in military fashion. He then released the flag from the clasps attaching it to the rope, stepped back from the pole, made an about-face, and carried the flag between his hands—one above, one below—and placed it securely on a stand before the Chancery.

"He then marched over to a second flagpole and repeated the same lonesome ceremony. . . . After completing his task, he apologized for the delay—out of pure courtesy, as nothing less than incapacity would have prevented him from fulfilling his goal—and said to me, 'Thank you for waiting, Sir. I had to pay honor to my country.'

"I have had to tell this story because there was something impressive about a lone Marine carrying out a ceremonial task which obviously meant very much to him and which, in its simplicity, made the might, the power and the glory of the United States of America stand forth in a way that a mighty wave of military aircraft, or the passage of a super-carrier, or a parade of 10,000 men could never have made manifest.

"One day it is my hope to visit one of our embassies in a faraway place and to see a soldier fold our flag and turn to a stranger and say, 'I am sorry for the delay, Sir. I had to honor my country.'"[36]

[36] *From "Commentary: Diplomat Notices Marine's Patriotism,"* The Scout *(Camp Pendleton Military Base), May 28, 1998.*

Appendix: US Flag Code

On June 22, 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt approved House Joint Resolution 303 codifying the existing customs and rules governing the display and use of the flag of the United States by civilians. The law included provisions of the code adopted by the National Flag Conference, held in Washington, DC on June 14, 1923, with certain amendments and additions. The code was reenacted, with minor amendments, as part of the Bicentennial celebration. In the 105th Congress, the Flag Code was removed from title 36 of the United States Code and recodified as part of title 4.

Title 4 United States Code:

§ 4. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag; Manner of Delivery.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag: "I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.", should be rendered by standing at attention facing the flag with the right hand over the heart. When not in uniform men should remove any non-religious headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart. Persons in uniform should remain silent, face the flag, and render the military salute.

§ 5. Display and Use of Flag by Civilians; Codification of Rules and Customs; Definition.

The following codification of existing rules and customs pertaining to the display and use of the flag of the United States of America is established for the use of such civilians or civilian groups or organizations as may not be required to conform with regulations promulgated by one or more executive departments of the Government of the United States. The flag of the United States for the purpose of this chapter shall be defined according to Sections 1 and 2 of Title 4 and Executive Order 10834 issued pursuant thereto.

§ 6. Time and Occasions for Display.

(a) It is the universal custom to display the flag only from sunrise to sunset on buildings and on stationary flagstaffs in the open. However, when a patriotic effect is desired, the flag may be displayed 24 hours a day if properly illuminated during the hours of darkness.

(b) The flag should be hoisted briskly and lowered ceremoniously.

(c) The flag should not be displayed on days when the weather is inclement, except when an all-weather flag is displayed.

(d) The flag should be displayed on all days, especially on New Year's Day, January 1; Inauguration Day, January 20; Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday, the third Monday in January; Lincoln's Birthday, February 12; Washington's Birthday, third Monday in February; Easter Sunday (variable); Mother's Day, second Sunday in May; Armed Forces Day, third Saturday in May; Memorial Day (half-staff until noon), the last Monday in May; Flag Day, June 14; Independence Day, July 4; Labor Day, first Monday in September; Constitution Day, September 17; Columbus Day, second Monday in October; Navy Day, October 27; Veterans Day, November 11; Thanksgiving Day, fourth Thursday in November; Christmas Day, December 25; and such other days as may be proclaimed by the President of the United States; the birthdays of States (date of admission); and on State holidays.

(e) The flag should be displayed daily on or near the main administration building of every public institution.

(f) The flag should be displayed in or near every polling place on election days.

(g) The flag should be displayed during school days in or near every schoolhouse.

§ 7. Position and Manner of Display.

The flag, when carried in a procession with another flag or flags, should be either on the marching right; that is, the flag's own right, or, if there is a line of other flags, in front of the center of that line.

(a) The flag should not be displayed on a float in a parade except from a staff, or as provided in subsection (i) of this section.

(b) The flag should not be draped over the hood, top, sides, or back of a vehicle or of a railroad train or a boat. When the flag is displayed on a motorcar, the staff should be fixed firmly to the chassis or clamped to the right fender.

(c) No other flag or pennant should be placed above or, if on the same level, to the right of the flag of the United States of America, except during church services conducted by naval chaplains at sea, when the church pennant may be flown above the flag during church services for the personnel of the Navy. No person shall display the flag of the United Nations or any other national or international flag equal, above, or in a position of superior prominence or honor to or in place of the flag of the United States or any Territory or possession thereof: Provided, That nothing in this section shall make unlawful the continuance of the practice heretofore followed of displaying the flag of the United Nations in a position of superior prominence or honor, and other national flags in positions of equal prominence or honor, with that of the flag of the United States at the headquarters of the United Nations.

(d) The flag of the United States of America, when it is displayed with another flag against a wall from crossed staffs, should be on the right, the flag's own right, and its staff should be in front of the staff of the other flag.

(e) The flag of the United States of America should be at the center and at the highest point of the group when a number of flags of States or localities or pennants of societies are grouped and displayed from staffs.

(f) When flags of States, cities, or localities, or pennants of societies are flown on the same halyard with the flag of the United States, the latter should always be at the peak. When the flags are flown from adjacent staffs, the flag of the United States should be hoisted first and lowered last. No such flag or pennant may be placed above the flag of the United States or to the United States flag's right.

(g) When flags of two or more nations are displayed, they are to be flown from separate staffs of the same height. The flags should be of approximately equal size. International usage forbids the display of the flag of one nation above that of another nation in time of peace.

(h) When the flag of the United States is displayed from a staff projecting horizontally or at an angle from the window sill, balcony, or front of a building, the union of the flag should be placed at the peak of the staff unless the flag is at half-staff. When the flag is suspended over a sidewalk from a rope extending from a house to a pole at the edge of the sidewalk, the flag should be hoisted out, union first, from the building.

(i) When displayed either horizontally or vertically against a wall, the union should be uppermost and to the flag's own right, that is, to the observer's left. When displayed in a window, the flag should be displayed in the same way, with the union or blue field to the left of the observer in the street.

(j) When the flag is displayed over the middle of the street, it should be suspended vertically with the union to the north in an east and west street or to the east in a north and south street.

(k) When used on a speaker's platform, the flag, if displayed flat, should be displayed above and behind the speaker. When displayed from a staff in a church or public auditorium, the flag of the United States of America should hold the position of superior prominence, in advance of the audience, and in the position of honor at the clergyman's or speaker's right as he faces the audience. Any other flag so displayed should be placed on the left of the clergyman or speaker or to the right of the audience.

(l) The flag should form a distinctive feature of the ceremony of unveiling a statute or monument, but it should never be used as the covering for the statute or monument.

(m) The flag, when flown at half-staff, should be first hoisted to the peak for an instant and then lowered to the half-staff position. The flag should be again raised to the peak

before it is lowered for the day. On Memorial Day, the flag should be displayed at half-staff until noon only, then raised to the top of the staff. By order of the President, the flag shall be flown at half-staff upon the death of principal figures of the United States Government and the Governor of a state, territory, or possession, as a mark of respect to their memory. In the event of the death of other officials or foreign dignitaries, the flag is to be displayed at half-staff according to Presidential instructions or orders, or in accordance with recognized customs or practices not inconsistent with law. In the event of the death of a present or former official of the government of any state, territory, or possession of the United States or the death of a member of the Armed Forces from any State, territory, or possession of the United States, the Governor of that State, territory, or possession may proclaim that the National flag shall be flown at half-staff, and the same authority is provided to the Mayor of the District of Columbia with respect to present or former officials of the District of Columbia and members of the Armed Forces from the District of Columbia. When the Governor of a State, territory, or possession, or the Mayor of the District of Columbia, issues a proclamation under the preceding sentence that the National flag be flown at half-staff in that State, territory, or possession or in the District of Columbia because of the death of a member of the Armed Forces, the National flag flown at any Federal installation or facility in the area covered by that proclamation shall be flown at half-staff consistent with that proclamation. The flag shall be flown at half-staff thirty days from the death of the President or a former President; ten days from the day of death of the Vice-President, the Chief Justice or a retired Chief Justice of the United States or the Speaker of the House of Representatives; from the day of death until interment of an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, a Secretary of an executive or military department, a former Vice-President, or the Governor of a state, territory, or possession; and on the day of death and the following day for a Member of Congress. The flag shall be flown at half-staff on Peace Officers Memorial Day, unless that day is also Armed Forces Day. As used in this subsection —

(1) The term "half-staff" means the position of the flag when it is one-half the distance between the top and bottom of the staff;

(2) the term "executive or military department" means any agency listed under Sections 101 and 102 of Title 5, United States Code; and

(3) the term "Member of Congress" means a Senator, a Representative, a Delegate, or the Resident Commissioner from Puerto Rico.

(n) When the flag is used to cover a casket, it should be so placed that the union is at the head and over the left shoulder. The flag should not be lowered into the grave or allowed to touch the ground.

(o) When the flag is suspended across a corridor or lobby in a building with only one main entrance, it should be suspended vertically with the union of the flag to the observer's left upon entering. If the building has more than one main entrance, the flag should be suspended vertically near the center of the corridor or lobby with the union to the north, when entrances are to the east and west or to the east when entrances are to the

north and south. If there are entrances in more than two directions, the union should be to the east.

§ 8. Respect for Flag.

No disrespect should be shown to the flag of the United States of America; the flag should not be dipped to any person or thing. Regimental colors, state flags, and organization or institutional flags are to be dipped as a mark of honor.

(a) The flag should never be displayed with union down, except as a signal of dire distress in instances of extreme danger to life or property.

(b) The flag should never touch anything beneath it, such as the ground, the floor, water, or merchandise.

(c) The flag should never be carried flat or horizontally, but always aloft and free.

(d) The flag should never be used as wearing apparel, bedding, or drapery. It should never be festooned, drawn back, nor up, in folds, but always allowed to fall free. Bunting of blue, white, and red, always arranged with the blue above, the white in the middle, and the red below, should be used for covering a speaker's desk, draping in front of the platform, and for a decoration in general.

(e) The flag should never be fastened, displayed, used, or stored in such a manner as to permit it to be easily torn, soiled, or damaged in any way.

(f) The flag should never be used as a covering for a ceiling.

(g) The flag should never have placed upon it, nor on any part of it, nor attached to it any mark, insignia, letter, word, figure, design, picture, or drawing of any nature.

(h) The flag should never be used as a receptacle for receiving, holding, carrying, or delivering anything.

(i) The flag should never be used for advertising purposes in any manner whatsoever. It should not be embroidered on such articles as cushions or handkerchiefs and the like, printed or otherwise impressed on paper napkins or boxes or anything that is designed for temporary use and discard. Advertising signs should not be fastened to a staff or halyard from which the flag is flown.

(j) No part of the flag should ever be used as a costume or athletic uniform. However, a flag patch may be affixed to the uniform of military personnel, firemen, policemen, and members of patriotic organizations. The flag represents a living country and is itself considered a living thing. Therefore, the lapel flag pin being a replica, should be worn on the left lapel near the heart.

(k) The flag, when it is in such condition that it is no longer a fitting emblem for display, should be destroyed in a dignified way, preferably by burning.

§ 9. Conduct During Hoisting, Lowering or Passing of Flag.

During the ceremony of hoisting or lowering the flag or when the flag is passing in a parade or in review, all persons present in uniform should render the military salute. Members of the Armed Forces and veterans who are present but not in uniform may render the military salute. All other persons present should face the flag and stand at attention with the right hand over the heart, or if applicable, remove their headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart. Citizens of other countries present should stand at attention. All such conduct toward the flag in a moving column should be rendered at the moment the flag passes.

§ 10. Modification of Rules and Customs by President.

Any rule or custom pertaining to the display of the flag of the United States of America, set forth herein, may be altered, modified, or repealed, or additional rules with respect thereto may be prescribed, by the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the United States, whenever he deems it to be appropriate or desirable; and any such alteration or additional rule shall be set forth in a proclamation.

Title 36 United States Code:

§ 301. National Anthem.

(a) Designation. — The composition consisting of the words and music known as the Star-Spangled Banner is the national anthem.

(b) Conduct During Playing. — During a rendition of the national anthem —

(1) when the flag is displayed —

(A) all present except those in uniform should stand at attention facing the flag with the right hand over the heart;

(B) men not in uniform should remove their headdress with their right hand and hold the headdress at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart; and

(C) individuals in uniform should give the military salute at the first note of the anthem and maintain that position until the last note.

(2) When the flag is not displayed, all present should face toward the music and act in the same manner they would if the flag were displayed.

Stars of the US Flag: A Timeline

13 Stars (1777–95)
★ Delaware (December 7, 1787)
★ Pennsylvania (December 12, 1787)
★ New Jersey (December 18, 1787)
★ Georgia (January 2, 1788)
★ Connecticut (January 9, 1788)
★ Massachusetts (February 6, 1788)
★ Maryland (April 28, 1788)
★ South Carolina (May 23, 1788)
★ New Hampshire (June 21, 1788)
★ Virginia (June 25, 1788)
★ New York (July 26, 1788)
★ North Carolina (November 21, 1789)
★ Rhode Island (May 29, 1790)

15 Stars (1795–1818)
★ Vermont (March 4, 1791)
★ Kentucky (June 1, 1792)

20 Stars (1818–July 3, 1819)
★ Tennessee (June 1, 1796)
★ Ohio (March 1, 1803)
★ Louisiana (April 30, 1812)
★ Indiana (December 11, 1816)
★ Mississippi (December 10, 1817)

21 Stars (July 4, 1819–July 3, 1820)
★ Illinois (December 3, 1818)

23 Stars (July 4, 1820–July 3, 1822)
★ Alabama (December 14, 1819)
★ Maine (March 15, 1820)

24 Stars (July 4, 1822–July 3, 1836)
★ Missouri (August 10, 1821)

25 Stars (July 4, 1836–July 3, 1837)
★ Arkansas (June 15, 1836)

26 Stars (July 4, 1837–July 3, 1845)
★ Michigan (January 26, 1837)

27 Stars (July 4, 1846–July 3, 1846)
★ Florida (March 3, 1845)

28 Stars (July 4, 1846–July 3, 1847)
★ Texas (December 29, 1845)

29 Stars (July 4, 1847–July 3, 1848)
★ Iowa (December 28, 1846)

30 Stars (July 4, 1848–July 3, 1851)
★ Wisconsin (May 29, 1848)

31 Stars (July 4, 1851–July 3, 1858)
★ California (September 9, 1850)

32 Stars (July 4, 1858–July 3, 1859)
★ Minnesota (May 11, 1858)

33 Stars (July 4, 1859–July 3, 1861)
★ Oregon (February 14, 1859)

34 Stars (July 4, 1861–July 3, 1863)
★ Kansas (January 29, 1861)

35 Stars (July 4, 1863–July 3, 1865)
★ West Virginia (June 20, 1863)

36 Stars (July 4, 1865–July 3, 1867)
★ Nevada (October 31, 1864)

37 Stars (July 4, 1867–July 3, 1877)
★ Nebraska (March 1, 1867)

38 Stars (July 4, 1877–July 3, 1890)
★ Colorado (August 1, 1876)

43 Stars (July 4, 1890–July 3, 1891)
★ North Dakota (November 2, 1889)
★ South Dakota (November 2, 1889)
★ Montana (November 8, 1889)
★ Washington (November 11, 1889)
★ Idaho (July 3, 1890)

44 Stars (July 4, 1891–July 3, 1896)
★ Wyoming (July 10, 1890)

45 Stars (July 4, 1896–July 3, 1908)
★ Utah (January 4, 1896)

46 Stars (July 4, 1908–July 3, 1912)
★ Oklahoma (November 16, 1907)

48 Stars (July 4, 1912–July 3, 1959)
★ New Mexico (January 6, 1912)
★ Arizona (February 14, 1912)

49 Stars (July 4, 1959–July 3, 1960)
★ Alaska (January 3, 1959)

50 Stars (July 4, 1960–present)
★ Hawaii (August 21, 1959)

About the Cover

Frederick Edwin Church
***Our Flag*, 1864**
Indianapolis Museum of Art

Born in Hartford, Connecticut, Frederic Edwin Church (1826–1900) was one of the most prominent members of the Hudson River School of American landscape painters.

The son of a wealthy jeweler, Church pursued his interest in art from an early age, facilitated by his father's status and connections. In 1844, a family friend, Daniel Wadsworth—himself an amateur artist, arts patron, and founder of the Wadsworth Athenaeum Museum of Art—convinced the artist Thomas Cole to accept the young Church as a student. Church studied under the founder of the Hudson River School for two years, eventually becoming Cole's most successful pupil. His teacher attested to Church's talent, describing him as having "the finest eye for drawing in the world."[37]

In May 1848, at the age of 22, Church became the youngest Associate elected to the National Academy of Design. The following year he was promoted to Academician, earning full membership in the Academy alongside other artists such as Albert Bierstadt, Winslow Homer, and John Singer Sargent. In the early and mid-1850s, paintings such as *Home by the Lake* (1852), *The Falls of Tequendama* (1854), and *Niagara* (1857) won him much acclaim, with the latter—a seven-foot-wide portrait of Niagara Falls—especially bringing him to international prominence

Inspired by naturalist Alexander von Humboldt's multivolume work of geography and natural science, *Cosmos*, Church journeyed to South America in 1853 and 1857, visiting Colombia in the first expedition and Ecuador in the second. The sketches he completed on these journeys inspired paintings that further cemented Church's fame. In 1859, he revealed *The Heart of the Andes*, an enormous painting over five feet high and almost ten feet wide. Framed in an elaborate window-like structure (complete with drawn-back curtains) and displayed in a darkened room strategically lit by skylights, the

[37] Kevin J. Avery, "Frederic Edwin Church (1826–1900)," The Metropolitan Museum of Art, August 2009, www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/chur/hd_chur.htm.

painting drew over 12,000 viewers in three weeks to its New York City premiere. It was also shown in Britain and seven other US cities, becoming the most popular single-artwork exhibit of the Civil War era. *The Heart of the Andes* eventually sold for $10,000—at the time the greatest sum ever paid for a work by a living American artist.

While he is best known for his diverse landscapes, Church also created patriotic works. His *Our Banner in the Sky* (c. 1861), depicts the famous American flag of Fort Sumter as part of a twilight scene, the colors blending with the sunset. The cover painting of this volume, *Our Flag* (1864) features the 31-star flag of the Union rising above the smoke of a battle.

Describe what you see in the painting, concentrating on the placement of the flag and its relation to the rest. What message does the painting convey? What mood does it evoke? According to the painting, how solid is the Union? How well will it fare?

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