

“I Am Your Flag”

(Author Unknown GL Americanism Manual BPOE Code 51200)

Some people call me Old Glory, others call me the Star Spangled Banner, but whatever they call me, I am your Flag — the Flag of the United States of America.

Something has been bothering me, so I thought I might talk it over with you, because you see, it is about you and me.

I remember some time ago people lined up on both sides of the street to watch the parade and, naturally, I was leading every parade, proudly waving in the breeze. When your daddy saw me coming, he immediately removed his hat and placed it against his left shoulder so that his hand was directly over his heart — remember?

What happened? I’m still the same old Flag. Oh, I have a few more stars since you were a boy and a lot more blood has been shed since those parades of long ago.

But now I don’t feel as proud as I used to. When I come down your street and you just stand there with your hands in your pockets, I may get a small glance and then you look away. Then I see children running around and shouting — they don’t seem to know who I am.

I saw a man take his hat off, then look around. He didn’t see anybody else with theirs off, so he quickly put it back on. And what about that night at the ball game, when they played the “Star Spangled Banner” and I waved so proudly in the breeze, but nobody bothered to sing? Oh, they stood up, all right, as sort of a mild patriotic gesture, but then they talked among themselves about the game and weather, but they did not sing. I felt hurt.

Is it a sin to be patriotic? Have you forgotten what I stand for and where I have been? Anzio, Guadalcanal, Korea, Vietnam, and Persian Gulf. Take a look at the memorial honor rolls sometime — names of those who never came back — who gave their lives to keep this republic free.

One nation, under God. When you salute me, you are saluting them.

I may not be coming down your street for a long time, as it seems that patriotic parades are a thing of the past. But when I do, will you do me a big favor?

Stand up straight, place your right hand over your heart, and if they play the “Star Spangled Banner,” sing out loud and clear. I will salute you by waving back..

Show me you remember.

I AM YOUR FLAG!



Show Your Colors, America

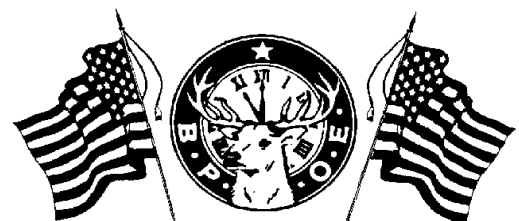


I Am Old Glory

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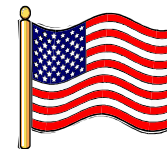
I Am Old Glory: For more than eleven* score years I have been the banner of hope and freedom for generation after generation of Americans. Born amid the first flames of America’s fight for freedom, I am the symbol of a country that has grown from a little group of thirteen colonies to a united nation of fifty* sovereign states. Planted firmly on the high pinnacle of American Faith my gently fluttering folds have proved an inspiration to untold millions. Men have followed me into battle with unwavering courage. They have looked upon me as symbol of national unity. They have prayed that they and their fellow citizens might continue to enjoy the life, liberty and pursuit of happiness, which have been granted to every American as the heritage of free men. So long as men love liberty more than life itself; so long as they treasure the priceless privileges bought with the blood of our forefathers; so long as the principles of truth, justice and charity for all remain deeply rooted in human hearts, I shall continue to be the enduring banner of the United States of America.

*Updated. Originally written by Marine Master Sergeant Percy Webb (1879-1945). Sergeant Webb wrote this famous Flag tribute in the original “Our Flag” booklet distributed at the Chicago World’s Fair, 1933.



North Carolina Elks

Wear an American Flag Pin!
Fly the American Flag!



2009 Flag-Flying Calendar

The Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks serve as constant reminders to the people of our Community and Nation that America means freedom. Stimulate the spirit of American patriotism by flying the flag of our country.

The Flag should be displayed on all days, especially on:

January 1st: New Year's Day

January 20th: Inauguration Day

3rd Monday each January:

Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday

February 12th: Lincoln's Birthday

3rd Monday in February:

Washington's Birthday and Presidents' Day

March/April (variable): Easter

2nd Sunday in May: Mother's Day

3rd Saturday in May: Armed Services Day

Last Monday in May: Memorial Day

(fly at half-staff until noon)

June 14th: Flag Day

3rd Sunday in June: Father's Day

July 4th: Independence Day

1st Monday in September: Labor Day

September 7th-13th: National Patriotism Week

September 11th: Patriot Day

(fly at half staff)

September 17th: Constitution Day (Citizenship Day)

2nd Monday in October: Columbus Day

1st Tuesday in November: Election Day

November 11th: Veterans' Day

4th Thursday in November: Thanksgiving Day

December 7th: National Pearl Harbor Day

(fly at half-staff)

December 25th: Christmas Day

And such days as may be proclaimed by the President of the United States; the birthdays of States (date of admission); and on State holidays.

*PLUS Anniversary Date of your Town's Founding

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."

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag 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.

*Under Ss 9 Veterans and members of the military not in uniform are now permitted to salute.



The original Pledge of Allegiance

"I pledge allegiance to my Flag and the Republic for which it stands- one nation indivisible-with liberty and justice for all."

On September 8, 1892, the Boston based "The Youth's Companion" magazine published a few words for students to repeat on Columbus Day that year. Written by Francis Bellamy, the circulation manager and native of Rome, New York, and reprinted on thousands of leaflets, was sent out to public schools across the country. On October 12, 1892, the quadricentennial of Columbus' arrival, more than 12 million children recited the Pledge of Allegiance, thus beginning a required school-day ritual.

At the first National Flag Conference in Washington D.C., on June 14, 1923, a change was made. For clarity, the words "the Flag of the United States" replaced "my flag". In the following years various other changes were suggested but were never formally adopted.

It was not until 1942 that Congress officially recognized the Pledge of Allegiance. One year later, in June 1943, the Supreme Court ruled that school children could not be forced to recite it. In fact, today only half of our fifty states have laws that encourage the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance in the classroom!

In June of 1954 an amendment was made to add the words "under God". Then-President Dwight D. Eisenhower said "In this way we are reaffirming the transcendence of religious faith in America's heritage and future; in this way we shall constantly strengthen those spiritual weapons which forever will be our country's most powerful resource in peace and war."

The National Anthem

The Star-Spangled Banner

Written by Francis Scott Key on September 14th, 1814

*Oh, say, can you see, by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming?
Whose broad stripes and bright stars, 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.
Oh, say, does that star-spangled banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?*

On the shore dimly seen, thro' the mists of the deep,
Where the foe's haughty host in dread silence reposes,
What is that which the breeze, o'er the towering steep,
As it fitfully blows, half conceals, half discloses?
Now it catches the gleam of the morning's first beam,
In full glory reflected, now shines on the stream;
'Tis the star-spangled banner: oh, long may it wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

And where is that band who so vauntingly swore
That the havoc of war and the battle's confusion
A home and a country should leave us no more?
Their blood has wash'd out their foul footsteps' pollution.
No refuge could save the hireling and slave
From the terror of flight or the gloom of the grave,
And the star-spangled banner in triumph doth wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

Oh, thus be it ever when free men shall stand,
Between their loved homes and the war's desolation;
Blest with vict'ry and peace, may the heav'n-rescued land
Praise the Power that has made and preserved us as a nation.
Then conquer we must, when our cause is just,
And this be our motto: "In God is our trust";
And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.



The American's Creed

"I believe in the United States of America as a Government of the people by the people, for the people, whose just powers are derived from the consent of the governed; a democracy in a Republic; a sovereign Nation of many sovereign States; a perfect Union, one and inseparable; established upon those principles of freedom, equality, justice, and humanity for which American patriots sacrificed their lives and fortunes.

I therefore believe it is my duty to my Country to love it; to support its Constitution; to obey its laws; to respect its flag, and to defend it against all enemies."

Historical Notes: The American's Creed was a result of a nationwide contest for writing a National Creed, which would be a brief summary of the American political faith founded upon things fundamental in American history and tradition.

The Flag Code

In order that we may be knowledgeable on the laws relating to the Flag of the United States of America, we should read the details spelled out in the United States Code. Title 4, Chapter 1 pertains to the Flag and Seal, Seal of Government and the States; Title 36, Chapter 10 pertains to patriotic customs and observations. These laws were supplemented by Executive Orders and Presidential Proclamations. All are important, but we only have space for a limited amount which pertain to Patriotic Customs.

171. National Anthem;

Star Spangled Banner, Conduct During Playing.

During rendition of the National Anthem when the Flag is displayed, all present, except those in uniform, should stand at attention facing the Flag with the right hand over the heart. Persons not in uniform should remove their headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart. Persons in uniform should render the military salute at the first note of the anthem and retain this position until the last note. When the Flag is not displayed, those present should face the music and act in the same manner that they would if the Flag were displayed there.

172. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag;

Manner of Delivery.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag should be rendered by standing at attention facing the Flag with the right hand over the heart. When not in uniform, men should remove their 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.

177. Conduct

During Hoisting, or Lowering, or Passing of the 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, except those in uniform should face the Flag and stand at attention with the right hand over the heart. Those present in uniform shall render the military salute. When not in uniform, men should remove their headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart. Aliens should stand at attention. The salute to the Flag in a moving column should be rendered at the moment the Flag passes.

Care of Your Flag

The life of your Flag depends on your care. Dirt can cut fabrics, dull colors and cause wear. Most outdoor Flags can be washed in mild detergent and thoroughly rinsed. Indoor and parade Flags should be dry cleaned. Damaged Flags can be repaired and utilized as long as the overall dimensions are not noticeably altered. American Legion posts and local governments often have facilities to dispose of unserviceable Flags. Store your Flags in a well-ventilated area away from harsh chemicals or cleaning compounds. If your Flag gets wet, never store it until completely dry. Wet folds cause permanent creases. Dampness ruins fabric and causes mildew. Pole care is also related to Flag care. Rust and scale cause permanent stains and some metallic oxides eat holes in fabric.



Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of the United States of America

THE FLAG of the United States of America: ITS HISTORY

Heraldry is as old as the human race. The carrying of banners has been a custom among all peoples in all ages. These banners usually contain some concept of the life or government of those who fashion them.

The evolution of the American Flag marks the progression of the government of the American people.

From the founding of Jamestown in Virginia, in 1607, until 1775, the Flag of England was the Flag of the Peoples of America.

In 1775, the Pine Tree Flag was adopted for all colonial vessels, and this was the banner carried by the Continental forces in the Battle of Bunker Hill.

The Southern colonies from 1776 to 1777 used the Snake Flag.

In the latter part of 1775 the Continental Congress appointed a committee to consider the question of a single Flag for the thirteen colonies. That committee recommended a design of thirteen alternate stripes of red and white, with an azure field in the upper corner bearing the red cross of St. George and the white cross of St. Andrew. John Paul Jones, the senior lieutenant of the flagship "Alfred," hoisted this Flag to the masthead on December 3, 1775, and one month later it was raised over the headquarters of General Washington at Cambridge, Massachusetts, "In compliment," as he wrote, "to the United Colonies."

This Flag, called "The Continental Colors" and "The Grand Union," was never carried in the field by the Continental land forces, but it was used by the Navy as its exclusive ensign, and was the first American Flag to receive a salute of honor, a salute of eleven guns from the Fort of Orange in the Dutch West Indies.

In response to a general demand for a banner more representative of our country, the Congress on June 14, 1777, provided: — "That the Flag of the United States be thirteen stripes of alternating red and white; and that the union be thirteen stars, white on a blue field, representing a new constellation."

It is generally believed that in May or June of 1776, a committee consisting of George Washington, Robert Morris and George Ross commissioned Betsy Ross, a Philadelphia Quakeress, to make a Flag from a rough design they left with her. It is said that she suggested that the stars should have five points, rather than six.

This starry banner was first flown at Fort Stanwix, called Fort Schuyler at that time, near the city of Rome, New York, on August 3, 1777, and was under fire three days later at the battle of Oriskany, August 6, 1777, during a British and Indian attack.

The first official salute to the Stars and Stripes was given on February 14, 1778, by France, on the French coast, when the "Ranger," under command of John Paul Jones, was saluted by the French fleet.

This Flag, then carried by the "Ranger," was made by the young women of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, from stripes of their best colored-silk dresses and the white wedding gown of a recent bride.

It is said that this same "Ranger's" Flag was flown by Jones' ship, the "Bon Homme Richard" in its thrilling fight by moonlight, upon the high seas, with the British frigate "Serapis." When the "Serapis" struck her colors, the immortal fame of John Paul Jones was insured as the intrepid defender of the youthful republic.

The original thirteen Stars and Stripes represented the original thirteen colonies. In 1795 two additional Stars and Stripes were added to represent admission to the Union of Vermont and Kentucky. Under this banner of fifteen Stars and Stripes was fought the War of 1812. It was the sight of it flying over Fort McHenry, on September 14, 1814, that inspired Francis Scott Key to write what was to become our national anthem, "The Star-Spangled Banner."

Miss Margaret Young, who cut the stars for that particular banner, was the mother of Henry Sanderson, the Grand Exalted Ruler of the Order of Elks in 1884.

The Congress on April 14, 1818, adopted a resolution that on and after July 4, 1818, the number of stripes should be thirteen and that the blue field should carry one star for each of the twenty states in the union and that a new star should be added for each state thereafter admitted.

Since 1818, there has been no change in the Flag design except that twenty-eight new stars were added before July 4, 1912, and this Flag of forty-eight stars flew over this nation for forty-seven years until just before the Vietnam War.

On July 4, 1959, a star was added for Alaska, our first non-connected state and a year later, Hawaii, our island state added a fiftieth star. Our present Flag — fifty stars and thirteen stripes. It is accompanied by the POW-MIA Flag to recognize the plight and demise of a special group of our Armed Services, those who were prisoners of war or still remain missing in action.

