

STAR SPANGLED MUSIC *Editions*

The Star-Spangled Banner

First Sheet Music Imprint, Arranged by Thomas Carr

1814



Words by Francis Scott Key

Original Music by John Stafford Smith



(Bb Major • Medium Voice)

Edited by Mark Clague and Andrew Kuster

STAR SPANGLED MUSIC
Foundation



editions@starspangledmusic.org

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The Star-Spangled Banner (first sheet music imprint), 1814

Lyric by Francis Scott Key (1779–1843); Music by John Stafford Smith (1750–1836)

Arranged by Thomas Carr (d. 1849)

Historical Note

Usually referred to as a poet, Francis Scott Key is more accurately remembered—at least in connection with “The Star-Spangled Banner”—as a lyricist. In fact, he wrote lyrics for a total of three songs and ten hymns. In all cases, he invented words to fit previously existing musical models. This was typical in Key’s era when hand-engraved music notation was expensive, but printing words was not. In one strategy known as the broadside ballad tradition, lyrics would be written to match the rhythm and contour of familiar tunes and published as text only in newspapers and books. The melodies for these “broadside ballads” were usually identified by a note just below their titles. The most successful of these lyrics went “viral” and were reprinted again and again by local newspapers.

Such was the case with Key’s “In Defense of Fort McHenry” (as the lyric was originally known). It was first printed as a broadside ballad with the indication “Tune—Anacreon in Heaven.” In the patriotic jubilation following Baltimore’s victory, Key’s lyric was reprinted widely. Carrs Music Store and music publishing house in Baltimore thus recognized a commercial opportunity when Francis Scott Key approached the firm about publishing his song with accompanying musical notation. According to Mary Jordan Carr, her father Thomas Carr created the musical arrangement “by Mr. Key’s request in his presence from his manuscript selected from an English Composition—entitled “The Anacreon in Heaven” [*sic*]—and approved by him.”¹

Thomas Carr’s resulting arrangement is faithful to the 1779 imprint of “The Anacreontic Song” and this issue was likely in the Carr family collection as Joseph Carr had owned a music shop in London and brought his business to Baltimore in 1794. Thomas, who also played organ at Christ Church in Baltimore, added an original introduction and coda that would be imitated by other publishers up through the U.S. Civil War. His imprint also marks two other vital innovations.

Published in late October or November of 1814, the Carr imprint is not only the first presentation of the lyric with a notated accompaniment, it is also the first

publication of any sort to bear the title “The Star Spangled Banner.” Carr’s arrangement is further the first representation of the “Anacreon” melody to use a raised fourth scale degree. This half-step elevation adds momentum to the melody and emphasizes specific words in the text. For Key’s first verse, the words “light,” “fight” and finally “there” are stressed.

Performance Suggestions

The original version of “The Star-Spangled Banner” is a song celebrating an unexpected victory. It is thus upbeat, not a sacred hymn. The tempo is marked “with spirit” and is sung faster than is common today. While group performance is appropriate, in Key’s era the Banner would have been sung by a soloist with a choir (often the audience) joining in on a repetition of the chorus (i.e., the repeating final two lines of each verse). This refrain creates a ritualized affirmation of the lyric (and also gives the soloist a short respite). Note too that the melody’s contour and rhythm are different than is traditional today. Care must be taken to sing the notation as on the page. It is rather easy to accidentally sing what is habitual instead.

Sources

This edition created from one of the dozen or so surviving copies of the original Carr Music Store first imprint held in the collection of the University of Michigan at the William L. Clements Library (see plate).

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¹ Joseph Muller, *The Star Spangled Banner* (New York: G.A. Baker, 1935), p. 43–46.



THE
STAR SPANGLED BANNER

A PATRIOTIC SONG.

Baltimore, Printed and Sold at CARRS Music Store, 56 Baltimore Street.
Air, Adapted to Harmonium.

Con Spirito

O! say can you see by the dawn's early light, What so

proudly we hail at the twilight's last gleaming, Whose broad stripes & bright stars thro'

perilous fight, O'er the ramparts we watch'd, so gallantly streaming. And the

Rockets red glare, the Bombs bursting in air, Gave proof through the night that our

(T.C.) (Adapt^d & Arr^d by T.C.) (Pl.)

Soft time Chorus.

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.

L.H.

(3)
On the shore dimly seen through the deep
Where the flocks are bred, in local silence,
What is that shape the breeze, over the waving steep,
A home and a country, shall leave us no more.
As it fitfully blows, half conceals, half discloses,
Now it catches the gleam of the morning's first beam,
In full glory reflected new 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.

(4)
O! thus be it ever, when freemen shall stand
Between their lov'd home, and their war's desolation,
Blest with vict'ry and peace may the heav'n rescued Land,
Praise the Pow'r 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 &c.

For the Flute.

Con Spirito

(T.C.) (Adapt^d & Arr^d by T.C.) (Pl.)

Plate: Carrs Music Store first printing of "The Star Spangled Banner," 1814; note misspelling "patriotic" in subtitle
Courtesy William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan (Ann Arbor)

The Star-Spangled Banner

Words
Francis Scott Key
(1779–1843)

First sheet-music edition.
This score a whole step lower than the source.
1814

Music
Anacreon in Heaven
John Stafford Smith
Arr. Thomas Carr

Con Spirito §

1. O___
2. On the
3. And___
4. O___
§

Con Spirito

5

say can you see by the dawn's ear - ly light What so proud - ly we hail'd at the
shore dim - ly seen through the mists of the deep, Where the foe's haugh - ty host in dread
where is that band who so vaunt - ing - ly swore That the hav - oc of war and the
thus be it ev - er when free - men shall stand Be - tween their lov'd home and the

8

twi - light's last gleam - ing, Whose broad stripes and bright stars through the per - il - ous fight O'er the
si - lence re - pos - es, What is that which the breeze, o'er the tow - er - ing steep, As it
bat - tle's con - fu - sion A_____ home and a Coun - try should leave us no more? Their____
war's des - o - la - tion! Blest with vic - t'ry and peace may the heav'n res - cued land Praise the

The Star-Spangled Banner

11

ram-parts we watch'd were so gal-lant-ly stream-ing? And the rock-ets' red glare, the bombs
fit-ful-ly blows, half con-ceals, half dis-clos-es? Now it catch-es the gleam of the
blood has wash'd out their foul foot-steps pol-lu-tion. No— ref-uge could save the—
pow'r that hath made and pre-serv'd us a na-tion! Then— con-quer we must when our

14

2nd time
Chorus.

burst-ing in air Gave— proof through the night that our flag was still there. O—
morn-ing's first beam, In full glo-ry re-flect-ed now shines in the stream, 'Tis the
hire-ling and slave From the ter-ror of flight or the gloom of the grave, And the
cause it is just, And— this be our mot-to: "In God is our trust," And the

17

say does that star-span-gled ban-ner— yet— wave O'er the land of the— free and the
star-span-gled ban-ner, O long may— it— wave O'er the land of the— free and the
star-span-gled ban-ner in tri-umph— doth— wave O'er the land of the— free and the
star-span-gled ban-ner in tri-umph— shall— wave O'er the land of the— free and the

20

Sym[phonia].

[D.S.]

home of the brave?
home of the brave!
home of the brave.
home of the brave.

Sym[phonia].

L.H. [D.S.]