The Star-Spangled Banner

The "Star-Spangled Banner" was composed under the following circumstances:

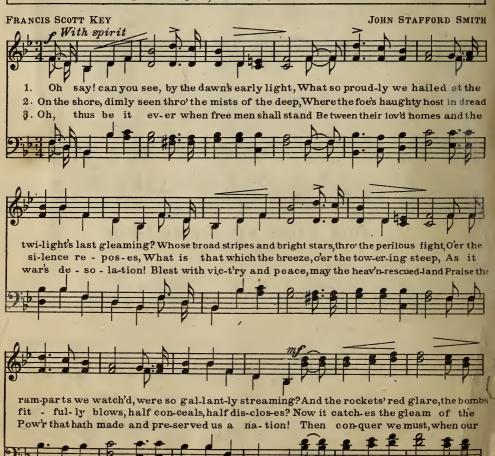
It was on the evening of September 13,1814, during the War of 1812, that a British fleet was anchored in Chesapeake Bay. A Dr. Beanes, an old resident of Upper Marlborough; Maryland, had been captured by the British and sent as a prisoner to Admiral Cochrane's fiagship.

Francis Scott Key, a young lawyer of Baltimore, hearing of the misfortune of Dr. Beanes, who was his personal friend, hastened to the British commander to endeaver to have his friend released. The enemy was about to attack Fort McHenry, so refused to allow Mr. Key and Dr. Beanes to return until after the fort was captured.

All through the night of September 13th, the bombardment was kept up, and in the light of the "rockets red glare, the bombs bursting in air" they could see the American flag still waving over the old fort. And when, in the first rays of dawn of September 14th, he still beheld the same glorious banner waving from its accustomed place, Francis Scott Key wrote the words of that wonderful song "The Star Spangled Banner."

The next day Key went ashore, and, after copying his poem, showed it to a friend and relative, Judge Nicholson, who saw its worth and at his suggestion it was printed. Soon after it was adapted to an old English air known as "To Anacreon in Heaven," the composition of which is credited to John Stafford Smith, who is supposed to have written the music some time between 1770 and 1775. "The Star-Spangled Banner" was first sung in public by Ferdinand Durang, an actor, in a tavern near the Holiday Street Theatre in Baltimore, Md.

Francis Scott Key was the son of John Ross Key, an officer of the Revolutionary Army. He was born August 1,1779, and died January 11,1843, leaving "The Star-Spangled Banner" as a monument to his patriotic spirit, and an inspiration to his countrymen.



The Star-Spangled Banner-Continued

