



# AMERICA'S STAR-SPANGLED BANNER

A TRIBUTE TO THE AMERICAN FLAG

MARGOT MORRELL





For James and Naeyl,  
May the love of freedom and liberty flourish throughout your lifetimes.

This flag, with 13 stars, flew over Fort Independence in Boston Harbor during the American Revolution.

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In the 1700s, Great Britain's colonies did not have their own flags.

When the French and Indian War broke out in 1754, Benjamin Franklin published a cartoon that urged the colonies to unite.

Ten years later, Franklin's design took on a more powerful meaning when the colonies – from New Hampshire to Georgia - united to resist tyranny.

Note: Franklin did not include Georgia, and he combined the New England states. At the time, Delaware was part of Pennsylvania.







# DONT TREAD ON ME

In the early days of the American Revolution, Christopher Gadsden, a delegate to the Continental Congress from Charleston, SC, and a brigadier general in the Continental Army, designed a flag for use by the Colonists' Army and Navy.

On battlefields and at sea, flags are important tools to identify friends and foes.

Gadsden used Benjamin Franklin's rattlesnake design on his flag.



When Franklin saw Gadsden's flag, he commented on the symbolism of the rattlesnake:

- "The ancients considered the serpent as an emblem of wisdom."
- "The Rattlesnake is found in no other quarter of the world besides America."
- "She has no eye-lids. She may therefore be esteemed an emblem of vigilance."
- She never begins an attack, nor, when once engaged, ever surrenders. She is therefore an emblem of magnanimity and true courage."
- Rattlesnake "wounds however small, are decisive and fatal. Conscious of this, she never wounds till she has generously given notice, even to her enemy, and cautioned him against the danger of treading on her."

The Pine Tree flag was designed by George Washington's secretary, Joseph Reed, in 1775, for use by warships. "An Appeal to Heaven" comes from British philosopher John Locke's writings on government.

Today, without Locke's words, the design is still used in Massachusetts on flags designed for boats and ships. The Pine Tree has been a symbol of New England for over 400 years.

# AN APPEAL TO HEAVEN

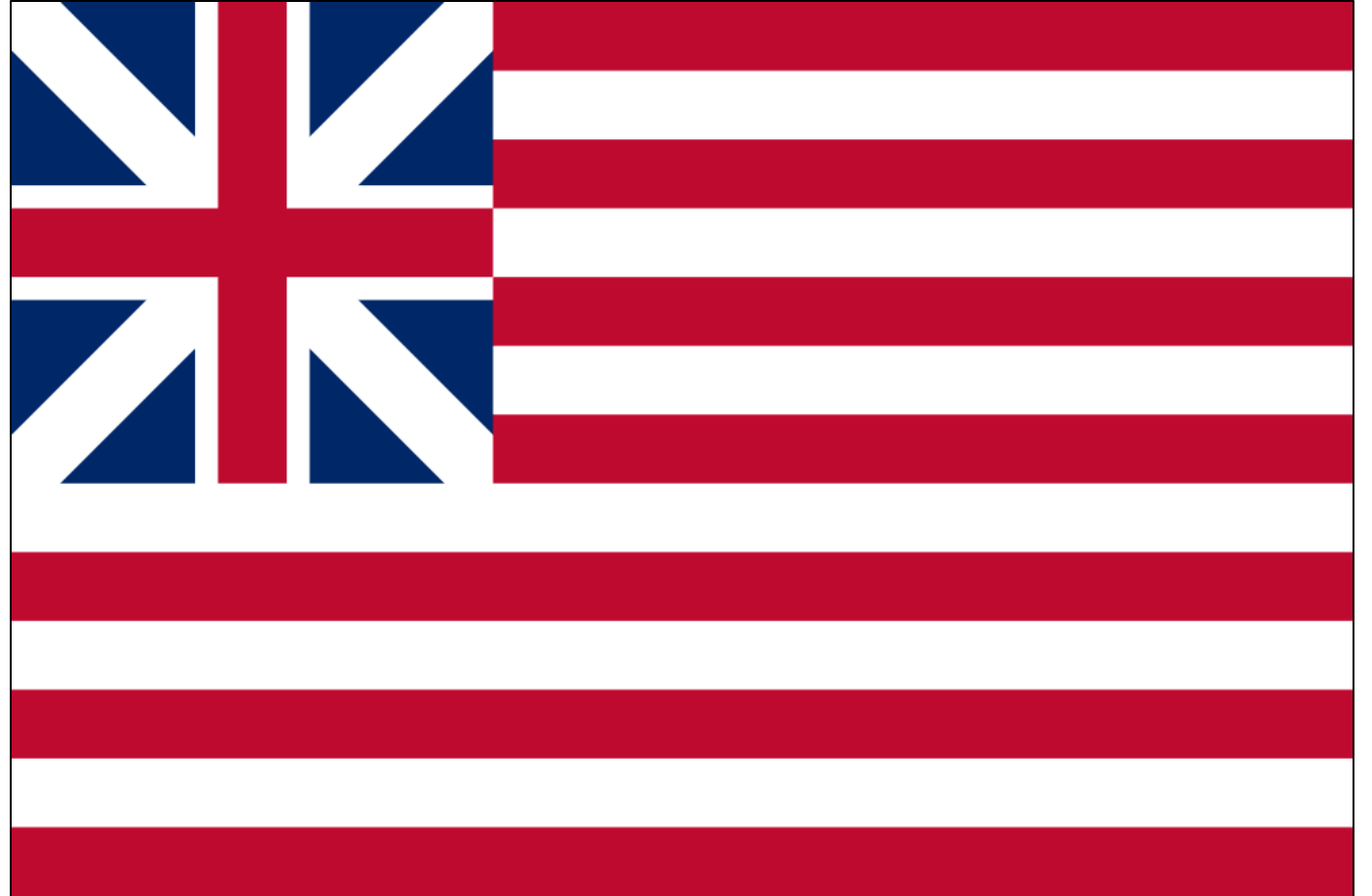




Other colonists designed flags.

In Taunton, Massachusetts, the  
SONS OF LIBERTY designed the  
Liberty and Union Flag.

The Grand Union Flag, also known as the "Continental Colours," was the first official flag of the colonies' Continental Congress.





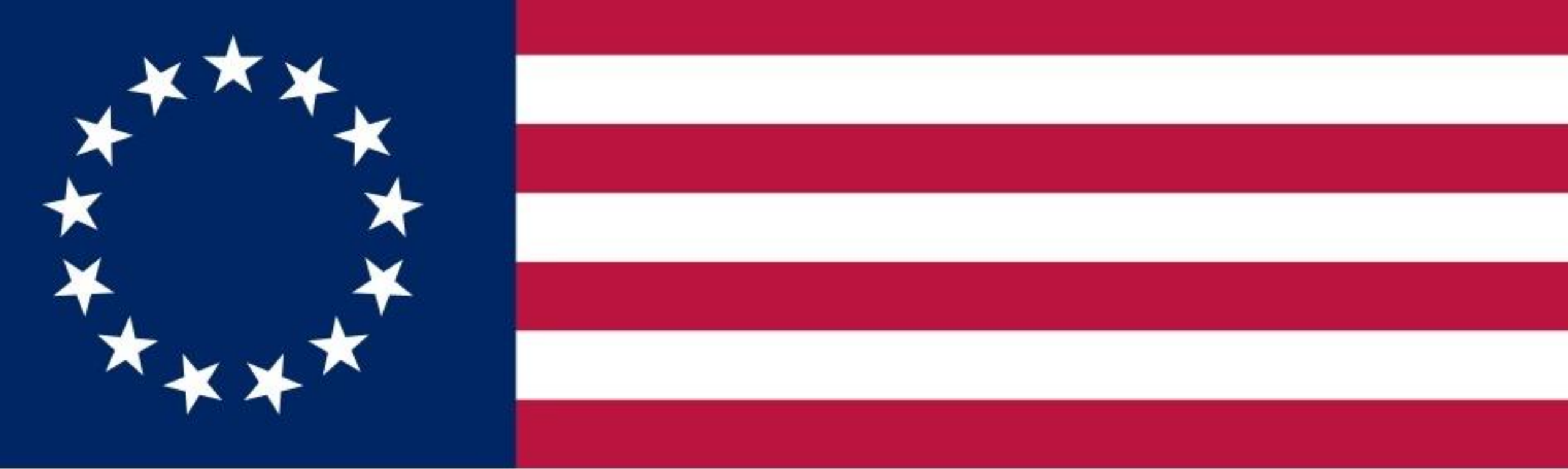


These flags were based on Britain's "Red Ensign" which had been in use since 1700. Using Britain's Union Jack motif in 1775 reflected how reluctant the patriots were to declare independence from the mother country.



On July 4, 1776, in a unanimous decision, the United States of America declared independence from Great Britain.





A year later, as the first birthday of the United States approached, Congress settled on a design and announced on June 14, 1777, "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."



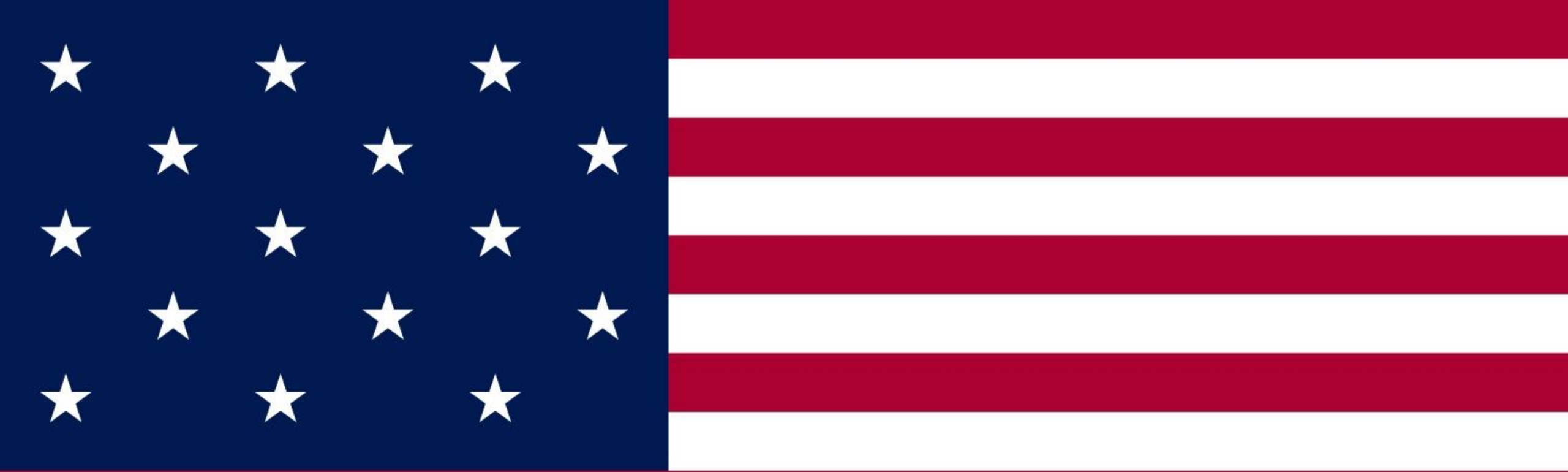


100 years later, descendants of Philadelphia seamstress, Betsy Ross, claimed she had designed and made America's first flag at the request of George Washington. There isn't any evidence for that in historic documents.



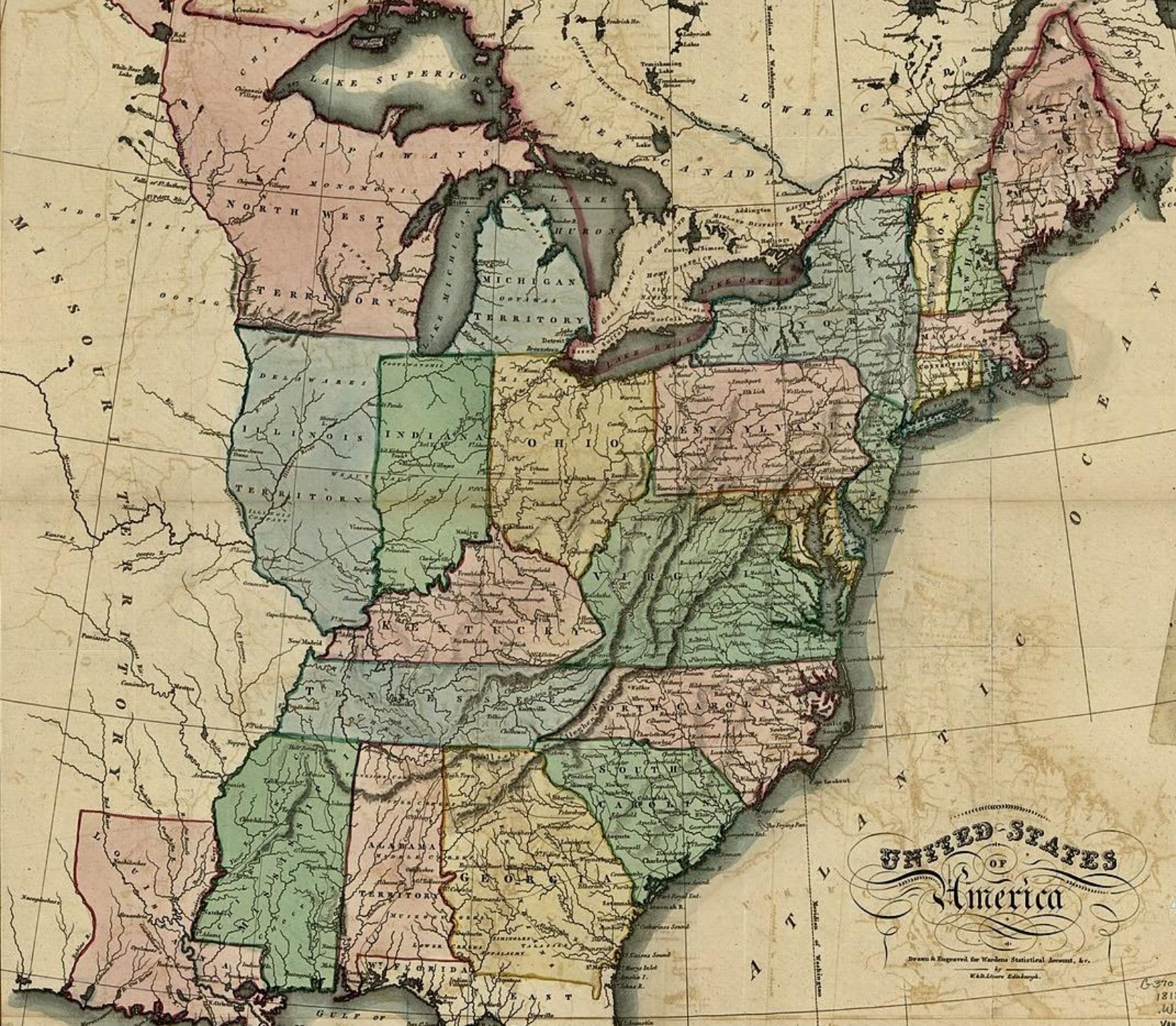


Today we're not sure what the first official American flag looked like!  
But we do know, our flag's first nickname was "the Stars and Stripes."



In 1794, President George Washington signed a law to change the flag's design when two new states, Vermont and Kentucky, were admitted to the Union. For the first and only time, stripes were added to the flag as well as stars.





Over the next twenty-three years, Tennessee, Ohio, Louisiana, Indiana, and Mississippi were admitted to the Union but the flag did not change until 1818.

In part, because during those years America's presidents were preoccupied by another conflict with Great Britain.





The War of 1812 began as a dispute between Great Britain and the United States over borders and trade. The conflict ended when Andrew Jackson defeated the British at the Battle of New Orleans in 1815.



When Major George Armistead was appointed commander of Fort McHenry in Baltimore, Maryland in 1813, he ordered a large flag – "a garrison flag" - to fly over the fort.

The Flag House and  
Star-Spangled Banner Museum.

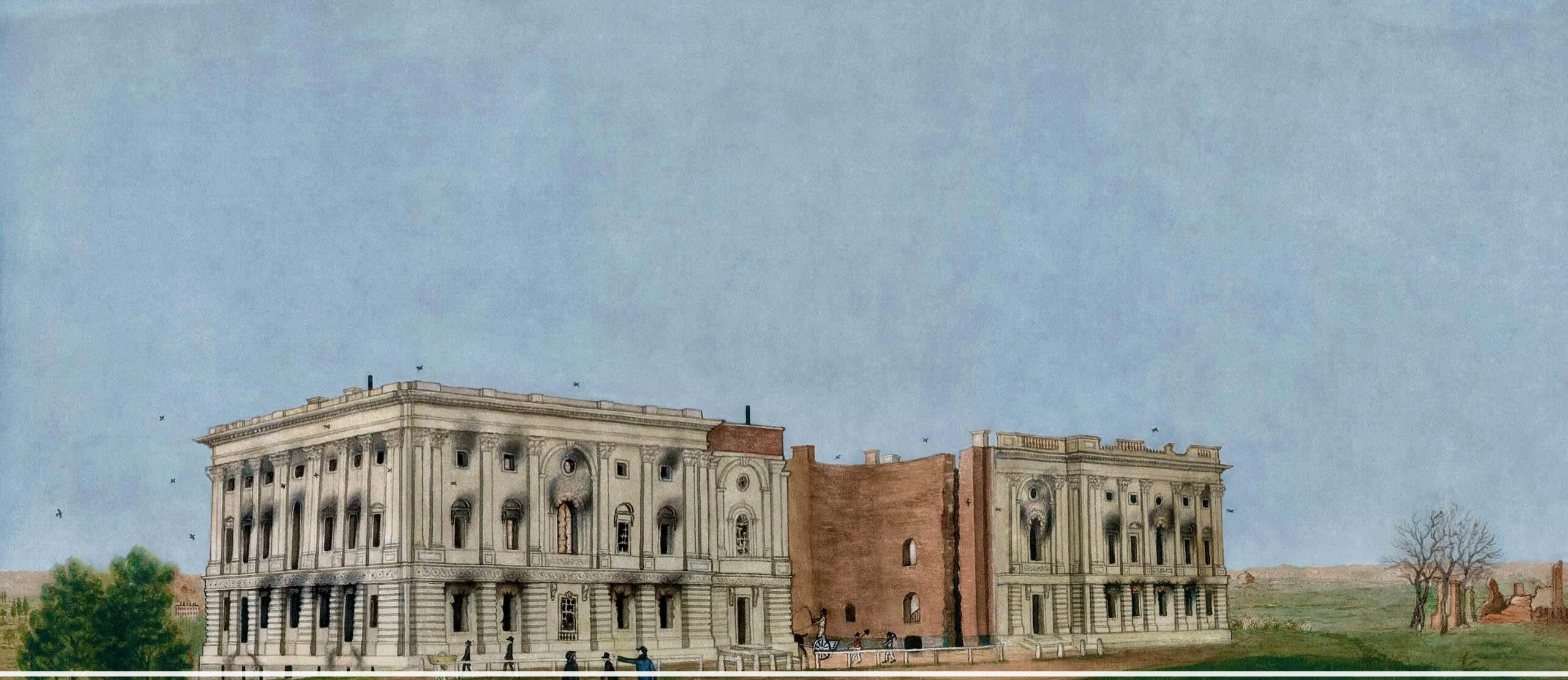






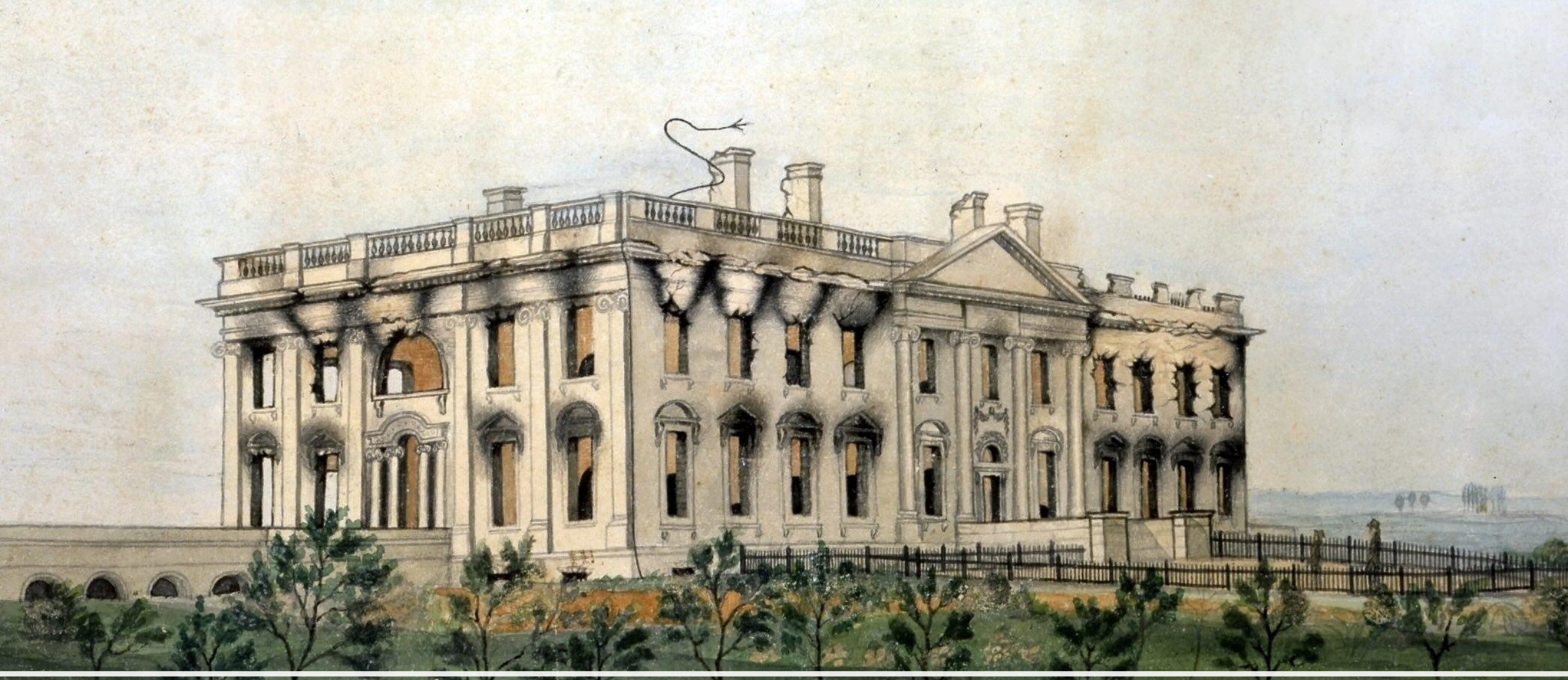
Baltimore seamstress, Mary Young Pickersgill, and her staff, created the enormous flag - 42 feet by 30 feet. It took over a month to make the flag.





A year later, on August 24, 1814, British troops destroyed the United States Capitol.





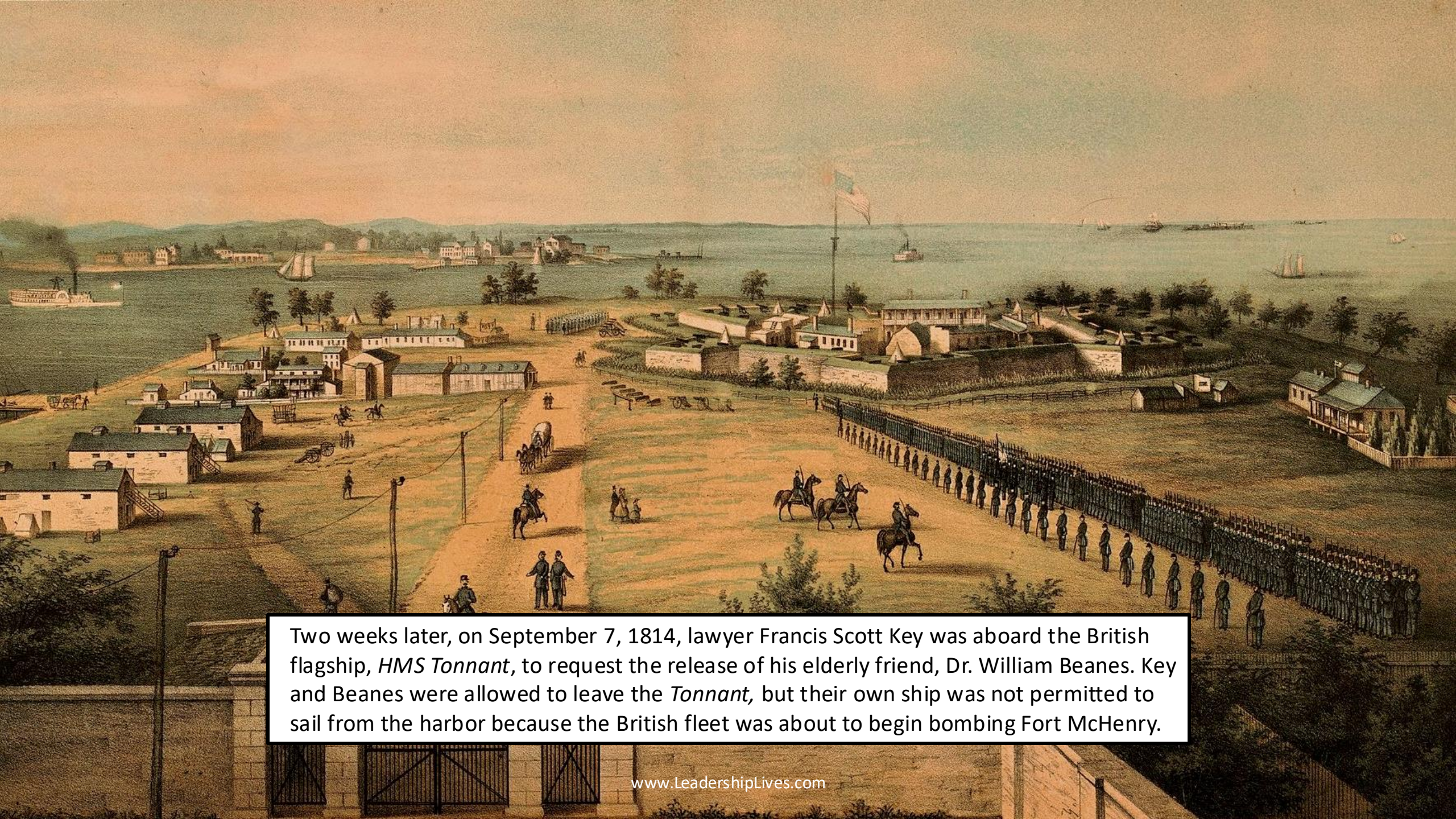
Then they set fire to the White House.





The president was out of town but, as British troops approached the White House, First Lady Dolley Madison had the staff slice the portrait of George Washington by Gilbert Stuart out of its frame, rolled it up, and escaped.





Two weeks later, on September 7, 1814, lawyer Francis Scott Key was aboard the British flagship, *HMS Tonnant*, to request the release of his elderly friend, Dr. William Beanes. Key and Beanes were allowed to leave the *Tonnant*, but their own ship was not permitted to sail from the harbor because the British fleet was about to begin bombing Fort Mifflin.



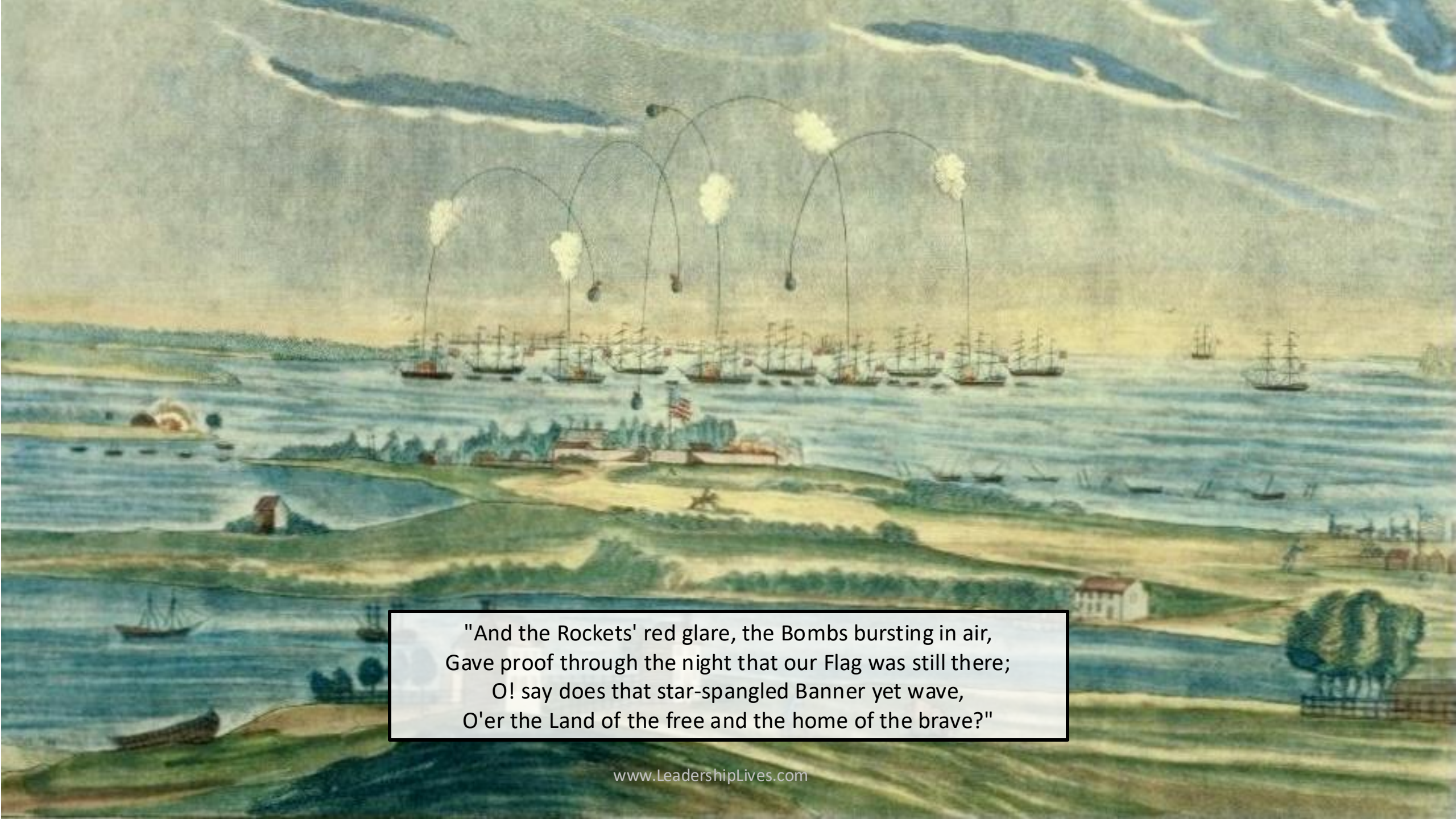


For twenty-five hours, from daybreak on September 13<sup>th</sup> to early the next morning, Francis Scott Key watched as British ships pounded Fort McHenry with more than 1500 shells.

During the night, Baltimore put out all lights. When dawn broke on the 14<sup>th</sup>, Key could see Fort McHenry's flag waving in the wind. Astounded by the sight – which meant the Americans had not surrendered - he grabbed an envelope from his pocket and began writing a poem...

"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 watch'd, 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?"

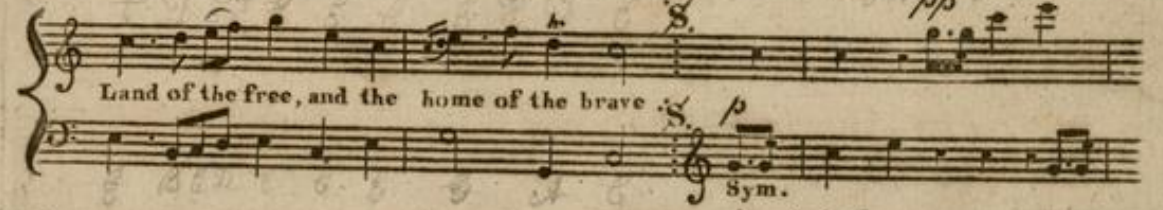
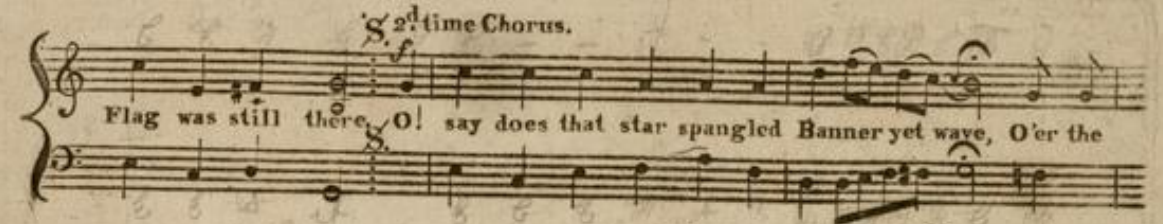
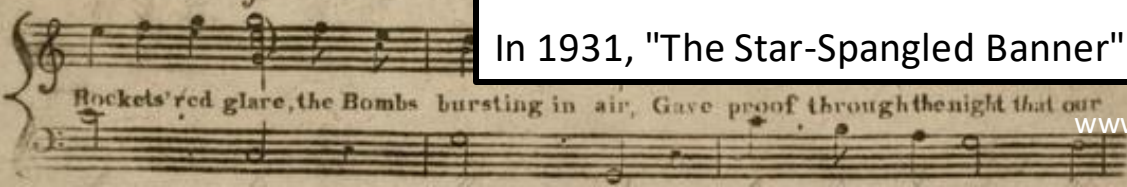
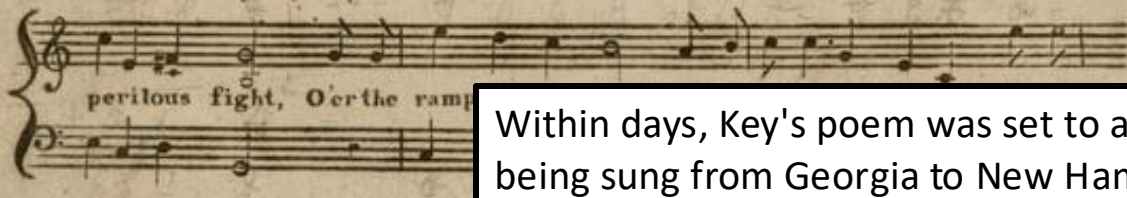
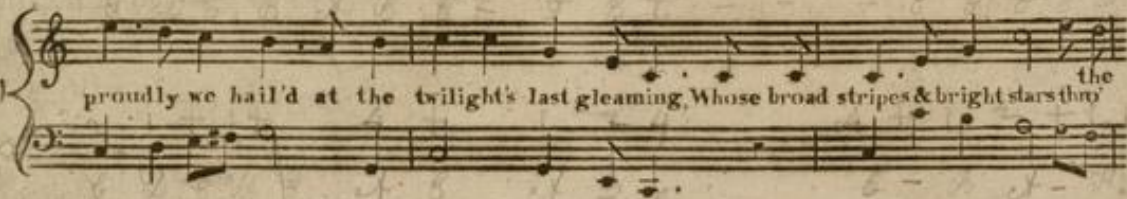
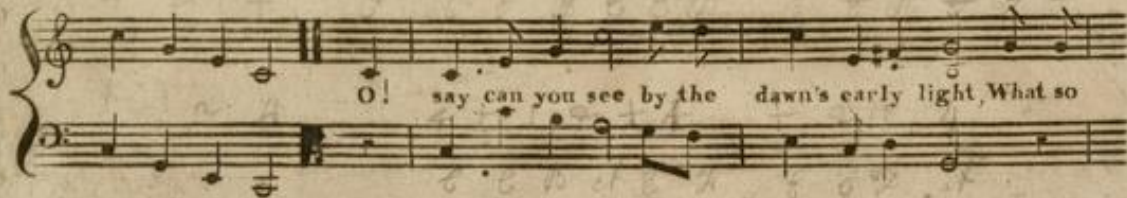


THE  
STAR SPANGLED BANNER

A PATRIOTIC SONG.

Baltimore. Printed and Sold at CARRS Music Store 36 Baltimore Street.  
Air, Anacreon in Heaven.

Con Spirito



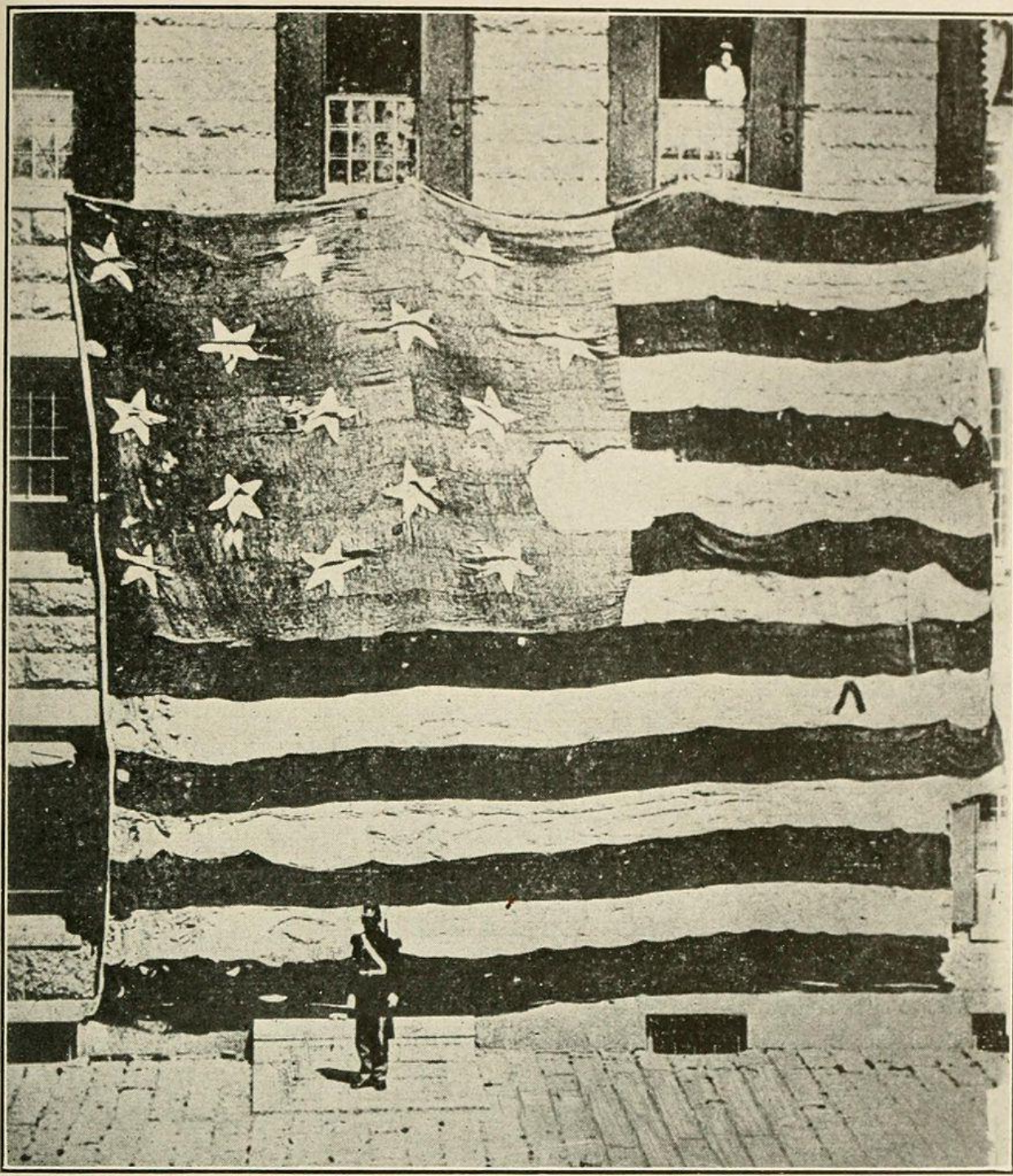
On the shore dimly seen through the mists of the deep,  
Where the foe's haughty host in dread silence reposes,  
What is that which the breeze, o'er the towering steep,  
As it fitfully blows, half conceals, half discloses,  
Now it catches the gleam of the morning's first beam,  
In full glory reflected 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.

O! thus be it ever when freemen shall stand,  
Between their lov'd home, and the 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!"

Within days, Key's poem was set to a popular tune, "To Anacreon in Heaven," and was being sung from Georgia to New Hampshire.

In 1931, "The Star-Spangled Banner" was officially named America's national anthem.





In 1873, Major Armistead's daughter lent the Star-Spangled Banner to naval historian, George Preble.

To protect the sixty-year-old, war-damaged flag, Admiral Preble had it sewn on to sailcloth and then had the flag displayed and photographed at the Boston Navy Yard.

In 1912, Major Armistead's grandson, Ebenezer Appleton, donated the flag to the Smithsonian Institution.





Today, the Star-Spangled Banner flag is preserved and on display  
at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History in Washington, D.C.





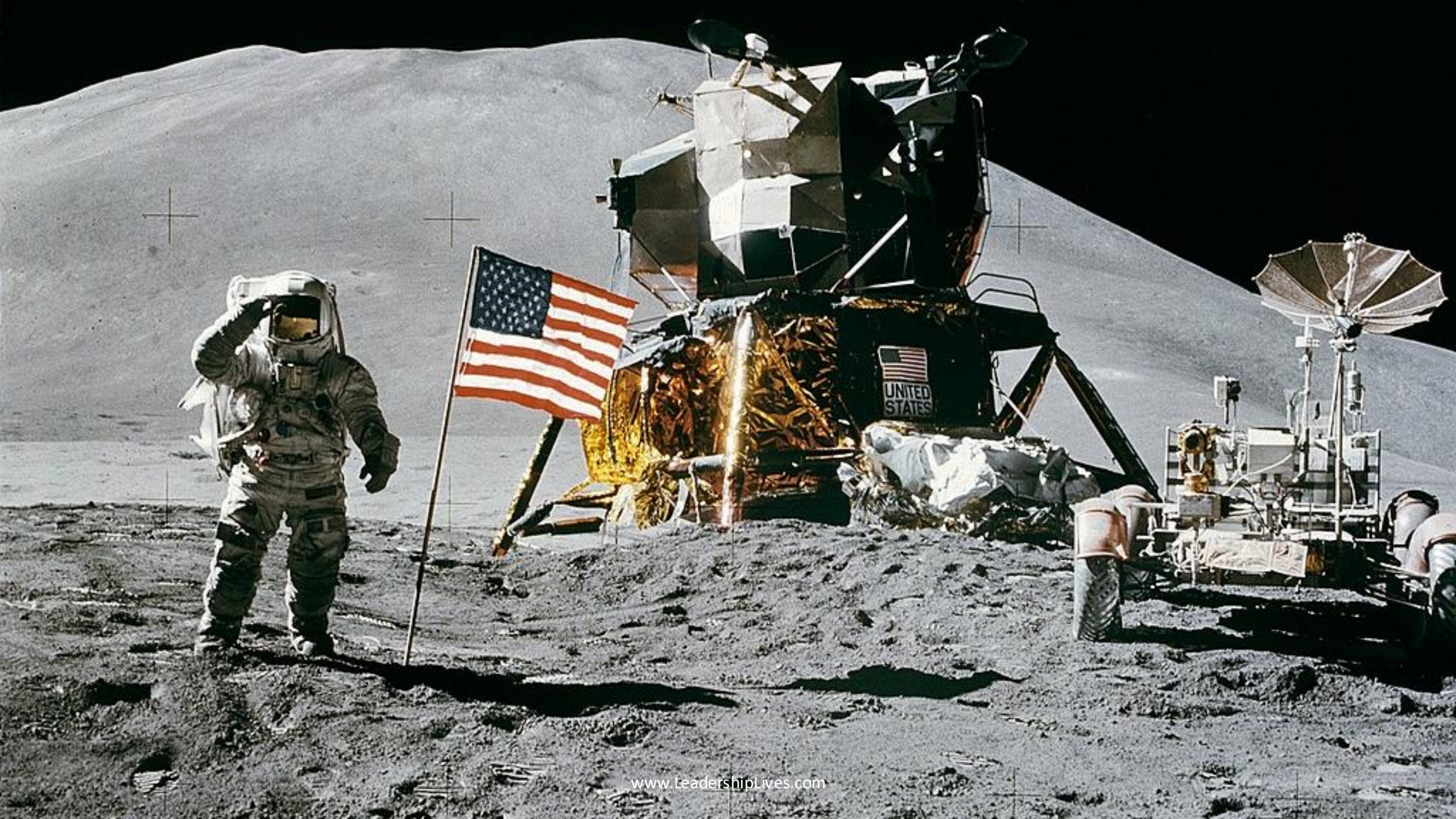
## POSTSCRIPT

In 1824, Massachusetts sea captain, William Driver's mother gave him a flag for his 21st birthday.

The first time, Captain Driver hoisted the flag on his ship, he shouted, "Behold Old Glory!"

The flag, which measures 17' by 10', is now at the National Museum of American History in Washington, D.C.







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"THREE CHEERS FOR THE RED, WHITE AND BLUE, SMITHSONIAN" - [HTTPS://WWW.SI.EDU/SPOTLIGHT/FLAG-DAY/BANNER-FACTS](https://www.si.edu/spotlight/flag-day/banner-facts)



## IMAGE CREDITS

STAR SPANGLED BANNER FLAG ON DISPLAY AT THE SMITHSONIAN'S NATIONAL MUSEUM OF HISTORY AND TECHNOLOGY, AROUND 1964. PUBLIC DOMAIN, VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

FORT INDEPENDENCE FLAG, BOSTON, MA. AMERICANBUTTERS, CC BY-SA 4.0, VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN FLAG, JOIN OR DIE, 1754. PUBLIC DOMAIN, VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

GADSDEN FLAG, 1775. PUBLIC DOMAIN, VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

BRITANNICA RATTLESNAKE. 1911 ENCYCLOPÆDIA BRITANNICA, PUBLIC DOMAIN, VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

THE PINE TREE FLAG, 1775. DEVINCOOK (TALK). THE PINE TREE GRAPHIC WAS CREATED BY IMEOWBOT (TALK)., PUBLIC DOMAIN, VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

FLAG OF TAUNTON, MASSACHUSETTS. SKUNKCREW, CC0, VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

GRAND UNION FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES, 1776 - 1777. HOSHIE, PUBLIC DOMAIN, VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

RED ENSIGN OF GREAT BRITAIN. ANONMOOS, BASED ON IMAGE BY ZSCOUT370, ANONMOOS, PUBLIC DOMAIN, VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

KING'S HANDBOOK OF THE UNITED STATES. PUBLIC DOMAIN, VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE. JOHN TRUMBULL, PUBLIC DOMAIN, VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

BETSY ROSS FLAG. PUBLIC DOMAIN, VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

THE BIRTH OF OLD GLORY. EDWARD PERCY MORAN, PUBLIC DOMAIN, VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

THIS IMAGE FROM C. 1917 DEPICTS WHAT IS PRESUMED TO BE BETSY ROSS AND TWO CHILDREN PRESENTING THE "BETSY ROSS FLAG" TO GEORGE WASHINGTON AND THREE OTHER MEN.

THE IMAGE IS A VERSION OF A PAINTING ENTITLED "THE BIRTH OF OLD GLORY" BY PERCY MORAN, FROM THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

FORT INDEPENDENCE FLAG, BOSTON, MA. AMERICANBUTTERS, CC BY-SA 4.0, VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES, 1795 - 1818. PUBLIC DOMAIN, VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

1818 MAP OF UNITED STATES. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

BATTLE OF NEW ORLEANS. KURZ & ALLISON. (CA. 1890). RETRIEVED FROM THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, [HTTPS://WWW.LOC.GOV/ITEM/96513344/](https://www.loc.gov/item/96513344/).



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THE FLAG HOUSE, BALTIMORE, MARYLAND. USER:EUEL BENUL, CC BY-SA 4.0, VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

"PLACING THE STARS ON THE FLAG." 1962. ROBERT MCGILL MACKALL, PUBLIC DOMAIN, VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

THE PRESIDENT'S HOUSE BY GEORGE MUNGER, 1814-1815. WHITE HOUSE, PUBLIC DOMAIN, VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

MRS. JAMES MADISON, DOLLY PAYNE / FROM AN ORIGINAL PICTURE BY GILBERT STUART, IN POSSESSION OF RICHARD CUTTS, ESQ. M.D. WASHINGTON. , RETRIEVED FROM THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, [HTTPS://WWW.LOC.GOV/ITEM/96525521/](https://www.loc.gov/item/96525521/).

GEORGE WASHINGTON BY GILBERT STUART, PUBLIC DOMAIN, VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

FORT MCHENRY, BALTIMORE, MARYLAND, 1861. POPULAR GRAPHIC ARTS, PUBLIC DOMAIN, VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

BY DAWN'S EARLY LIGHT, 1912 BY EDWARD PERCY MORAN (1862–1935). PUBLIC DOMAIN, VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

FRANCIS SCOTT KEY., CA. 1825. ATTRIBUTED TO JOSEPH WOOD. WALTERS ART MUSEUM. PUBLIC DOMAIN, VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

FORT MCHENRY BOMBARDMENT, 1814. DR.FROG AT EN.WIKIPEDIA, PUBLIC DOMAIN, VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

THE CAPTION READS "A VIEW OF THE BOMBARDMENT OF FORT MCHENRY, NEAR BALTIMORE, BY THE BRITISH FLEET TAKEN FROM THE OBSERVATORY UNDER THE COMMAND OF ADMIRALS COCHRANE & COCKBURN ON THE MORNING OF THE 13TH OF SEPT 1814 WHICH LASTED 24 HOURS & THROWN FROM 1500 TO 1800 SHELLS IN THE NIGHT ATTEMPTED TO LAND BY FORCING A PASSAGE UP THE FERRY BRANCH BUT WERE REPULSED WITH GREAT LOSS."

THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER SHEET MUSIC, NOVEMBER 1814. THOMAS CARR (ARRANGER), PUBLIC DOMAIN, VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

FORT MCHENRY FLAG AT THE BOSTON NAVY YARD, 1873. GEORGE HENRY PREBLE, PUBLIC DOMAIN, VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

APOLLO 15 LUNAR MODULE PILOT JAMES IRWIN SALUTES THE U.S. FLAG. ASTRONAUT DAVID R. SCOTT, APOLLO 15 COMMANDER., PUBLIC DOMAIN, VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

## THE END