

STAMP SCOOP



WAR OF 1812: FORT McHENRY

Although it is often called the “Forgotten Conflict,” the War of 1812 was a significant chapter in our nation’s history, proving the strength of our young nation. It also lent us amazing tales of bravery and patriotism, from “Old Ironside’s” astonishing naval victory to Dolley Madison’s harrowing escape – important documents in tow – from a burning capital.

An equally legendary moment from the War happened at the siege of Fort McHenry in mid-September of 1814, when British forces attempted to bombard the stronghold guarding the city of Baltimore. Francis Scott Key, a wealthy lawyer from Maryland, was dispatched to the scene to negotiate the release of his friend Dr. William Beane, who was held captive aboard a British ship. Key successfully won Beane’s freedom, but the two were held aboard the ship until the end of the bombardment.

It was the next morning, after a rigorous but failed bombing campaign from the British, that Key penned “The Defence of Fort McHenry.” Inspired by a resilient American banner that waived among “rockets’ red glare” and “bombs bursting in air,” he had unwittingly written what would become our national anthem, *The Star-Spangled Banner*.

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