



INDEPENDENCE DAY!

Today I am skipping Solomon since he knew nothing of America. This morning, as we Worship, we shall be singing a couple of national songs. First, we will sing the *Battle Hymn of the Republic* (#692). The words for it were written by Julia Ward Howe. What do you know about her?

JULIA WARD HOWEL

She was an American author and reformer, born in New York City. She was associated with her husband, Samuel Gridley Howe, in his humanitarian work and in editing and contributing to the Boston Commonwealth, an antislavery paper. Inspired by a visit to a Union army camp during the American Civil War (1861-1865), Howe wrote the famous poem "Battle Hymn of the Republic," which, after publication in *The Atlantic Monthly* in 1862, immediately achieved great popularity as a song of the Civil War. After the war, Howe was active in the women's rights movement as a founder of both the New England Woman's Club and the Association for the Advancement of Women.

Then we will sing *My Country 'Tis of Thee*. (Hymn #695) The words of this were written by Samuel F. Smith. Who was he?

SAMUEL F. SMITH

The lyrics for "*My Country 'Tis of Thee*" were written by Reverend Samuel F. Smith, a Baptist minister. In 1832, he came across the air "God Save the King" and wrote the new lyrics on a scrap of paper. "America" became popular after the Civil War.

One song we shall not be singing is *America the Beautiful* (one of my favorite patriotic songs, #690). It was written by Katharine Lee Bates - who was she?

KATHERINE LEE BATES

America the Beautiful first appeared in print in *The Congregationalist*, a weekly journal, on July 4, 1895. Over the years, It has become the country's unofficial second national anthem.

Miss Bates, long-time professor at Wellesley College, couldn't have known that those four stanzas, hastily scribbled into a notebook on a trip West in 1893, would attain such fame. Atop Pikes Peak in Colorado Springs, Colorado, she was electrified by the beauty that was her country, and in writing what later became *America the Beautiful*, passed on that intense love for her country to all Americans.

Miss Bates, who was lecturing at the summer session at Colorado College, joined an expedition to the summit of Pikes Peak in a prairie wagon. She wrote, "It was then and there, as I was looking out over the sea-like expanse..."

She rewrote some sections, and the new version was published in *The Boston Evening Transcript* on Nov. 19, 1904. Perhaps the most intense criticisms centered on the word "beautiful," which some called hackneyed. But Miss Bates refused to change that word, for she claimed it best described America. Following the 1904 publication, part of the third stanza was altered, thereafter, the poem stayed the same, for Miss Bates retained the copyright, protecting it from misprints and deliberate changes.

The only payment Miss Bates ever received for her efforts was a small check from *The Congregationalist* when *America the Beautiful* was first published.

Note that this material was gathered from various sources on the Internet. Next week we will return to Solomon. In the mean time,

HAVE A BANG UP FORTH OF JULY!

Wayne

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