

BALTIMORE GETS FLAG THAT INSPIRED KEY'S GREAT SONG

Fort McHenry's Emblem That Prompted "The Star-Spangled Banner" to Be Presented by a Descendant of Major Armistead, Who Held the Fort Against England.

troops in the rear were two redoubts, Fort Covington and Babcock's Battery. Behind these upon high ground was an unfinished circular redoubt for seven guns. On Lazaretto Point, opposite Fort McHenry, was a small battery which with Fort Covington was in charge of Barney's flotilla.

The British bomb ships opened a heavy fire upon the fort and its dependencies at a distance of two miles. Armistead immediately replied with a volley from the batteries of Fort McHenry. After a while he found that his missiles fell short and desisted.

His garrison was exposed for several hours to a tremendous shower of shells without the power of retreating. At length a bomb lit upon a twenty-four-pounder in the fort, killing a Lieutenant and wounding several men. Cockburn ordered three bomb ships to move nearer

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That evening when the British fleet was ready to sail away the two Americans were released. Key sent the poem to his uncle, John Nicholson, who had assisted in the defense of Fort McHenry. Nicholson took it to the office of Capt. Benjamin Edes in Baltimore, had it printed in handbill form, and distributed it among the citizens. Ferdinand Durang, a popular actor and musical composer, set the words to the then familiar tune of "Anacreon in Heaven," and with his brother Charles sang it at a restaurant next door to the Holliday Street Theatre in Baltimore to an assemblage of military men. After that it was sung nightly in all the theatres and at every place of public resort, as well as in private residences.

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The authorities at Washington presented him with the flag he had so gallantly defended, which in due course passed through his daughter, who married one of the Appletons of Boston, into the possession of his only living descendant, Col. Eben Appleton of Yonkers and Mrs. George Livingston Baker, who was living until recently in Staten Island, N. Y.

Armistead himself died April 25, 1818, at Baltimore, where a fine marble monument has been erected to his memory. A larger and even finer monument, designed by Maximilian Gottfrey, was later raised to the memory of all the defenders of the City of Baltimore during the trying times of 1814.

"Not yet, however, are we through with the story of the 'Star-Spangled Banner.' Nearly half a century ago Harper's Magazine published an interview held by one of its contributors with a surviving veteran of the War of 1812. This was an octogenarian named Hendon, a native of Fredericktown, who had left Maryland for Pennsylvania in early youth. Nevertheless he remembered Francis Scott Key and his sister Anna, who married Roger B. Taney.

"It was like the union of a hawk with a skylark," said Mr. Hendon, "but she lived to be the wife of a Chief Justice of the United States, and I never heard that either repented of their marriage. Mr. Taney was a strict Catholic, and Frank an Episcopalian, not considered very

As sharing the glories of the Fort McHenry episode, it is only right to recall a humble hero who has been allowed to fall into forgetfulness. During the bombardment, at a time when the explosions were fiercest, a rooster mounted a parapet and crowed lusty defiance of the enemy. This excited the laughter and applause of the garrison and helped to keep up their spirits. One of the defenders, worn down with fatigue and sickness, declared that if ever he lived to see Baltimore the rooster should be treated to pound cake. Next day, being unable to leave the fort himself, he sent a messenger to the city, procured the



One of the Heroes of the Bombardment (from an Old Print.)

he could sleep? As the struggle ceased upon the coming morning, and he looked through the dim twilight for the flag of his country, his heart sick with fear and doubt, could he help the grand-oldest of that first verse? And then, as through 'the mist of the deep' the banner loomed dimly in the morning sun's first rays, he exclaimed,

'Tis the star-spangled banner! Oh, long may it wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!

It was prayer and praise all in one; and there has never been anything like it since.

In reply to a query as to his own whereabouts during that stirring episode, the veteran explained that he was a hundred miles away, chafing like a caged tiger because he could not join in the fray. Early in August, 1814, he had become one of a band of one hundred and fourteen volunteers who had left Harrisburg, Penn., to join General Watson at York. Watson was organizing a division of five thousand men to march to the defense of the threatened City of Baltimore, but it was several weeks before the division was ready.

"We grew dreadfully impatient. Telegrams were not dreamed of in those days, and daily newspapers were almost as scarce as roses in winter. One morning, some of our guard went to gather wood, and hearing a dull rumbling noise they laid their ears to the ground and listened. The sound of cannon was distinctly heard, and they hurried to camp with the news."

The sounds of course were those of the cannon of the bombarding fleet!

"Soon wagons, outwardly filled with hay but containing the specter from the banks in Baltimore, came in a long line, followed by every kind of vehicle, packed with flying Baltimoreans. Then in tremendous haste we were filled into ranks, and marched to the seat of war, three days after the battle had been fought."

The Colonel of Hendon's regiment was an Irish schoolmaster named Kennedy, who knew as much about military tactics "as a bear does about mathematics." Valiant and tyrannical in proportion to his ignorance he was ill-fitted to control "as spirited and independent a set of Pennsylvania Dutchmen as ever trod American soil."

Every fifteen minutes he would issue the command "Push along, men, ye're walkin' dreadful slow."

The second day some of the men fainted from the heat and fatigue. "Nearing a pump along the roadside, we halted to drink, but the Colonel angrily urged us forward. An orchard near by, hanging full of harvest apples, tempted some of the thirstier ones, who broke ranks and rushed for the fruit! This excited the Colonel greatly. Riding up to the rails and brandishing his sword, he shouted, 'Ye blackguards! would ye be atter leaving the ranks for the pathrath sum of an apple?'

"This expression of his indignation grew into a by-word, thanks to the powers of mimicry of two of our company, Charles and Ferdinand Durang. They, with their father, were strolling play-actors (natives of Lancaster, I think) who, when their winter engagements in city theatres were over, would entertain us in town and country with their varied accomplishments. The brothers were such genial, brave fellows, and mirthful, so full of rollicking fun, they kept us alive, soul and body, by compelling us to laugh."

On the third day they reached Baltimore and encamped upon Gallows Hill, near a ropewalk, daily waiting for an enemy that never returned.

"Have you heard Francis Key's poem?" said one of the mess, coming in one evening as the company were scattered over the green hill near the Captain's marquee. He displayed a rude copy written in a scrawl which Horace Greeley might have envied.

"He read it aloud," continued Mr. Hendon, "once, twice, three times, until the entire division seemed electrified in its pathetic eloquence. An idea seized Ferd Durang. Hunting up a volume of old flute music, which was in somebody's tent, he impudently whistled snatches of tune after tune, just as they caught his quick eye. One, called 'Anacreon in Heaven,' (I have played it often, for it was in my book that he found it,) struck his fancy and riveted his attention. Note after note fell from his puckered lips until, with a leap and shout, he exclaimed, 'Boys, I've hit it!' and fitting the tune to the words, there rang out for the first time the song of the 'Star-Spangled Banner.' How the men shouted and clapped, for never was there a wedding of poetry to music made under such inspiring influences! Getting a brief furlough, the brothers sang it on the stage of Holliday Street Theatre soon after. It was caught up in the camps, and sung around our bivouac fires, and whistled in the streets, and, when peace was declared, and we scattered to our homes, carried to thousands of firesides as the most precious relic of the war of 1812. Ferdinand Durang died, I do not know where—and Frank Key's bones lie in the cemetery at Fredericktown, but I guess that song will live as long as there is an American boy to sing it."



Francis Scott Key, Who Wrote "The Star-Spangled Banner."

UNUSUAL stimulus will be given this year to the celebration in Baltimore of the anniversary of the British bombardment of Fort McHenry on Sept. 13-14, 1814—an event which prompted Francis Scott Key's famous song, "The Star-Spangled Banner." The commemorative exercises will begin on next Wednesday. The reason for this renewal of enthusiasm is that a lineal descendant of Major George Armistead, who held the fort on that glorious occasion, has presented to the City of Baltimore the original flag which defied the British guns, withdrawing it for that purpose from a long slumber in the vaults of a New York bank. The banner, full of honorable rents and patches, will be restored for the occasion to its original place of honor on the flagpole of Fort McHenry.

The story of the flag and of the song has often been told, but only in staccato fashion. Separate episodes in this international drama have been celebrated in print here and there in old magazines and in current histories; separate legends have survived among the descendants of the principal American actors therein. These were Key and Armistead, as aforesaid, and a certain Dr. William Beanes of Upper Marlborough, in Prince George's County, Md. The writer believes that here, and now for the first time, printed fact and family tradition have been woven into a coherent story for the readers of THE NEW YORK TIMES.

The scenario of the drama is familiar to all readers of American history. The curtain rises upon a British squadron of sixteen men of war, including five bomb ships, under command of Admiral Cockburn, which early in September, 1814, appeared at the mouth of the Patuxent River with minatory intent against the neighboring City of Baltimore. Our readers, or, to continue the histrionic metaphor, our audience must imagine officers and men alike as flushed with their recent capture of Washington and the attendant burning and pillage of its principal buildings.

And now enters upon the scene the least-known member of this American triad. Dr. Beanes owned a plantation on the shores of the river opposite the spot where the Admiral's flagship rode at anchor. He was the head of a good old Maryland family to whom the estate had been granted by Lord Baltimore in the year 1634. The doctor was warm-hearted, genial, and eccentric.

"Dr. Beanes," said an old lady who remembered him from her girlhood days and who was still alive at the end of the last century, "was my father's life-long friend, as well as our family physician. He was the kindest and most lovable of men, and wonderfully patient and gentle with little children to whom he was devoted; and he was the only gentleman I ever knew who invariably wore ruffled shirts."

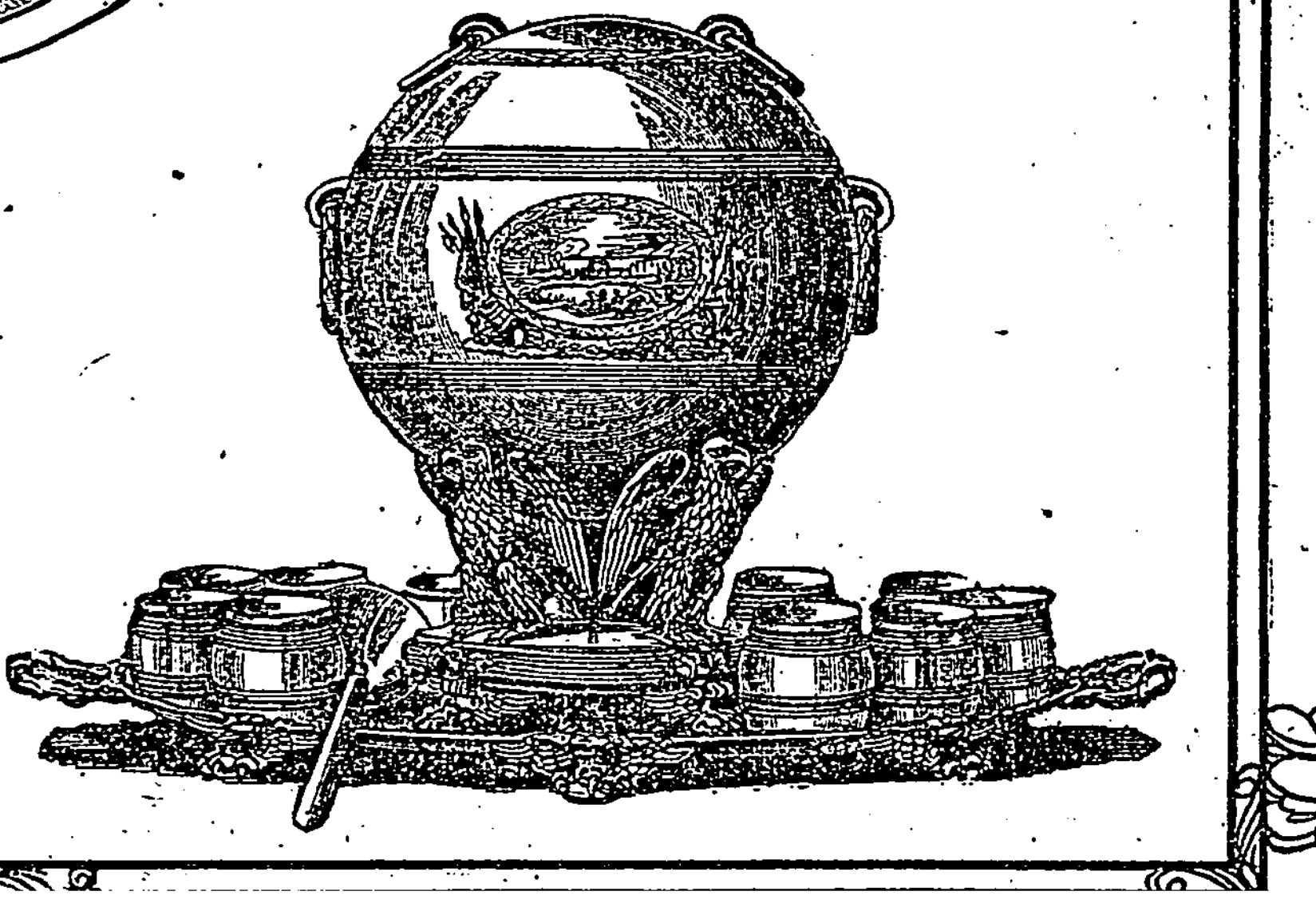
Dr. Beanes loved his country, no doubt, but he loved hospitality more. It was said of him that if Satan had knocked at his door the doctor would have asked the arch fiend in to dinner—an anticipation of Carlyle's more famous jest about Lord Houghton and Judas Iscariot. So it must be forgiven him that he was amiable and even hospitable to the officers of the enemy's squadron whenever they came ashore. They were gentlemen, they were genial companions; they liked a joke and enjoyed a good story, and they did full justice to his viands and his wines.

It came to pass that on the afternoon of the memorable September 13 a party of the Britishers were gathered around the Marylander's hospitable table. Perhaps the guests lingered a little longer than usual at the table, perhaps the wine went around a little too freely, perhaps the Englishmen talked a bit too recklessly. They were aware that the bombardment of Fort McHenry had been decided upon for that very night.

After taking their departure misty-eyed and attacked some of the members of the party. Had Dr. Beanes received any inkling of what was coming? Probably not. Nevertheless, it was best to be on the safe side. So the little party returned to the scene of their late festivity. They found the good doctor on the point of retiring for a siesta. They explained; he expostulated; they apologized, but they remained firm. In short, they carried him off with so little ceremony that he left his wig and his spectacles behind him.

In this fashion they reached their boat and rowed over to the flagship. Here the doctor was welcomed by Admiral Cockburn and gently but firmly informed that he must remain a nominal captive aboard ship until further orders. There was nothing for him to do but to acquiesce with the best grace he could command.

Now Francis Scott Key, a member of the bar of Fredericktown, Md., was a neighbor of Dr. Beanes and a relative by marriage. He was one of the first to be notified of the doctor's dilemma. Being a jovial young fellow of about 22, polished and courteous in his manners, he was deemed the best messenger to send on a parley with the Admiral of the English squadron. Key was granted the use of the United States cartel ship Minden, and, sailing out under a flag of truce, he



FROM HARPER'S ENCYCLOPEDIA OF UNITED STATES HISTORY

Silver Service Presented to Major Armistead.

found the English fleet making all preparations for the coming attack.

The symbol of truce was respected, Key was permitted to board the flagship, and the Admiral agreed to the release of Dr. Beanes at an early date. For the moment, however, Key as well as Beanes must consider themselves his prisoners. Neither could be allowed to leave for shore at present, lest the news of the British plans should intentionally or unintentionally be revealed to the country. So both were remanded on board the Minden with a guard of mariners to prevent their landing or giving a sign to the Americans ashore.

"But for their restraint," says one of the doctor's descendants, "they were treated with perfect courtesy. I have never heard that either one of them ever bore the least personal grudge to their captors."

Meanwhile preparations for the bombardment went on with secrecy and dispatch. An attack of some sort had of course been anticipated ever since the news of Washington's capture had reached Baltimore. In the narrow channel between Fort McHenry and Lazaretto Point vessels had been sunk to prevent the passage of an enemy's ship. The fort itself was garrisoned by 1,000 men comprising volunteers and regulars and commanded by Major George Armistead. To the right, guarding the shores at Patapsco and prepared to resist any attempt to land the enemy's

in order to increase their effectiveness. This was exactly what Armistead desired. He at once opened a general cannonade from every part of the fort. So severe was his punishment of the venturesome intruders that half an hour later they had fallen back to their former anchorage. One of the bomb ships was so badly damaged that she had to be towed out of reach of the American guns. The garrison gave three cheers and the firing ceased.

Thereupon the British opened a more furious bombardment at safer range, keeping it up until long after midnight. It was then discovered that a command of 1,200 picked soldiers sent up Patapsco in the gloom to attack Fort McHenry in the rear had been ignominiously repulsed. The bombardment from the vessels promptly ceased. At 7 P. M. on the morning of Sept. 14 the hostile ships and the land forces withdrew, and Baltimore was saved. The British did not lose a man. The total American loss was four killed and twenty-four wounded.

Meanwhile what about our captive friends on the Minden? All night long they had anxiously paced the deck of the cartel ship. As well as he could in the darkness, Frank Key had watched the bombardment of the fort. Dr. Beanes could see little or nothing without spectacles to reinforce his aged sight. At intervals he would ask: "Is the flag yet flying?" receiving with delight the answer that came in the affirmative.



Sir George Cockburn.

cake, and enjoyed himself hugely treating the feathered hero.

Major Armistead was more suitably rewarded by his fellow-citizens. He was then a man of 34. A native of Newmar-

sealous and sharp in his profession, and much given to dreaming. He went to Virginia, and brought home a wife much larger and taller than himself, went to housekeeping on Market Street, and had