



# What So Proudly We Hailed: Francis Scott Key, A Life

*Marc Leepson*

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*What So Proudly We Hailed* is the first full-length biography of Francis Scott Key in more than 75 years. In this fascinating look at early America, historian Marc Leepson explores the life and legacy of Francis Scott Key. Standing alongside Betsy Ross, Thomas Paine, Patrick Henry, Paul Revere, and John Hancock in history, Key made his mark as an American icon by one single and unforgettable act, writing "The Star-Spangled Banner."

Among other things, Leepson reveals:

- How the young Washington lawyer found himself in Baltimore Harbor on the night of September 13-14, 2014
- The mysterious circumstances surrounding how the poem he wrote, first titled "The Defense of Ft. M'Henry," morphed into the National Anthem
- Key's role in forming the American Colonization Society, and his decades-long fervent support for that controversial endeavor that sent free blacks to Africa
- His adamant opposition to slave trafficking and his willingness to represent slaves and freed men and women for free in Washington's courts
- Key's role as a confidant of President Andrew Jackson and his work in Jackson's "kitchen cabinet"
- Key's controversial actions as U.S. Attorney during the first race riot in Washington, D.C., in 1835.

Publishing to coincide with the 200th anniversary of "The Star Spangled Banner" in 2014, *What So Proudly We Hailed* reveals unexplored details of the life of an American patriot whose legacy has been largely unknown until now.



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