

"You're A Grand Old Flag" (or "You're A Grand 'Ole Flag")

Music and lyrics by George M. Cohan

Simple Version

**You're a grand old flag,
You're a high flying flag
And forever in peace may you wave.**

**You're the emblem of
The land I love.
The home of the free and the brave.**

**Ev'ry heart beats true
 'neath the Red, White and Blue,
Where there's never a boast or brag.
Should auld acquaintance be forgot, Keep
your eye on the grand old flag.**

"You're a Grand Old Flag" was written by George M. Cohan for his 1906 stage musical *George Washington, Jr.* The song was introduced to the public in the play's first act on opening night, February 6, 1906, in New York's Herald Square Theater. It was the first song from a musical to sell over a million copies of sheet music.

The original lyric for this perennial George M. Cohan favorite came, as Cohan later explained, from an encounter he had with a Civil War veteran who fought at Gettysburg. The two men found themselves next to each other and Cohan noticed the vet held a carefully folded but ragged old flag. The man reportedly then turned to Cohan and said, "She's a grand old rag." Cohan thought it was a great line and originally named his tune "You're a Grand Old Rag." So many groups and individuals objected to calling the flag a "rag," however, that he "gave 'em what they wanted" and switched words, renaming the song "You're a Grand Old Flag."

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