

O beautiful for spacious
skies,
For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain
majesties
Above the fruited plain!

America! America!
God shed His grace on thee,
And crown thy good with
brotherhood
From sea to shining sea!

O beautiful for pilgrim feet
Whose stern impassion'd stress
A thoroughfare for freedom beat
Across the wilderness.

America! America!
God mend thine ev'ry flaw,
Confirm thy soul in self-control,
Thy liberty in law.

O beautiful for heroes prov'd
In liberating strife,
Who more than self their country loved,
And mercy more than life.

America! America!
May God thy gold refine
Till all success be nobleness,
And ev'ry gain divine.

O beautiful for patriot dream
That sees beyond the years
Thine alabaster cities gleam
Undimmed by human tears.

America! America!
God shed His grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea.



A Little Bit of History....

The lyrics to this beautiful song were written by Katharine Lee Bates (1859-1929) an instructor at Wellesley College, Massachusetts, after an inspiring trip to the top of Pikes Peak, Colorado, in 1893. Her poem, *America the Beautiful* first appeared in print in *The Congregationalist*, a weekly journal, on July 4, 1895. Ms. Bates revised the lyrics in 1904 and again in 1913. In addition to those changes in the words, it is notable that the poem was not always sung to the tune presented on this website ("Materna," composed by Samuel A. Ward in 1882, nearly a decade before the poem was written). In fact, for two years after it was written it was sung to just about any popular or folk tune that would fit with the lyrics, with "Auld Lang Syne" being the most notable of those. The words were not published together with "Materna" until 1910, and even after that time, the tune to be used was challenged to some degree. For example, in 1926 the National Federation of Music Clubs held a contest to put the poem to new, reportedly "less somber," music, but no other entry was determined to be more acceptable. Before her death in 1929, Ms. Bates never indicated publicly which music she liked best, but it now appears likely that *America the Beautiful* will forever be associated with "Materna."