



# God Bless America

The son of a rabbi, he was born MAY 11, 1888. At 4-years-old, he emigrated with his family from Russia to New York. Falling in love with America, he served as a U.S. infantry sergeant in World War I. He later wrote some of the nation's most popular songs, including:

"I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas"; "Remember"; "Always"; "Alexander's Ragtime Band"; "There's No Business like Show Business"; and "Easter Parade."

Who was he?

Irving Berlin.

Irving Berlin wrote the Broadway musical, "This is the Army," which was made into a 1943 film starring Ronald Reagan. President Harry S. Truman awarded Berlin the Army's Medal of Merit in 1945 for: "Extraordinary service as creator and producer of the musical revue, This Is the Army."

Irving Berlin wrote the patriotic hymn "**God Bless America**" in 1917. It was introduced to the public in 1938 when Kate Smith sang it on an Armistice Day radio broadcast. Berlin gave all the royalties from the song, over \$100,000, to the Boy Scouts and the Girl Scouts. In 1954, President Eisenhower signed a Congressional Bill awarding Berlin a Congressional Gold Medal: "



In recognition of his services in composing many popular songs, including 'God Bless America.'" Upon receiving the medal, February 19, 1955, Irving Berlin commented to President Eisenhower: "To me, 'God Bless America' was not just a song but an expression of my feeling toward the country to which I owe what I have and what I am."

In 1977, Irving Berlin received the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President Ford. On October 12, 2001, Congressman Mike Castle of Delaware stated: "In the aftermath of September 11...Republicans and Democrats burst into that song of the same name by Irving Berlin on the steps of the U.S. Capitol...It was a slogan for peace."

Irving Berlin wrote:

"While the storm clouds gather far across the sea,  
Let us swear allegiance, to a land that's free.  
Let us all be grateful, for a land so fair,  
As we raise our voices, in a solemn prayer.

God Bless America, Land that I Love,  
Stand Beside Her, and Guide Her,  
Through the Night, with the Light From Above,  
From the Mountains, to the Prairies,  
To the Oceans White with Foam,  
God Bless America, My Home Sweet Home,  
God Bless America, My Home Sweet Home!"

