

ODE FOR THE FOURTH OF JULY by James Monroe Whitfield

Another year has passed away,
And brings again the glorious day
When Freedom from her slumber woke,
And broke the British tyrant's yoke -
Unfurled her standard to the air,
In gorgeous beauty, bright and fair -
Pealed forth the sound of war's alarms,
And called her patriot sons to arms!

They rushed, inspired by Freedom's name,
To fight for liberty and fame;
To meet the mercenary band,
And drive them from their native land.
Almighty God! grant us, we pray,
The self-same spirit on this day,
That, through the storm of battle, then
Did actuate those patriot men!

May those great truths which they maintained
Through years of deadly strife and toil,
Be by their children well sustained,
Till slavery ceases on our soil -
Till every wrong shall be redressed,
And every bondman be set free;
And from the north, south, east and west,
Peans shall rise to Liberty.

May that same God whose ægis led
Our patriot sires on Bunker's height,
Shed the same blessings on our head,
The heroes of a nobler fight -
A fight not waged by fire and sword.
And quenched in gore and human blood,
But only by that Sacred Word,
The mandate of Almighty God.

Our cause is Love, our weapon Truth,
Our ally is the living God;
Matron and maiden, sire and youth,
Shall feel the power of his rod.
Prone to the dust, shall Slavery fall,
And all its withering influence die,
While liberty, the boon of all,
Shall swell through earth, and air, and sky.

