

## **I am the Flag**

**by Ruth Apperson Rous**

**I am the flag of the United States of America.**

**I was born on June 14, 1777, in Philadelphia.**

**There the Continental Congress adopted my stars and stripes as the national flag.**

**My thirteen stripes alternating red and white, with a union of thirteen white stars in a field of blue, represented a new constellation, a new nation dedicated to the personal and religious liberty of mankind.**

**Today fifty stars signal from my union, one for each of the fifty sovereign states in the greatest constitutional republic the world has ever known.**

**My colors symbolize the patriotic ideals and spiritual qualities of the citizens of my country.**

**My red stripes proclaim the fearless courage and integrity of American men and boys and the self-sacrifice and devotion of American mothers and daughters.**

**My white stripes stand for liberty and equality for all.**

**My blue is the blue of heaven, loyalty, and faith.**

**I represent these eternal principles: liberty, justice, and humanity.**

**I embody American freedom: freedom of speech, religion, assembly, the press, and the sanctity of the home.**

**I typify that indomitable spirit of determination brought to my land by Christopher Columbus and by all my forefathers - the Pilgrims, Puritans, settlers at James town and Plymouth.**

**I am as old as my nation.**

**I am a living symbol of my nation's law: the Constitution of the United States and the Bill of Rights.**

**I voice Abraham Lincoln's philosophy: "A government of the people, by the people,for the people."**

**I stand guard over my nation's schools, the seedbed of good citizenship and true patriotism.**



**I am displayed in every schoolroom throughout my nation; every schoolyard has a flag pole for my display.**

**Daily thousands upon thousands of boys and girls pledge their allegiance to me and my country.**

**I have my own law—Public Law 829, "The Flag Code" - which definitely states my correct use and display for all occasions and situations.**

**I have my special day, Flag Day. June 14 is set aside to honor my birth.**

**Americans, I am the sacred emblem of your country. I symbolize your birthright, your heritage of liberty purchased with blood and sorrow.**

**I am your title deed of freedom, which is yours to enjoy and hold in trust for posterity.**

**If you fail to keep this sacred trust inviolate, if I am nullified and destroyed, you and your children will become slaves to dictators and despots.**

**Eternal vigilance is your price of freedom.**

**As you see me silhouetted against the peaceful skies of my country, remind yourself that I am the flag of your country, that I stand for what you are - no more, no less.**

**Guard me well, lest your freedom perish from the earth.**

**Dedicate your lives to those principles for which I stand: "One nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."**

**I was created in freedom. I made my first appearance in a battle for human liberty.**

**God grant that I may spend eternity in my "land of the free and the home of the brave" and that I shall ever be known as "Old Glory," the flag of the United States of America.**