

The Pledge of Allegiance

Francis Bellamy (1855-1931) wrote the Pledge for the observance of the 400th Anniversary of the discovery of America by Columbus. He was working on a journal for juveniles, called Youth's Companion. James B. Upham was the editor and they worked closely together. He went to the paper in 1891.

His job on the paper was to promote patriotism and the flying of the flag over the public schools. He was made Chairman of the executive committee for the National Public School Celebration of Columbus Day in 1892. He felt every public and private school in the land should fly the flag.

Bellamy visited President Benjamin Harrison in Washington to ask him to endorse the idea of a flag over every school house and the teaching of patriotism in all the schools. On June 21, 1892 President Harrison signed the proclamation that said, "Let the National Flag float over every schoolhouse in the country and the exercises be such as shall impress upon our youth the patriotic duties of American citizenship!"

Francis Bellamy wrote these now famous words, first printed in Youth's Companion, September 8, 1892:

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States and to the Republic

for which it stands; one Nation indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

At the Second National Flag Conference held in Washington, D.C. on Flag Day, 1924, they added the words "of America."

A further change was made in the Pledge by House Joint Resolution 243, approved by President Eisenhower on June 14, 1954. This amended the language by adding the words "under God," so that it now reads,

One Nation under god, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.