History of *The Marines' Hymn*: (excerpt from ***Warrior Culture of the U.S. Marines***, Copyright 2001 Marion F. Sturkey) The U.S. Army, the U.S. Navy, and the U.S. Air Force all have their own songs. For the **U.S. Navy**, ***Anchors Aweigh*** was written in 1906 by Lt. Charles Zimmerman and midshipman Alfred Miles. Initially the song was a tribute to the Naval Academy Class of 1907. Various people revised it later, trying to weed out the nonsense. Another midshipman, Royal Lovell, penned the final stanza in 1926. ***Anchors Aweigh*** has a snappy little tune, but no one knows what the words imply. The original first stanza in 1906 had dealt solely with the game of football. Even today, the song offers a bittersweet "farewell to college joys." The lyrics end by "wishing you a happy voyage home." Many musical experts think that ***Anchors Aweigh*** is a ballad for football players who like sailboats. But, no one really knows for sure. The **U.S. Army** adopted a snazzy tune for ***The Caisson Song***. Unlike the words in the Navy's song, the words of the Army's song make sense. According to

the words of each stanza, ***The Caisson Song*** clearly is a melody for rural motorists. Edmund Gruber wrote the original lyrics in the Philippines during World War I. Naturally, since most of the fighting was 8000 miles away in Europe, Gruber made only a passing reference to warfare. Yet, he was careful to be "politically correct." He apparently sought the help of first grade students in composing the lyrics. The banal "Hi, hi, hee" is a dead giveaway. No one has a clue as to what it might mean. Still, at least it rhymes. The **U.S. Air Force** did not exist in 1938. But, that year ***Liberty Magazine*** sponsored a contest for an official song for the Army Air Corps. The magazine received 757 entries. A group of Army Air Corps wives (yes, believe it or not, ***wives***) selected the entry from Robert Crawford, ***Off We Go into the Wild Blue Yonder***. After World War II the Army Air Corps evolved into the U.S. Air Force. This fledgling flying club adopted ***Off We Go'*** as their official song. It suited the illusionary nature of the new Wild-Blue-Yonder-Wonders with references to "those who love the vastness of

the sky" and the fictitious "rainbow's pot of gold." The final stanza speaks of the "gray haired wonder," an admirable gesture of non-discrimination for the new civilianized Air Force. These three songs, ***Anchors Aweigh***, ***The Caisson Song***, and ***Off We Go into the Wild Blue Yonder***, are often played at public events. They obviously delight the members and advocates of the affected service: Navy, Army, or Air Force. When their song is played, sailors, soldiers, and zoomies leap to their feet and shout, cheer, clap their hands, and jive with the music. They have a jolly time, almost like a high school pep rally. ***The U.S. Marine Corps*** is the United States' military band of brothers dedicated to pure warfighting. The proud Brotherhood of Marines is guided by principles, values, virtues, love of country, and its Warrior Culture. This brotherhood of American Patriots has no song. Instead, Marine Warriors have a ***hymn***. When ***The Marines' Hymn*** is played, United States Marines stand at attention. They silently show their pride in their fellow Marines, their Corps, their Country, their heritage, and

their hymn. ***The Marines' Hymn*** is a tribute to Warriors. Marine Warriors stormed fortress Derna, raised the American flag, and gave us "the shores of Tripoli." Marines fought their way into the castle at Chapultepec and gave us the "halls of Montezuma." Marines exist for the purpose of war fighting. Fighting is their role in life. They "fight for right and freedom" and "to keep our honor clean." They fight "in the air, on land, and sea." The Marine Corps is Valhalla for Warriors. U.S. Marines need no *song*. They have a ***hymn***. Ironically, no one knows who wrote the hymn, which was in widespread use by the mid-1800s. Col. A.S. McLemore, USMC, spent several years trying to identify the origin of the tune. In 1878 he told the leader of the Marine Band that the tune had been adopted from the comic opera *Genevieve de Barbant*, by Jaques Offenback. Yet, others believe the tune originated from a Spanish folk song. Whatever! Regardless of its origin, ***The Marines' Hymn*** has remained a revered icon of the United States Marine Corps for almost 200 years. In 1929 ***The Marines' Hymn*** became the ***official*** hymn

of the Corps. Thirteen years later in November 1942 the Commandant approved a change in the words of the first verse, fourth line. Because of the increasing use of aircraft in the Corps, the words were changed to "In the air, on land, and sea." No other changes have been made since that time. When you have attained absolute perfection, there is no need for further modification:

From the Halls of Montezuma, To the Shores of Tripoli; We fight our country's battles In the air, on land, and sea; First to fight for right and freedom And to keep our honor clean; We are proud to claim the title Of UNITED STATES MARINES.

Our flag's unfurled to every breeze, From dawn to setting sun; We have fought in every clime and place Where we could take a gun; In the snow of far off northern lands And in sunny tropic scenes; You will find us always on the job -- The UNITED STATES MARINES. Here's health to you and to our Corps Which we are proud to serve; In many a strife we've fought for

life And never lost our nerve If the Army and the Navy Ever look on Heaven's scenes; They will find the streets are guarded By UNITED STATES MARINES.

Sir Winston Churchill, British Prime Minister, became an ardent admirer of the U.S. Marine Corps. In the company of guests of state, he often demonstrated his respect for U.S. Marines by reciting, from memory, all three verses of The Marines' Hymn.