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Ragged Old Flag

By Johnny Cash

I walked through a county courthouse square,
On a park bench an old man was sitting there.
I said, "Your old courthouse is kinda run down."
He said, "Naw, it'll do for our little town."
I said, "Your flagpole has leaned a little bit,
And that's a Ragged Old Flag you got hanging on it."

He said, "Have a seat," and I sat down.
"Is this the first time you've been to our little town?"
I said, "I think it is." He said, "I don't like to brag,
But we're kinda proud of that Ragged Old Flag.

"You see, we got a little hole in that flag there
When Washington took it across the Delaware.
And it got powder-burned the night Francis Scott Key
Sat watching it writing *Oh, Say Can You See*.
And it got a bad rip in New Orleans
With Packingham and Jackson tuggin' at its seams.

"And it almost fell at the Alamo
Beside the Texas flag, but she waved on through.
She got cut with a sword at Chancellorsville
And she got cut again at Shiloh Hill.
There was Robert E. Lee, Beauregard and Bragg,
And the south wind blew hard on that Ragged Old Flag.

“On Flanders Field in World War I
She got a big hole from a Bertha gun.
She turned blood red in World War II.
She hung limp and low by the time it was through.
She was in Korea and Vietnam.
She went where she was sent by her Uncle Sam.

“She waved from our ships upon the briny foam,
And now they’ve about quit waving her back here at home.
In her own good land she’s been abused --
She’s been burned, dishonored, denied and refused.

“And the government for which she stands
Is scandalized throughout the land.
And she’s getting threadbare and wearing thin,
But she’s in good shape for the shape she’s in.
‘Cause she’s been through the fire before
And I believe she can take a whole lot more.

“So we raise her up every morning,
Take her down every night.
We don’t let her touch the ground
And we fold her up right.
On second thought, I DO like to brag,
‘Cause I’m mighty proud of that Ragged Old Flag.”

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