

# A BOY AND HIS COUNTRY

An Oration

by  
Margaretta Gratz



**Wetmore Declamation Bureau**

**Box 2695  
Sioux City, IA 51106**

**[www.wetmoredeclamation.com](http://www.wetmoredeclamation.com)  
Email: [speeches@wetmoredeclamation.com](mailto:speeches@wetmoredeclamation.com)**

CAUTION: Wetmore Declamation Bureau material is protected by United States copyright law and conventions. None of our material may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means-electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or any other-without prior permission. No trademark, copyright or other notice may be removed or changed. All rights reserved. Violators will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

A BOY AND HIS COUNTRY  
An Oration

Margaretta Gratz

Copyright 1957 by the WETMORE DECLAMATION BUREAU, Sioux City, Iowa.

(To be given in a quiet, sincere and conversational manner.)

I'm just a young fellow growing up. I haven't been too interested in what is going on about me in this world of ours--having too much fun I guess--just living. I figured, as all other boys in this great country do, that the job of keeping America free was for the grown-ups. But just recently I heard a newscaster talk about freedom. He said that liberty worth having is worth fighting for. "Hah!" I said to myself, "that is strictly for the birds. Why should anyone fight for what he already has? We are free, aren't we? We can go from where we are to where we want to be without asking permission from any civic officer, can't we? We talk and write and pray the way we feel, don't we? Why, we live in the freest country in the world! We live and breathe the very air of freedom!"

But the man kept on talking about liberty and how precious it is. He spoke of Hungary, of the people's love of freedom, of their bravery in the face of the most horrible punishment and torture. How, mind you, young boys and girls--like me--fought and died that their country be freed of the oppressor. One boy said, "I'd rather die standing up than live on my knees."

"Boy!" I thought, "if lads like him will defend liberty with their very lives, then to have freedom in the fullest sense of the word, we must hold it no matter what the cost!" (Slowly) So I knew right then that liberty's defense was NOT strictly for the birds, it was strictly for ME!

After that, I listened closely to what more he had to say. "The founding fathers," he said, "Washington, Jefferson, Franklin, Madison, Hamilton, Adams, established a way of life based upon the principle that EVERY HUMAN BEING IS MORE IMPORTANT than government. Didn't the wisdom and bravery of Washington give us independence? Didn't Jefferson give us the immortal Bill of Rights? The hope and dream of all freedom loving people? Liberty of choice is our precious heritage. Jefferson had the vision to see beyond today to meet the needs of tomorrow. In adding them to the Constitution, he said, 'In proposing these ten amendments, I have sworn on the altar of the Living God eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind and soul of man. Let all eyes be opened to the rights of man that life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness be his inalienable privilege.'"

--- END OF FREE PREVIEW ---