

Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War



PATRIOTIC RECOLLECTIONS



Various Memorial Day Poems and Tributes

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Unnamed Poem^(a)

By Annie Poole Atwood

What a wonderful trip our party has had,
With Commander and Mrs. Town,
A trip which we will never forget,
As long as the sun goes down.

We have seen the ocean, the rivers, the desert and hills,
The pigs, the sheep, the cows by the rills,
The wheat, the corn, the oats and the hay,
And the beautiful flowers and fruit by the way

We have met the kindest women and men,
And made many friends each day,
And when we go back to our homes in the east,

Our hearts in the west will stay.

**We have traveled miles and miles very day,
But we knew when the day was done,
There would be friends at the end of the road,
To greet us, and welcome us home.**

**And so we have learned to love every one,
Every one from the east to the west,
They have made us happy in each place we have stayed,
And we love them all the best.**

**So fare thee well, our western friends,
May your lives be as bright as the sun,
And we will wish you well always,
After our voyage is done.**

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***The Challenge of the Flag*^(b)
By Frank Huston**

***Old Glory*, when we look on you, as you are hanging there,
We wonder, could there ever be a banner still more fair?
No other such arrangement of our stripes and stars that gleam,
Could ever be so beautiful, no holy, it would seem.**

**As if the God above us all, in looking down could see
Just what our Nation needed most, and what it's Flag should be,
And guided those who made it, so in every thought and way,
To make you, Glorious Banner, just what you are today.**

**But far beyond the beauty rare-God only could create,
We recognize in symbol, that which make our nation great;
No god of Gold; no favored class; not selfishness, nor greed;
But *Righteousness and Brotherhood*, this is our nation's creed.**

**Within that Flag, we see, today, embodiment of Grace;
The better things of all mankind for all the human race.
The Red, there, tells how bold was shed that freemen still be free,
How heroes died to usher in these better things to be.**

**The White, there, tells that for this land no hero died in vain-
That those who live will ever keep that Flag without a stain.
The field of Blue, bedecked with stars-a bit of heaven's dome,
Reflects the glory of our God, who gives us such a dome.**

**Could any banner ever float o'er nations half so blest?
The friend of all the needy world, the hungry and oppressed.
She brooks no fears; desires no foes; but, advocates the plan
That those who live beneath her folds, should be AMERICAN.**

**No hyphenated loyalty can give her honors due,
Allegiance, undivided, THAT make a man true blue;**

**No man can serve two masters, why should one care to try,
While living 'neath the grandest Flag that ever graced the sky.**

**Old Glory when we see you there, what challenges you bring
To those who know you as you ARE, and now your praises sing;
You challenge us to lives that tell in high and holy deeds,
To lives of noble thoughts and acts-not merely mouthing creeds.**

**And, so, we pledge you here, today, the best that in us lies,
That you may wave forevermore, the fairest Flag that flies.
We love you, dear old Banner Bright; God help us each to see
That YOU are but the symbol of what We, ALL, ought to be.**

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Memorial Day 1912^(c)

By Ella F. Cary

**The nation lives; after War's bloody showers
The aire is sweet with Freedom's stainless flowers.
Let praise ascend and congratulations grand!
The graves of martyrs consecrate the land.**

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Sleep, Comrades, Sleep^(d)

By Mary Starkey Sanford

**Sleep, Comrades, in your glory! Sweet be your honored rest,
Thousands shall tell the story, how ye your high behest,
Bravely in love fulfilling, gave up your live, to be,
A sacrifice not willing-the seal of liberty.
Oft as the springtime, breathing sweet odors from fair flow'rs
With dewy pearls, comes, wreathing our bright and peaceful bow'rs,
We bring the first and fairest in honor to the brave,
The choicest and the rarest, to deck the soldier's grave.
God of our country, o'er us thy shield of glory spread!
Go thou in love before us; direct the paths we tread;
Faithful in ev'ry duty, to us Thy grace be given,
And then the crowning beauty of fadeless wreaths in heav'n.**

**Day of sacred memories, on which, in the beautiful month of flowers, we gratefully
and reverently lay our choicest blossoms upon the green tents beneath which heroes
sleep.**

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Memorial Day 1941^(e)

by Maude A. Nolan

**Is it enough to think today
Off all our brave, then put away
The thought until a year has sped?**

Is this full honor for our dead?

**Is it enough to sing a song
And deck a grave! and all year long
Forget the brave who died that we
Might keep our great land proud and free?**

**Full service needs a greater toll-
That we who live give heart and soul
To keep the land they died to save,
And be ourselves, in turn, the brave!**

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Memorial Day 1940^(f)

By Sarah Miner

**Because they dared, because they died,
We and our nation live,
Our liberty, our hope, our pride,
Were gifts that they could give.
And since for all these gifts the price
Was life-they held life cheap
And blithely made the sacrifice
And laid them down to sleep.**

**O, dead of many wars who fought
With spirit high and pure.
The noble structure that you wrought
Shall evermore endure.
You held your country's cause above
All else, we unafraid,
Will keep your Country worthy of
The price you gladly paid.**

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Then Shall We have Peace^(g)

By Jane V. Fallone

**When we shall know and understand
That love of power is the gauntlet hand
Which seeks to drive and crush and grind
The Soul and Will of human kind;
When we shall see that soon or late
The strength of strife is Hate and Hate;
And in this there is no plan
For love of God and love for Man;
When we shall know that selfish greed
Is always War's steel armored steed,
And we shall know that when it's gone
that he has naught to ride upon;
When everyone at home, abroad**

Shall love his neighbor and his God
Shall train his child in ways of PEACE
Then strife upon this Earth shall cease.

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Our Hero Dead^(h)

By Ella May Sherriff

The season comes when memory turns
To the ashes in a million urns;
To a million graves on land, in sea,
Where silent pulseless heroes be
Whose records, traced in lines of blood,
Through changing years have changeless stood,
Except to shine in brighter hues,
Oft bathed in sorrow's limpid dews;

Oft brought to mind by bitter cries
That haunt the earth and rend the skies;
By footless leg, by empty sleeve.
By hearts that still in silence grieve;
By mounds that heave in churchyards fair,
North, South, East, West-ah, everywhere;
By song and speech and-Memory
That will not die or silent be.

Come children, bring your choicest flowers-
Transform these graves to Eden bowers;
Here He the strong, the brave, the true,
In blood-bathed shrouds of battle blue.
Come, youth, and stand with bowed heads bear,
In thoughtful mood a moment where
Full starred in pride Old Glory waves
Above a million hero graves.

Come, manhood, womanhood, kneel and pray
That God, of Memorial Day,
Through its return a thousand years,
And through its songs and prayers and tears
Cement between both South and North
Strong bonds of Union's vital worth,
And pledge above each hero's grave
Undying memory of the brave.

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Tribute⁽ⁱ⁾

By Florence L. Sutton

This is our day of Memories, sad, sweet, glorious and eternal. Memory is the Soul of the Past, the Recording Angel of the Present and the Inspiring Genius of the Future. Someone has said that all lives are beautiful, wherein the sovereign thought

has been service for others. The lives of these men, living and dead, and the youth Col. Lindbergh, to whom we pay tribute today, exemplifies this thought. They gave years of gallant service to their country and their Flag, *for greater love hath no man than this, that a many lay down his life for his friend*. Hunger and thirst, wounds and sickness, the wearisome march, the tortures of prison, all were borne with patient endurance: and when the two great Armies turned toward Home, one with Banners furled in defeat, one with Banners radiant with Glory, each bearing his honored scars, every man entered upon his duties as a citizen of an **UNDIVIDED COUNTRY**. For these lives we are thankful, and we, the Woman's Relief Corps, of the Department of New York, the **ONLY** Auxiliary of the Grand Army of the Republic, are appreciative of our great heritage, and humbly pay our tribute to them today here and throughout the length and breath of our Land. But-

The finest tribute we can pay
Unto our honored dead today,
Is not a rose wreath, white and red,
In memory of the blood they shed.
It is to stand beside each mound,
Each couch of consecrated ground,
And pledge ourselves as warriors true,
Unto the task they tried to do.

Into God's valleys where they lie
At rest, beneath the open sky,
Triumphant now o'er every foe,
As living tributes let us go.
No wreath of rose or immortelles
Nor spoken words or tolling bells,
Will do today, unless we give
Our pledge that **LIBERTY** shall live.

Our hearts must be the roses red
We place above our hero dead;
Today, beside each mound we must
Renew allegiance to their trust;
Must bare our heads and humbly say,
We hold the Flag as high as they,
And stand, as once they stood, to die
To keep the Stars and Stripes on high.

The finest tribute we can pay
Unto our Comrades her today,
Is not of speech or roses red,
But living, throbbing hearts instead
That shall renew the pledge they sealed
With blood upon the battle field:
That Freedom's Flag shall bear no stain
And Freemen wear no tyrant's chain.

We, the Woman's Relief Corps, Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic, of the Department of New York, are deeply conscious of our own indebtedness and through the Inspiration given us by the lesson taught by their valor and sacrifices, will ever keep before the people of this ear the perfection of that high ideal given to the Word by the Volunteers of the Sixties.

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Memorial Day 1943^(j)

By Martha M. Griffin

Sons and Daughters of this Nation,
You must tell the triumphs won.
When on earth our work is ended,
And the Veterans claims his own.
You must cherish dear *Old Glory*,
And its teachings pass along,
You must tell the world the story
When the *Boys in Blue* are gone.

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Memorial Day 1946^(k)

By Edna S. Freer

The finest tribute we can pay
Unto our hero dead today,
Is not a rose wreath white and red
In memory of the blood they shed;
It is to stand beside each mound,
Each couch of consecrated ground,
And pledge ourselves as warriors true
Unto the work they died to do.

Into God's valley's where they lie
At rest, beneath the open sky,
Triumphant now o'er every foe,
As living tributes let us go.
No wreath of rose or immortelles,
Or spoken word or tolling bells
Will today, unless we give
Our pledge that liberty shall live.

Our hearts must be the roses red
We place about our hero dead;
Today beside their graves we must
Renew allegiance to their trust,
Must bare our heads and humbly say
We hold the Flag as dear as they,
And stand, as once they stood, to die
To keep the Stars and Stripes on high.

The finest tribute we can pay
Unto our hero dead today
Is not of speech or roses red,
But living, throbbing hearts instead
That shall renew the pledge they sealed
With death upon the battlefield:
That freedom's flag shall bear no stain

And free men wear no tyrant's chain.

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The Final Reunion^(l)

By Beatrice Tyson

Gone to the final reunion,
At rest, are the marched-wearied feet;
Gone are the call of the drummer
Beating the silent retreat.
Gone to the final reunion,
Camped with silence of years;
Gone where the battles are ended.
Gone with our love and our tears.
Under the myrtle and dewdrop,
Under the stars and the sun.
Gone where the brave boys of Dixie
And the loved of the Northland are one.
Then pause for a moment to bless him
Sleeping there under the sod,
Under the myrtle and dewdrop,
At peace with the World and his GOD.

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Memorial Day 1947^(m)

By Josephine Parkhurst

How sleep the brave, who sink to rest,
By all their country's wishes blessed!
When Spring, with dewy fingers cold,
Returns to deck their hallowed mold
She there shall dress a sweeter sod
Than Fancy's feet have ever trod.

By fairy hand their knell is rung;
By forms unseen their dirge is sung;
There Honor comes, a pilgrim gray,
To bless the turf that wraps their clay;
And Freedom shall awhile repair,
To dwell a weeping hermit there!

Memorial Day 1949⁽ⁿ⁾

By Georgiana E. Ried

Somewhere back in the Sunset,
Where loveliness never dies
They live in the land of Glory
'Mid the blue and gold of the Sky.
And those who have known and loved them
Whose parting has brought sad tears,
Will cherish their memory always

And brighten the passing years.

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- (c) ----- . 1912. *Memorial Day 1912*, General Orders. Annual Journal, New York Department, Woman's Relief Corps, Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic.
- (d) Sanford, M.S. (Department President) 1915. *Sleep, Comrade Sleep*, Memorial Day Poem, General Order. New York Department, Woman's Relief Corps, Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the
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- (f) Miner, S. (Department President) 1940. *Memorial Day 1940*, General Order. New York Department, Woman's Relief Corps, Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic.
- (g) Fallone, J.V. 1953. (Department President). *Then Shall We have Peace*, Memorial Day General Order. New York Department, Woman's Relief Corps, Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic.
- (h) Sherriff, E.M. (Department President). 1924. *Our Hero Dead*, Memorial Day, General Order. New York Department, Woman's Relief Corps, Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic.
- (i) Sutton, F.L. 1927. *Tribute*, Memorial Day, New York Department, Woman's Relief Corps, Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic, Grand Army Plaza, New York, New York.
- (j) Griffin, M.M. (Department President) 1943. *Memorial Day 1943*, General Order. New York Department, Woman's Relief Corps, Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic.
- (k) Freer, E.S. (Department President) 1946. *Memorial Day 1946*, General Order. New York Department, Woman's Relief Corps, Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic.
- (l) Tyson, B. (Past Department President) 1946. *The Final Reunion*, p 17. New York Department, Woman's Relief Corps, Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic.
- (m) Parkhurst J. (Department President) 1947. *Memorial Day 1947*, General Order. New York Department, Woman's Relief Corps, Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic.
- (n) Ried, G.E. (Department President) 1949. *Memorial Day 1949*, General Order. New York Department, Woman's Relief Corps, Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic.

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