



PATRIOTIC RECOLLECTIONS



Memorial Day Poems and Readings

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Excerpt from May 4, 1898 Memorial Day Order ^(a)

When my final farewell to the world I have said,
And gladly lie down to my rest;
When softly the watchers shall say, *she is dead*,
And fold my pale hand o'er my breast;
And when with my glorified vision at last
The wall of *That City* I see,
Will anyone then at the beautiful gate
Be waiting and watching for me?

There are old and forsaken who linger awhile
In homes which their dearest have left;
And a few gentle words, or an action of love
My cheer their sad spirits bereft;
But the Reaper is near to the long standing corn,
The weary will soon be set free.
Will any of them at the beautiful gate
Be watching and waiting for me?

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New York Department President Message, 1900 [\(b\)](#)

Long as the spring-time shall come to the earth,
Long as the summer in leafage and bloom,
Herald the harvest-time's gladness and mirth,
Long as the snowflakes drift o'er the tomb;
While with a weird and magic unfolding
Open the buds of the maple and larch,
While the June roses shall brighten, unheeding
Chills of the April and winds of the March,
While the earth yields from her myriad treasures,
Grasses and daisies to brighten the sod,
Still shall their place ever be holy,
Sacred to freedom and country and God.

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1936 Memorial Service [\(c\)](#)

This is our sacred hour and we pause to pay loving tribute to those Comrades and members who have joined the long train and have left sweet and tender memories. May their lives be an inspiration to us who are left here a little while longer, that we may value the golden moments and live as we shall wish we had, when our time comes to pass through the Valley of the Shadow of Death.

One by one ther're swiftly passing
While Celestial Trumpets sound,
With a grander army massing
On Eternal muster grounds.
Past and Present soon will sever
Veteran Sires will cease to be
But the Flag they loved will ever
Glorify their memory.

God opened the door of his Temple
And bade him come over the sill,
And feeling the strength of his presence
He whispered, *Dear Master I will.*

How fast they fall, these Comrades we have known,
As leaves from autumn's branches blown,
So quickly sere;
Yet one by one they drop away,
As withered leaves, they fall and stray,
and disappear.

This is an hour of memories fragrant with pleasant associations and lost friends, who, like the leaves have fallen, one by one, and disappeared. But we would recall the familiar faces, the pleasant talks, the warm greetings of him, who was wont to greet us all at our many meetings.

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Memorial Order, April 7, 1906 [\(d\)](#)

Decked alone with glorious sunshine
Countless unknown graves must lay
In sublime and quiet grandeur,
Waiting their Memorial Day,
While the skies wave starry banners
O'er these lowly mounds at night,
Where a silent host are watching
For the freedom of God's light.

Oh, the simple, solemn glory,
Of our blest Memorial Day;
May we never lose its meaning,
Neither from its precepts stray;
For it teaches us that freedom
Is a gift that's dearly won
With the blood of martyred patriots
Of Columbia's bravest sons.

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With Tenderness in our Hearts [\(e\)](#)

Spring, with her sunshine and showers, has lifted the wintry mantle from Mother Earth and bid the buds and blossoms come forth in all their fragrance and beauty to fill the outstretched hands of the Union veterans, who, with their sweet spirit of fraternity, will place them above the last resting place of their comrades-in-arms that sleep in the City of Peace-whose boundaries extend from ocean to ocean, from the mountains to the gulf. With tenderness in our hearts let us remember those who sleep where no loving hands can bear them a garland of memory. But whether their requiems be sung by the restless waves of the ocean, or by the sighing winds through the Southern pines, they are all one God's roll call; He know them all. He covers the Southland with His choicest verdure, and plants with lavish hand the wild flowers among its grasses he bids the song birds thrill their sweetest notes in out-of-the way places. So throughout year every day is God's Decoration Day for those who sleep where they fell. Let us stand ready with willing hearts and hands to render the comrades of the Grand Army of the Republic every assistance that they may require of us on Memorial Day - whether it be to weave the laurel and the pine into chaplets for our heroes dead, or to make glad the day for our heroes living-let all be done quietly as befits a day hallowed by tender associations.

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Emblems of Memorial Day [\(f\)](#)

[First child with bunch of red roses recites]

With slow and reverend tread
I bring the roses red
To deck the soldier's bed,
Emblem of the blood they shed
For this, our native land.

[Second child with bunch of daisies recites.]

And I white daisies bring
A simple offering,
Emblem of holy peace-
Oh, may its reign ne'er cease
In this, our happy land.

[Third child with bunch of violets recites]

I bring the violets blue;
They say, "Be true, be true!
True to God above you,
And to they native land.

[All three children recite together]

For the brave and the true
We'll twine them together,
For the red, white and blue
Are united forever.

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The New Memorial Day ^(g)

Oh, the roses we plucked for the blue
And the lilies we twined for the gray,
We have bound in a wreath,
And in silence beneath
Slumber our heroes today.

Over the new-turned sod
The sons of our fathers stand,
And the fierce old fight
Slips out of sight
In the clasp of a brother's hand.

For the old blood left a stain
That the new was washed away,
And the sons of those
That have faced as foes
Are marching together today.

Oh, the blood that our father's gave!
Oh, the tide of our mother's tears!
And the flow of red,
And the tears they shed,

Embittered a sea of years.

But the roses we plucked for the blue,
And the lilies we twined for the gray,
We have bound in a wreath
And in glory beneath
Slumber our heroes today.

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We Crown Memorial Day [\(h\)](#)

The morning dawns, and low! In light,
Upspring from sea to sea,
Columbia's passions flowers bright,
The bloom of Liberty!
The tiny flags that lightly wave,
How eloquent they are!
We read besides each soldier's grave,
A lesson in each star.

What messages of hope they bear
For those bereft, who weep!
A Nation's benediction, where
Its leal defenders sleep.
Roses and lilies will we bring,
The evergreen and bay,
And all the jewels of the Springs
Shall crown Memorial Day.

But where the triune colors shine
Above the sleeping brave,
Celestial beauty doth enshrine
The patriot soldier's grave!
O, blessed Standard of the world!
They gave their lives for thee!
That stainless, thou shouldst be unfurled,
The banner of the Free!

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The Flag Goes By [\(i\)](#)

The Flag Goes By
Hats off!
Along the street there comes
A blare of bugles, a ruffle of drums,
A flash of color beneath the sky:
Hats off!

Blue and crimson and white it shines,
Over the still-tipped, ordered lines,
Hats off!

The Colors before us fly!
But more than the Flag is passing by.
Sea-flights and land fights, firm and great,
Fought to make and to save the State;
Weary marches and sinking ships;
Cheers of victory on dying lips;

Days of plenty and years of peace;
March on a strong land's swift increase;
Equal justice, right and law,
Stately honor and reverent awe;

Signs of a nation great and strong
To ward her people from foreign wrong;
Pride and glory and honor, all
Line in the Colors to stand or fall.

Hats off!
Along the street there comes
A blare of bugles, a ruffle or drums;
And loyal hearts are beating high:
Hats off!
The Flag is passing by!
-The Youth's Companion

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Memorial Day: Again the Shadow Moveth O'er the Dial Plate of Time [\(i\)](#)

Memorial Day! The day of sad, sweet memories-most sacred day of all the year-the one day set aside to cover with spring's choicest blossoms the grassy mounds of our soldier dead who willingly gave their lives that we might enjoy the blessings of a free country. *They come not back, but rest where they won their imperishable laurels.*

It is our mission of love to perpetuate their memory, and, as we cover them over with beautiful flowers, may the perfume that arises from the mute messengers of love and sympathy purify our own hearts and help us to make the lives of those who are yet with us bright with the sunshine of sympathy and human kindness.

Do not forget the thousands of brave men who sleep in *unknown and unmarked graves* where no blossoms can be placed, but let every Corps prepare a loving tribute for our Unknown Dead. Scatter flowers upon the water in remembrance of those who sleep 'neath the ocean's wave, the billows their winding sheet. Call the children from far and near to assist in these sacred ceremonies, and this teach them that this day is the Nation's holy-day--sacred to the memory of her fallen defenders.

When May has culled the flowers for the summer waiting long,
And the breath of early roses woos the hedges into song,
Comes the throb of marital music and the banners in the street,
And the marching of the millions bearing garlands fair and sweet,
'Tis the Sabbath of the Nation, 'tis the floral feast of May,

In remembrance of our heroes we keep Memorial Day.

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Your Flag and My Flag ^(k)

Your flag and my flag-
And how it flies today!
In your land and my land,
And half the world away!
Rose-red and blood-red,
The Stripes forever gleam;
Snow-white and soul-white-
The good forefathers' dream;
Sky-blue and true blue, with stars to shine a-right--
The gloried guidon of the day, a shelter through the night.

Your flag and my flag-
And, oh, how much it holds!
Your land and my land
Secure within its folds!
Your heart and my heart
Beat quicker at the sight-
Sun-kissed and wind-tossed-
Red and blue and white.
The one flag-the great flag-the flag for me and you-
Glorified all else beside-the red and white and blue.

Your flag and my flag-
To every star and stripe
The drums beat as hearts as heart beat And fifers shrilly pipe.
Your flag and my flag-
A blessing in the sky!
Your hope and my hope-
It never hid a lie!
Home land and far land, and half the world around,
Old Glory hears the great salute and flutters to the sound!

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(a) Mohr, A.D. (Department President). 1898. *Excerpt from May 4, 1898 Memorial Day Order*, p 231. Annual Journal, New York Department, Woman's Relief Corps, Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic.

(b) Seely, M.E. (Department President). 1900. *New York Department President Message, 1900*, p. 54. Annual Journal, New York Department, Woman's Relief Corps, Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic.

(c) 1936. *1936 Memorial Service*, p. 28. Annual Journal, New York Department, Woman's Relief Corps, Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic.

(d) Payne, F. (Department President) 1906. *Memorial Order, April 7, 1906*. New York Department, Woman's Relief Corps, Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic.

(e) Turner, L.A. (National President 1894-1895) 1903. *With Tenderness in our Hearts*. 21st National Convention, Woman's Relief Corps,

Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic, August 21 and 22, 1903, San Francisco, California.

(f) Woodman, W. 1903. *Emblems of Memorial Day*. 21st National Convention, Woman's Relief Corps, Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic, August 21 and 22, 1903, San Francisco, California.

(g) Paine, A.B. 1903. *The New Memorial Day*. 21st National Convention, Woman's Relief Corps, Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic, August 21 and 22, 1903, San Francisco, California.

(h) Burleigh, C.H. 1903. *We Crown Memorial Day*. 21st National Convention, Woman's Relief Corps, Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic, August 21 and 22, 1903, San Francisco, California.

(i) 1903. *The Flag Goes By*. 21st National Convention, Woman's Relief Corps, Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic, August 21 and 22, 1903, San Francisco, California.

(j) Taylor, L.J. (National President) 1903. *Memorial Day: Again the Shadow Moveth O'er the Dial Plate of Time*. General Order #6, March 15, 1903, Woman's Relief Corps, Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic, Le Sueur, Minnesota.

(k) 1903. *Your Flag and My Flag*. 21st National Convention, Woman's Relief Corps, Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic, August 21 and 22, 1903, San Francisco, California.

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