

Object ID: *MG0828_SeriesF_F12*

Document: *"Decoration Day"*

Transcription:

[*Columbia Spy*] [3 June 1876—date assumed from context and usual Saturday publication]

DECORATION DAY.

Imposing Memorial Ceremonies on

The decoration ceremonies of last Tuesday were never surpassed in Columbia. The weather was all that could be desired—cloudy, but cool, and no burning sun—and the streets without dust or mud. Business was entirely suspended at 12 o'clock, and every store, office, bank, &c., closed for the rest of the day.

The soldiers and sailors assembled at Odd Fellows' Hall, at 3 o'clock p.m. Large quantities of flowers were contributed by friends for the decoration. At 3:15 the procession moved in the order given in the following programme which was issued and distributed on Monday:

All honorably discharged soldiers and sailors are invited to meet at Odd Fellows' Hall, at 2 o'clock, on the 30th of May, and join the Post in its services and procession.

All other societies, the fire companies, council and school board, are invited to join in the procession and to report themselves to the Chief Marshall, at Odd Fellows' Hall, on Tuesday, May 30th. The procession will move at 3 o'clock sharp, in the following order:

Chief Marshall.

Columbia Cornet Band.

Burgess and Town Council.

School Board.

Orator.

Clergymen.

Firemen.

Civic Societies.

Soldiers and Sailors.

Citizens.

Arriving at Mount Bethel Cemetery, the graves will be decorated in the usual way. During the ceremony of decoration the procession will move to the orator's stand where the following programme will be observed:

1. Music by the Band.
2. Prayer by Rev. Theodore Stevens.
3. Poem by Mrs. Mary S Evans, read by J. F. Frueauff.
4. Music by the Band.
5. Memorial oration by Rev. I C. Burkhalter.
6. Benediction by Rev. C. Clever.
7. Music by the Band, re-form and return



Contributions of flowers are kindly and earnestly solicited, and should be sent to Odd Fellows' Hall before 2 o'clock p. m.

All persons are requested to close their places of business at 12 o'clock m.

The following committees have been appointed *for work* for Decoration Day. Every man is expected to do his duty:

Platform—Geo. A. Souders, J. C. Clark, S. S. Clair.

Orator—J. W. Yocum, A. R. Breneman, A. R. Hougendobler.

Marking Graves—H. Mullen, A. R. Breneman, J. L. Pinkerton.

Music—H. Mullen, B. F. Mullen, S. B. Clepper.

Flowers—Theo. Eyde, Dr. Craig, J. A. Meyers, W. Hayes Grier, J. W. Yocum, W. H.

Hougendobler, L. W. May, Herbert Thomas, Col. W. M. McClure.

S. S. Clair has been appointed chief marshal, and A. R. Hougendobler and Theodore Eyde, assistants.

The civic organizations represented in the procession were Gen. Welsh Post 118 G. A. R; the Temperance Army; Washington Camp, No. 27, Patriotic Order Sons of America; Junior American Mechanics; Knights of the Mystic Chain; Columbia, Vigilant and Shawnee Fire Companies.

In the cemetery the Post deployed, and at the tap of the drum members simultaneously decorated the graves beside which they were stationed. Re-assembling, the Post, the organizations and the people generally, congregated at the speaker's stand, just north of the Washington Institute building, where the exercises were conducted in the order given above.

The following is the poem composed by Mrs. Evans, and read by Maj. J. F. Frueauff:

DECORATION DAY, 1876.

The last blooming treasures of beautiful May
Once more on the graves of the heroes we lay;
Thus tenderly of the beloved that were ours
Speaking in silently eloquent flowers,
Beautiful tribute, though sadness, 'tis true
Must blend with the thought 'tis all we can do.
Ah! bitterest thought when our loved ones have fled,
So little affection can do for the dead!

These dead—on the altar of Liberty slain,
To happy homes lost, that the nation might gain[,]
Who fell in Virginia, Vicksburg, Tennessee,
Or perished in Sherman's long "march to the sea,"
In hospitals pined, or more terrible still,
Languished in Libby or Andersonville;
Or to Gettysburg's field turning homeward again
To breathe the last sigh in the blest land of Penn.

Yet they, who through suffering unspeakable, saved
The country they loved, still more cheerfully braved



The perils and hardships because of the prayers
Of the loved ones at home, which they knew must be theirs.
And perhaps some were soothed in their last solemn hours
By dreams of the perfume of graves decked with flowers,
Of brave fellow-soldiers sometimes coming near
To place o'er their ashes the flag they held dear.

But soldiers, brave soldiers, have ye never thought
How the land ye have saved was by suffering bought?
And now our proud nation, a century old
Hears the daring and deeds of its fathers o'ertold,
Of how they all rallied when tyranny robbed,
And all hearts together indignantly throbbed
From bold Ethan Allen, "mad Anthony Wayne"
To Sumpter and Marion, from Georgia to Maine.

The North called to duty her strong earnest men,
Nerved to valorous deeds by her patriot's pen.
Patrick Henry, with fiery eloquence, stirred
Virginia's proud soul to respond to each word,
And the watch-word arose o'er the land, as one breath.
"Give to me liberty, or—give me death!"
When the "times tried men's souls" the South too could trust
That God would give strength to the cause that was just.

As patient through hunger and wounds and defeat,
With poor, tattered garments, and bare bleeding feet,
Bore toil through long years that their children might rest,
And war, that those children with peace might be blessed.
The North had her Putnam, her Jasper, the South,
To rescue our flag at the foe's cannon's mouth,
And tidings of Moultrie, o'er mountain and rill,
Were echoed with rapture beyond Bunker Hill.

Carolina bore hardships, as did Valley Forge,
As firmly resolved not to yield to King George,
And in the great scroll that our Freedom declares
The South with the North immortality shares.
And when, in the pride of her one hundred years,
Our Freedom in festival garments appears,
Her birth-day to keep in the place of her birth,
And bids to the feast all the nations of Earth,

When graves long neglected are sought out once more
By grand-children pondering historical lore,
When sectional difference may sever them not,
But both may pay reverence at each hallowed spot,—
Think ye not this the time when all discord should cease?
When the North with the South should unite in true peace?



'Tis noble to 'rise when your country may call,
To forgive vanquished foemen is nobler than all.

In the City of Brotherly Love O forget
That ever as foemen in hatred ye met!
Fear not that 'twill crown you with one laurel less,
For though ye were wronged, ye have had stern redress,
Not one honor less to the dead will be paid,
Not one wreath will wither, not one flower will fade,
But sweet May returning, will leave in their stead
Fresh garlands as beautiful, over them spread.

Ye welcome to-day all the world to our land,
Then give all your countrymen friendship's warm hand.
Your sires wrought with theirs, in the same sacred cause,
Ye give the same heroes your grateful applause,
Resolve then beside your dead comrades to-day
All bitterness be from your souls cast away,
In one mighty brotherhood bow at one shrine—
"Tis in Love man approaches most near the Divine.

If the Power Mysterious speech should bestow
On these long silent ones that *their* thoughts we might know,
What words do you think would *then* fall on the ear
From General Welsh or the humblest one here?
Would he bid you nurse anger and hate against them
Whose haughty rebellion all time must condemn,
Whose courage their country gives no grateful praise,
And unto whose fallen no honor she pays?

[Transcribed by MTA, November 2020].

Scope and Content Note:

"Decoration Day: Imposing Memorial Ceremonies on Tuesday." Describes the ceremonies that occurred the previous week. Poem by Mrs. Evans is printed in its entirety. The Columbia Spy. 3 June 1876.

