

ADDRESS AND POEM





To Mrs. Pipkin

From J. J. Taylor.

May - 30th 1923



Confederate Monument erected by the Ladies' Memorial Association of Warren County, N. C., and unveiled August 27, 1903. (This cut is kindly furnished by Cooper Bros., Raleigh, N. C.)

ADDRESS AND POEM

DELIVERED AT THE UNVEILING OF THE MONUMENT ERECTED
TO THE MEMORY OF THE CONFEDERATE DEAD OF
WARREN COUNTY, N. C., AUGUST 27, 1903



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OFFICERS

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President Warren County Memorial Association.

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sepulchres of soldiers who were patriots, and who gave their lives for their country, for their love of the same, and who were "bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh."

The Association, whose spokesman I am, was organized to build, on some suitable ground, an appropriate monument in memory of the Confederate dead of Warren. This spot already the last resting place of departed friends, and overlooking the historic old town, was most aptly selected for its site. The foundation was laid two years ago.

It has been completed, and this day is unveiled amidst a cloud of witnesses. Behold it in its symmetry and beauty, emblematic both of the virtues and the deeds it is intended to commemorate, and of the gratitude of those who have erected it.

Let us hope that it will for ages withstand the ravages of time, a reminder to coming generations of honored worth and noble ancestry. We are not unmindful, however, of the fact that the tallest and broadest monuments of stone or brass are but partial and limited memorials of great achievements, and likely to perish long before the deeds they bear witness to grow dim in the pages of recorded history, or in the hearts of mankind. We know that should shafts with foundations as broad as the pyramids and so tall as to reach and pierce the skies be raised on each of the battlefields made famous by the valor of the Confederate troops, they would but poorly commemorate the imperishable feats of those soldiers, and affect those whose eyes might fall upon them. And we know, too, that the most enduring memorials of great events are not in written history, for its pages are often times falsified, but are those which are engraven on the hearts of mankind. But we intend by this structure to make an *outward* manifestation of our appreciation of the patient endurance of suffering, the high courage and the noble self-denial of our heroic dead; and by offering this physical tribute of our grateful love to the gaze of the beholder to produce on his mind the desire



MRS. LUCY E. POLK

MRS. PENDLETON

MRS. WILCOX

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to cherish a high standard of life and to encourage a disposition to imitate the principles which controlled the conduct of our dead.

It will not be thought, for a moment, that our purpose is the formation or encouragement of sectional hostility, or the disparagement of those who opposed us in our mighty struggle for State Supremacy. It is infinitely loftier and nobler. It is of our spirit "to speak no slander, no, nor listen to it."

We have not met to stir afresh the passions of the Civil War, nor to lament the results of that strife. From the decision of the God of Battles we filed no appeal. There is now no promoter of Southern Independence. No, my former Comrades and Friends! We have gathered to-day for another purpose than to quarrel with the Past, to indulge useless repinings, or to sow seeds of discord. True followers of Robert E. Lee and the Starry Cross are incapable of treachery or malice, and since the day when that banner was furled, though the times have been troublous, trying men's very souls, they have proven in their lives the truth of their leader's immortal words, "Human fortitude should be equal to human adversity." The men who drove the army of the Potomac from its entrenchments around Richmond, stormed the heights of Gettysburg and who, when reduced to a mere handful, stood like a stone wall at Spottsylvania, will never abuse a trust. If in the years long ago, when Appomattox and the memories it excited were fresh in our minds, we thought with sadness of "the might have been," the feelings such recollections now awaken "resemble sorrow only as mist resembles the rain." Experience, philosophy, religion, all have taught us that one adequate support for the calamities of mortal life exists—only one—an assured belief that the procession of our fate, however sad or disturbed, is ordered by a Being of infinite benevolence and power.

Conscious of the great worth of our ancestors, proud of the history of our grand old county, and with a due concern for

those who are to come after us, we are assembled with loving and loyal hearts, to perform the duties of the occasion.

We are here to record, in the unveiling and presenting of this monument erected to the memory of the Confederate dead of Warren County, our admiration of the splendid courage and manly virtues of those citizen soldiers; our exalted regard for their unselfish devotion to duty, our sympathy in their trials; our gratitude for the sacrifices they made for us, in the belief that notwithstanding defeat overtook the cause for which they battled, they did not die in vain. But the occasion does not require of us the exclusive concentration of our thoughts and our tenderness of feeling upon those unconquerable spirits who put to the touch-stone their professions, and lost their lives for their principles. It is a pleasure to see amongst us and to welcome a meritorious representation of the survivors of those of our Countymen who served their County in the field and also of other sections. Old Soldier Friends! you are crowned with the laurels of many a blood-stained field! You exalt this event by your presence; for you wear honors won at the Malvern Hills, Sharpsburg, Chancellorsville, Gettysburg and Spottsylvania. And though Appomattox was the end of your youthful dreams, was the tomb of the social aspirations and the sepulcher of the political hopes of the Southern people, you walked from thence with a consciousness of duty well performed and amidst the plaudits of your enemies. You had filled the whole earth with your fame. Throughout the long years *since*, you have been enshrined in the hearts of your countrymen. We wish you to-day the full enjoyment of the fellowship of old soldiers while you are receiving in full measure the gratitude of your people. But the meeting to-day cannot bring to you unalloyed joy. The memories of the past mix with the realities of the present, and contending feelings rush upon you; the pictures of the dead and the faces of the living stand before you and you cannot reconcile the changes

time has wrought. However, rejoice in the reunion. It will not be long before you shall have given and taken your last welcome; when you shall have clasped, for the last time, each others hands so often extended in sympathy in adversity, and in pride in victory. Year by year the older ones of you follow the beckon of the Pallid Messenger with the inverted torch, and within the not distant future the youngest of you, who as beardless boys, by turns fought great battles and sang with soft and plaintive voice around the camp fires their favorite songs, "The Years Creep Slowly by Lorena," or "Her Bright Smiles Haunt Me Still," will be the rear-guard of those armies of tattered uniforms and bright muskets which furled their banners nearly forty years ago.

The womankind of the good old County must also be mentioned here. By their efforts this monument has been erected. They have always been patriotic, courageous and intellectual; and from that source arose the intense war spirit which characterized the men of Warren throughout the war; and to that spirit may be attributed the unanimity of sentiment and the universality of enlistment in the Confederate army. They sent their sons to the field to conquer or to return upon their shields. And no influence but theirs could have held up the heads of the men through the subsequent years of poverty, of political oppression and despondency ensuing upon the close of hostilities. Many of their dear faces, whose trials and sufferings at home were as heroic as were the feats of valor of their kinsmen in the field, are missed to-day. These were they who bewept their husbands and sons, their brothers and lovers still sleeping where they fell, or carried dead from wounds across their thresholds and laid to sleep in their bloody shrouds until the trumpet shall sound. These were they who wanted back their dead, who never grew tired of lamenting them, and who cried from the depths of their hearts, "But oh for the touch of a vanished hand, and the sound of a voice that is still." These

souls, made strong through suffering and patient through affliction, have rejoined their loved ones in the Paradise of God.

The lineage from which these men sprung was proud and honorable. The very soil on which they were reared, named in honor of the Boston physician and patriot who fell at Bunker Hill, seemed favorable to the growth of a noble self-esteem, of patriotism, and above all the spirit of liberty—which is at bottom the love of home and family. As when in Bute in the war of the Revolution the Committees of safety were formed, one of each kin was selected to act as one of the Committee, so in that part of the same territory called Warren after 1779, in the war of 1861-1865 there was the same united determination to act together as one family. As there were no Tories in Bute, so there were no Unionists in Warren after the Secession ordinance of the Convention.

The whole body of the county had been affected through the influence of the excellence of character, the intellect and the wealth of the large number of educated and refined families who had lived within its borders from its almost earliest settlement. A bad man was found out and was ostracised. A cowardly act, or a dishonest transaction meant social ruin to its perpetrator. The treatment of the slave population, double that of the white, was considerate and kind. That institution never existed in any country or in any age attended with so little of harshness or hardship as with this people; and they repaid their owners during the war in cheerful labor and the protection of the homes of those of them who were in the army. The town of Warrenton was noted for its institutions of learning. The College and the Institute, both for young ladies and girls, sent out yearly numbers of graduates to adorn our society. There were two Academies for young men and boys with extensive patronage. Each of the Protestant Churches owned its place of worship.

It will be well, too, to mention that the material side of

life was not neglected among us. There were stables of thoroughbred horses trained for the turf; and upon the race course near Warrenton, favorites of national reputation were often entered. All manly sports were encouraged and, generally, the men and boys were experts with horse and gun. Two fashionable summer resorts drawing together each season hundreds of the most influential and polished people in the State added pleasure and profit to the community. When the war broke out there was general prosperity, and as a consequence contentment, founded on intelligence and moral worth. Why then did these men who loved peace and the institutions of their country, *so* fortunately situated, *so* contented, suddenly exchange peaceable employments for the toils and dangers of war? Why did these prosperous agriculturists, business and professional men leave their homes and families and march to the battlefield? Who of us doubts that they were impelled by a high sense of duty? They did not go out for conquest. They were not mercenaries. They were not traitors. They were patriots.

Whatever opinions may exist as to the motives of the chief political actors in the South in connection with the commencement of the war, of one thing we may be assured, and that is, that the impartial judgment of mankind, founded on a careful examination of the Constitution and its history, sustains the claim of the Southern States that their attempted withdrawal from the Union was of legal right.

The arguments on that matter would be out of place here, but the conclusions based on them by men disinterested and eminent in statesmanship and letters, other than those of the South, will be appropriate to the occasion. De Tocqueville, as the representative of foreign opinion, in his celebrated work on Democracy in America, says: "However strong a government may be, it cannot easily escape from the consequences of a Principle which it has once admitted as the foundation of its Constitution.

"The Union was formed by the voluntary agreement of the States; and in uniting together they have not forfeited their nationality, nor have they been reduced to the conditions of one and the same people. If one of the states should choose to withdraw from the compact, it would be difficult to disprove its right of doing so, and the Federal Government would have no means of maintaining its claims directly, either by force or right."

Senator Lodge, of Massachusetts, a statesman, a scholar and a patriot, in his life of Daniel Webster, in commenting on Mr. Webster's reply to Mr. Hayne on the Foote Resolutions, says: "The weak places in his armor were historical in their nature. It was probably necessary, at all events Mr. Webster felt it to be so, to argue that the Constitution at the outset was not a compact between the States, but a national instrument, and to distinguish the cases of Virginia and Kentucky in 1799, and of New England in 1814 from that of South Carolina in 1830. The former part he touched upon lightly; the latter he discussed ably, eloquently, ingeniously and at length.

Unfortunately the facts were against him in both instances. When the Constitution was adopted by the votes of the States at Philadelphia, and accepted by the votes of the States in popular convention, it is safe to say that there was not a man in the country, from Washington and Hamilton on one side, to George Clinton and George Mason on the other, who regarded the new system as anything but an experiment entered upon by the States, and from which each and every State had the right peaceably to withdraw—a right which was very likely to be exercised.

"What is true of 1799 is true of the New England leaders or Washington when they discussed the feasibility of secession in 1804, of the declaration in favor of secession made by Josiah Quincy in Congress a few years later; of the resistance of New England during the war of 1812,

and the right of 'interposition' set forth by the Harvard Convention. In all these instances no one troubled himself about the constitutional aspect; it was a question of expediency of moral and political right or wrong. In every case the right was simply stated, and the uniform answer was, 'Such a step means the overthrow of the present system.' "

From these quotations it is made clear that at the time the Constitution was framed the legal right of a State to withdraw from the Union, at discretion, was generally admitted and understood.

The people of the seceding States, then, are acquitted of any crime against the supreme law of the land paramount authority having been in the State and ultimate allegiance of its citizens due to the State and the policy or impolicy of their course was a matter for their discretion alone. In the forum of conscience they were bound by no rule except that which governs the intercourse between sovereign nations. Capricious action could not be defended. Well founded complaint was justification.

The last word of the defense of the South has been spoken. We will have to abide the verdict of impartial history upon the moral right of our action. Of the honesty of our people upon the question of due provocation there can be little doubt. Can any dispassionate and well informed person doubt the sincerity of the people of North Carolina in the ordaining of the ordinance of secession? Without going into particulars, which would involve the recital of the criminations and recriminations of those days, in the name of our dead we point as evidence of their good faith to the known hazard of the undertaking, the unexampled suffering and sacrifices they endured, and the tenacity with which they clung to their beliefs. We would to-day, for them, and each of them, speak the words of their great leader when he was advised by his lieutenants that in their opinion the time had

come for him to surrender his army: "We had I was satisfied, sacred principles to maintain, and rights to defend for which we were in duty bound to do our best even if we perished in the endeavor."

Allusion to the right of secession, the dearest of all dead issues, has been made here only, of course, with reference to the past, and to meet the charge of treason against those who participated with North Carolina in the great conflict.

Never were more hazardous resolves made than when the people of our State determined to leave the Union; and never were resolves more desperately defended than in the years of war which followed. Linking their destiny with that of the people of the South, they entered the contest totally unprepared. There was a lack of everything necessary to conduct the war except the courage of our people. There were no arms, no ammunition, no medical supplies, and no material out of which to make them; and no manufactories if we had had the material. There was a want of quinine to cure ague, of surgical instruments and chloroform with which to remove the shattered limbs of the wounded soldiers. Major Gorgan, in his article on the organization of our troops, states that on the day after the first battle of Manassas Governor Clark received a telegram from the War Department informing him that there was not powder enough in the Confederacy for another day's fight, and requesting him to put nitre agents in the field.

Among the first, if not the very first, of North Carolinians to buckle on their armor were the volunteers from our noble old county. It may be entertaining if for a few moments I try to sketch some scenes of those days, using the imagination and to a great degree the language of another—Cable in his Doctor Sevier.

All the States of the South of us had seceded, and Fort Sumter had been fired on and taken. All the people—men, boys, women and girls—were wild with excitement and clam-



HON. WALTER A. MONTGOMERY.

orous for secession and war. Speech-making was going on everywhere, flags and flag-poles were raised at every town and cross-road. War songs, Dixie and the Bonnie Blue Flag! it wasn't bonny very long—shot and shell, powder and dust and smoke and battle had marred its beauty—were sung on the streets, in the court-houses and in the homes. The flag of the South in bars of red, white and blue were everywhere to be seen, the women and children as well as the men and boys wearing them on the lapels of dresses and coats. Then came the sound of drums: Fall in! Fall in! once on such a day, then the next night, then twice the day after until it was every day and every night. High-stepping children with sticks and broom handles for guns fell in line and played soldier like the Guards and Rifles. Ah! the drums, the bugles, the fifes, the captains and lieutenants with their epauletts and plumes and shining swords calling, Left! Left! Guide Right! Forward, March! What pomp, what penons, what flags, artillery salvos, ladies' favors, balls, concerts, making uniforms and covering canteens; and a supper to this Company and a flag to that one; addresses by such and such an one; farewell sermons, and last family dinings! It has been more than forty years ago, but don't you see and hear then now? The old Guards coming down the moonlit streets from the old Academy grove, where they had been drilling, in quick and regular step, with glittering swords, and bayonets soon to be red with brothers blood, passing the church and the old hotel and filing into the court house square to go through their prettiest evolutions in the presence of beautiful maidens who had gathered there to witness it, their brave young hearts lifted up with the triumphs of battles to come! By and by on lightning wings the Captain received an order:

ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S OFFICE,
RALEIGH, N. C., April 17th, 1861.

Captain Warren Volunteers:

You are commanded to proceed with your Company forthwith to Fort Macon, Beaufort Harbor, and on your arrival at that point report

your arrival to Col. Tew. Transportation will be provided at the railroad station for the men. Telegraph to Weldon on receipt of this when the Company will be ready but do not delay.

By order of Commander-in-Chief:

J. F. HOKE,
Adjutant-General.

A meeting of citizens is called, and held on the next night, Thursday, 18th. Great war speeches were made and four thousand dollars raised in cash for the volunteers. On Saturday morning a little after service, a beautifully solemn service is held in Emmanuel Church, conducted by Dr. Hodges, that sweet descendant of the good Bishop Bienvenu. Mid tears and kisses the Guards and Rifles wend their way silently from the church and form their lines in the street in front. How many they seemed to be! How many! many! Presently the order of attention is passed down the lines in subdued tones; then another order follows, high-keyed and long drawn out, and with one sharp "clack" the sword-bayoneted rifles fly to the shoulders of as fine a company as is to be seen in the land of Dixie! The drums beat; tramp, tramp, in quick succession go the nimble feet of the brave young soldiers, and the old church bell rings out its blessings upon the devoted heads. Farewell, soldier boys! Light hearted, little forecasting, brave, merry boys! God accept you our first fruits. See that mother—that wife—that sweetheart—take them away; it is too much. Comfort them Father; tell them their tears may be for nought.

"And yet, and yet we cannot forget
That many brave boys must fall."

Farewell, precious youths! You shall thirst by day and hunger by night. You shall keep vigil on the banks of the Potomac and Rappahannock. You shall grow brown, but handsomer. You shall shiver in loathsome tatters and yet keep your grace, your courtesy and your joyousness. You shall ditch and lie down in ditches, and shall sing your saucy songs of defiance in the face of the foe, so blackened with powder, and dust and smoke that your mothers in

heaven would not know their children. And shall learn war songs and sing them by the camp fires. And for many of you there shall be blood on your breasts, and on your brow, and with cheers on your lips, down, down, you shall go to the death of your dearest choice.

No more heroic spirits ever marched to battle than those proud men of Warren; and death never reaped, on any of his most crimson fields, richer harvests than he garnished of her precious sons. Some were mere lads who, but a few months before, were so timid that they would have screamed at a scratch, met the King of Terrors with a smile; some were young and others middle aged, and they with duty as their guide went to their deaths with the alacrity of the bridegroom to the altar; and some were old men, who like ripe corn ready to be gathered, bowed their heads and fell into the arms of the great reaper. No less deserving of gratitude and honor are the memories of those who in the lonely watches of the sick room yielded up their lives for their country. God have their souls in His keeping and to Him be ascribed praise forever for the gift of such men to the earth. They may be with us to-day. There may be no veil between us and them, only our mortal eyes may not see all that is around us.

In the main the troops from Warren County were mobilized into nine companies: A the Guards, G the Rifles, and K of the Second Regiment of volunteers, afterwards F, C and K of the Twelfth State troops; D and F of the Eighth Regiment; E of the Ninth Regiment (First Cavalry); B of the Thirtieth Regiment; Company G of the Forty-third Regiment, and C of the Forty-sixth Regiment.

They all served in the army of Northern Virginia; the companies of the Twelfth Regiment and Company E of the First Cavalry throughout the war; the company of the Thirtieth and that of the Forty-sixth from early in 1862; the company of the Forty-third from and including Gettysburg, and the companies of the Eighth at the battle of Cold Har-

bor, June 3d, 1864. The Eighth did service in North and South Carolina and at Drury's Bluff under Beauregard in May, 1864. A number of boys between seventeen and eighteen were in the service of the State in the Seventieth Regiment (First Junior Reserves).

How many they all numbered can never be accurately computed. In February, 1862, a muster and militia roll of Warren was made, and it was then ascertained that including those already in service there were 1017 men between eighteen and fifty years of age in the County: 486 were in the field; 150 more who had volunteered and were ready to go; 95 who were exempt, leaving 286 efficient for military duty. In the three and more years of war which followed, the military age having been reduced in 1864, February, to sixteen years and extended to fifty, a reasonable calculation would probably increase by two hundred the number enumerated in February, 1862. The white population at that time was 5000. There were about 900 men between eighteen and forty-five. We sent to the field probably 1200 soldiers. The number of deaths were probably 300—one-half from sickness and the remainder killed in battle.

These soldiers were in the front ranks of those who made imperishable the fame of the army of Northern Virginia; that army that during its four years of existence was never broken in battle, though out of them all it went its way dripping with blood; that army that had always been chivalric in its treatment of prisoners; that was always scrupulous in its respect for womankind and most careful of the rights of private property; that for three years by the flash from its musketry was a sheet of flame encircling the borders of the Confederacy and consuming like stubble fresh armies and fresh generals of its enemy and twice bursting the boundaries of its territory leaped into the heart of its enemy's country; that made immortal almost every hill and dale of the Old Dominion and electrified the civilized world with its deeds of valor.

These men followed the fortunes of that army as its columns moved around the capital of the Confederacy in the Seven Days battles, thence to Boonsborough and Sharpsburg, thence to Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville, and Gettysburg and the Wilderness and Spottsylvania, and thence to Second Cold Harbor where their courage and their marksmanship brought their foe to a standstill, and thence to the trenches around Petersburg and the dreadful Eight-months' Siege, and thence to Appomattox. The blood of those who went out not to return mingled freely with that of some of the survivors who are with us to-day, enriches every battle field of Virginia. On one of them, the Malvern Hills, the spot of all the earth where human courage was most supremely tested, the Warren County dead lay with the nearest Confederate troops to the Union lines which had repulsed them; and at Spottsylvania they fell thick around the base of the historic horseshoe.

They did not die in vain. It was not written in the book of fate that the Southern States should be an independent nation. That did not harmonize with the law and thought of the nineteenth century. But as long as courage shall be admired on the earth, as long as the soul is capable of appreciating the qualities of patience and faithfulness to duty, as long as suffering for conscience' sake is applauded among men, so long shall the deeds and memories of these men endure and be cherished.

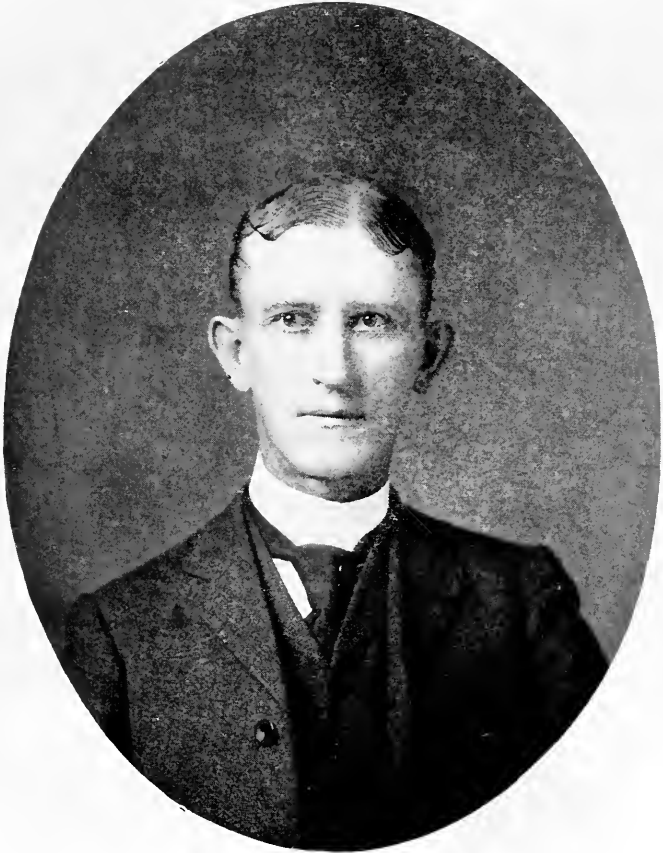
WARREN CONFEDERATE DEAD

The following poem was written and delivered by Mr. Tasker Polk, of Warrenton, N. C., on the occasion of the unveiling of the Confederate monument at that place on the 27th inst:

Backward, backward, rearward rolling,
Sweep our memory's rushing waves,
While the bells of war are tolling
Sounds of battles past in story,
Battle-sounds of deathless glory,
While the tear-drops of our sadness
Mingle with our sounds of gladness,
Let us meet in grand re-union,
Let us join in sweet communion
With Warren's host of spirit braves.

Where our gallant dead are sleeping
Beneath the crimson-crested sea,
There our memory sad is steeping
All its thoughts in glory keeping,
And the hallowed past is creeping
Nearer to the present heaping
Sacred thoughts o'er comrades sleeping,
Sleeping there in silent glory,
While the night winds sigh their story
To the distant, shadowy lea.

In each heart should be a longing
To honor do and homage pay
To those heroes who went thronging,
Leaving all to them belonging,
Rushing proudly to the battle,



HON. TASKER POLK.

Not like dumb and driven cattle,
 But like men who heard the rattle
 Of the musket brave and fearless,
 True and grand and proud and peerless
 Were Warren's sons who wore the gray.

Then draw from Recollection's sheath
 The stainless sword of Warren's pride!
 O'er hill and valley, plain and heath,
 Far flash its circling light and wide,
 Upward flashing, glancing, gleaming,
 Let its light be onward streaming
 To the graves where now lie dreaming
 Those who fought for us and died.

When war's black cloud hung darkly o'er
 Our Sunny South, our native land,
 And when the cannon's deadly roar
 Its thunders rolled from shore to shore,
 Did Warren's Soldiers trembling stand?

When North and South divided stood
 On the banks of War's red river,
 And Mars sprang reeking from the flood,
 And hurled his lightning spear of blood,
 Did our soldiers quake or shiver?

When battle from war's forge of hell
 Cast wide and far the screaming shell
 That bore death's message and its knell
 O'er bleeding valley, plain and dell,
 Did Warren's brave soldiers falter?
 No! but at their Country's altar
 Bowed and breathed their battle psalter,
 Then proudly rose, unsheathed their swords,
 And shouted wild the ringing words,
 "Our Country!"

Then rushed 'mid sabres' clang and clash,
 And fought 'mid battle's crush and crash,
 Fell in the muskets' blinding flash,
 Poured their heart's blood out like water
 Freely on the field of slaughter.
 Asked no mercy, begged no quarter,
 But fought and fell, their latest breath,
 Defiance in the face of death—
 For Dixie!

North and South: again united
 No longer hear the clash of swords,
 Union vows again are plighted,
 But hark to memory's pleading words;
 Oh, my country, Oh, my nation!
 Forget not thy illustrious braves,
 Let monuments of consecration
 Stand sentinel o'er our soldiers' graves!
 Not for fame they fought and fell,
 But fought for honor and country's weal,
 Hearken then to memory's bell,
 Whose echoes are heard in the land of the leal.





