

M 2121

107
100

A MEMORY
OF
EIGHTEEN HUNDRED
SIXTY-FIVE

A TRIBUTE TO
ABRAHAM LINCOLN



BY
JULIA CARTER ALDRICH

KENYON & WEIR
WAUSEON, OHIO

Ever with the Lilacs fragrant blooming,
A memory sweeps across the intervening years,
Bringing back that gloom beclouded morning,
When our stricken Nation, sobbing lay in tears.
The precious lives laid on our Country's altar—
Those years of trial—the days of anxious thought,
That led our dreams among the dead and dying,
When Love and Patriotism struggled, fought—
Love yielding ever husband, son or brother.
To this altar memory doth her offering bring—
This day, each patriot heart has holy message,
Folded in among the early flowers of Spring—A row of stars.

“’Twas but the yesterday that cannon thundered forth our joys,
And cables hissed thru seas to tell the listening world,
That it might join in all our wild acclaiming noise;
The bonfires mounting flame—the rockets sky-ward hurled,
Told how one glad, absorbing, great devotion stirred,
The throngs; enthusiastic shouts thruout the land,
Cried Union! Union! ’twas the talismanic word,
That woke anew our patriotic pride and fanned
The smouldering embers of forgiveness into flame.
But who can tell the grief that on the morning fell?
The flashing wires made Union seem an empty name,
The Chasm night had opened, words can never tell.

Before the herald told the country side the tale,
Oppressive gloom seemed stagnant on the morning air—;
A premonition like a whispered spirit wail,
Impressing all with an unworded, deep despair;
Each wondering, looked a question in the others face.
Ay, why, and whither gone the boom—the shouts of joy,
With funeral stillness brooding over all the town in place?
One riding came—we knew of message dire he was convoy,
And eagerly was grasped the crape, ensignalled case,
That woeful tidings held. Its stunning, inky words were read,
The yesterday's glad hope fell prone—the future seemed
A yawning gulf from which we shrank in dread,
Of horrors it might hold which were, as yet, undreamed.

Assassinated! Lincoln dead! O, crushing blow!
A seething chaos then before the vision whirled;
Our Country, stricken, struggling with benumbing woe,
Must face the proud, deriding kingdoms of the world;
Rebellion, masked, had wreaked its most atrocious crime:
Thru murderous plot was Liberty again betrayed—
The Nation's joy was paralyzed in this brief time—
The Union, stabbed, in deepest mourning was arrayed.

From lowest cottage thatch to palace turret high,
The mourning emblems, swaying, told the Country's woe;
The soft Spring breeze seemed Nature's sorrow-laden sigh
While flowers poured their precious oils with lavish flow.
In mart and port torn battle-flags half masted hung,
Near fields with victory's gore yet red upon the sod;
Such agony could form no prayer for human tongue—
The spirit cried—“Hast thou Forgotten us Oh, God!”

As brass the Heavens above us seemed—God veiled his face,
And helpless we must grope, so weighted with our loss,
For none in all the land had wisdom for the place,
That he had filled—now upon the martyr's cross.
’Tis not enough that we on History's page his record trace,
But make for him in every Freeman's heart an altar place,
Where love's enduring flame shall prove that Freedom's home,
Tho' poverty is there, may give the grandest Sons of Earth;
There is no home of wealth, beneath the blue encircling dome,
That's given to the world such true nobility of birth.

Self-seeking never dared approach him with its bribe and leer,
And she whose paths take hold on hell ne'er spread for him her
lure,

As soon expect a Star from its appointed course to veer.
His life inured to sterling traits of manhood, that endure;
E'en poverty, of his, was blessed to meet the Nation's need—
Economy stood firm and tho, extravagance did scoff,
He held with strong, controlling will the gross, rapacious greed
That in our Country's bleeding bosom sought to make its trough.

In him were conscience, justice, strength and mercy all combined,
Unyielding too, as rocks that guard the shores from ocean storms.
Tho' calumny assailed, and fierce Ambition's rage maligned
Unheeding he in wisdom ruled; controled war's wild alarms,
And meted out impartial justice unto friend and foe.
E'en to his foes thru death, his great soul was revealed;
They said, "That he was truest friend, now, all too late we know,
He wore the crown of thorns and with his life the Union sealed.

And yet what men call death was birth into a greater life;
Aye, Lincoln lives—he is to us a very presence now,
Thro' all the centuries of time, in peace or battle's strife,
Will men unto his words of wisdom point—will bow
As at a holy place where justice is enthroned.
Those who, at him, so blindly their invectives hurled
Their part, as Pilate, would most gladly have disowned,
In loving reverence now uniting with the world.

No one partitioned sect claimed favors at his hands;
His duty pointed to the Brotherhood of man—
Laid special stress on what the Golden Rule demands—
Eternal justice permeating every plan.
He wrought with soul alert for Heaven's high command,
The spirit of God's word in-woven with his every deed;
That masterful decree that broke oppressions chain,
By which our Nation from its foulest blot was freed,
A record, glory-starred, forever will remain

And thru the Holy joy and patriotic pride,
That sanctify this Day, remotest lands will learn,
How Union was preserved—Secession's blade defied,
By one equipped with might to hold, restrain or turn
Rebellions forces, with the Olive-branch or rod.
Our Country's noble Sons with staunch, unswerving zeal,
Responded to his call—that man prepared of God,
To silence Treason and restore the Country's weal.

Many answering to his call did never more return;
And in this sacrificial glory, with him have share.
Tho' tombless 'mong their foes, their names we will inurn,
Aye, give them to a monument's conserving care
And these to patriot hearts thru ages will appeal,
To memory's honored place and age, with reverent brow,
Will lift to Heaven our theme of thankfulness and prayer,
As we each year renew the consecrating vow.
And fitting 'tis that we in love should dedicate,

This mid-Spring day thru all the roll of coming years,
As Union-Day—our Country's one most sacred date,
When Freedom free—baptized anew in blood and tears,
Yet asked that consumating sacrifice—his life;
God yielded it, a fierce, unreasoning rage to share,
And end in lasting peace the fractricidal strife.
Now let our Flag be proudly to the breeze unfurled,
To speak our Nation's love for him from Sea to Sea—
Its every swaying fold proclaiming to the world,
THAT THRU HIS DEATH HE LEFT
OUR LAND UNITED FREE.

71.2009.024.00834