

# MEMORIAL DAY

This is the version of "*The Unknown Dead*" called for in the "*Ritual and Ceremonials of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War.*" It is from the 1909 "*Patriotic Selections for Memorial Day, Flag Day and Other Patriotic Anniversaries*" as compiled by Mary M. North, National Patriotic Instructor, Woman's Relief Corps, Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic. The poem is written by Elizabeth Robbins Berry.

Don't confuse this poem with the version written by Henry Timrod. Known as the "*Poet Laureate of the Confederacy*", Timrod regularly referred to those who fought for the Union cause as "*Huns*". His poem conveys a feeling of hopelessness and almost utter despair as compared to that feeling of a just reward achieved and of self-sacrifice for a just cause conveyed in Berry's version.

## THE UNKNOWN DEAD BY ELIZABETH ROBBINS BERRY

Above their rest there is no sound of weeping;  
Only the voice of song-birds thrills the air;  
Unknown their graves, yet they are in God's keeping,  
There are none "missing" from His tender care.

He knows each hallowed mound, and at His pleasure  
Marshalls the sentinels of earth and sky;  
O'er their repose kind Nature heaps her treasure,  
Fanned by soft winds which 'round them gently sigh.

Bravely they laid their all upon the altar,  
Counting as naught the sacrifice and pain,  
Theirs but to do and die without a falter -  
Ours to enjoy the victory and the gain.

They are not lost; that only which was mortal  
Lies 'neath the turf o'erarched by Southern skies;  
Deathless they wait beyond the heavenly portal;  
In that fair land where valor never dies.

In the great heart of coming generations  
Their fame shall live, their glory never cease;  
Even when comes to all earth's troubled nations  
God's perfect gift of universal peace.