

Who Gave Us Memorial Day?

By ELMO SCOTT WATSON

WHO gave us Memorial Day? Before attempting to answer that question, one might appropriately enough ask another—"Which Memorial Day do you mean?"

For the truth is that there are no less than five different days of the year which are observed as Memorial Day in different parts of the country.

April 26 is Confederate Memorial Day in the states of Alabama, Florida, Georgia and Mississippi.

Kentucky, North Carolina and South Carolina set aside May 10 as their Confederate Memorial Day.

May 30 is National Memorial Day, observed in all states and territories, except Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina. Georgia celebrates this day as World War Memorial Day and Virginia celebrates it as Confederate Memorial Day. (Incidentally, North Carolina, which formerly celebrated only May 10 as Confederate Memorial Day, began in 1935 to observe May 30 as National Memorial Day.)

June 3 is Confederate Memorial Day in Louisiana and Tennessee, (the latter also observes National Memorial Day on May 30) and since June 3 is Jefferson Davis' birthday it is celebrated as such in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, Texas and Virginia.

June 9 is celebrated as Memorial Day in Petersburg, Va., the only city in the United States which has its own such day of commemoration.

As for answering the question asked in the title of this article, it is virtually impossible to assign credit for the idea to one person and say positively that "father" or the "mother" of Memorial Day. It is, however, possible for a person to trace the growth of the idea and mention the names of some who played a part in its development. As early as May 1, 1865 a memorial service for the war dead had been held in Charleston, S. C. It was the idea of James C. Redpath,



MISS NORA DAVIDSON
One of the original members of the Petersburg Ladies' Memorial Association.

war correspondent and later founder of the famous lyceum bureau which bore his name, who was then superintendent of the freedmen's schools in Charleston. But this isolated instance probably would not have been enough alone to have established the custom had it not been followed up by a chain of circumstances of a similar nature.

Some time in the spring of 1865 the women of Columbus, Miss., began decorating the graves of soldiers who had died in the service of the Confederacy and the following January Miss Lizzie Rutherford suggested to other members of the Ladies Aid society that April 26 be set aside each year as a special day for decorating these graves. That date (which is still celebrated as Confederate Memorial Day in four Southern states) was the anniversary of the surrender of Gen. Joseph E. Johnston's army, the last formal act of the War Between the States.

Accordingly their first Memorial Day service was held in St. Luke's Methodist church in Columbus on April 26, 1866 with Col. James M. Ramsey as the orator of the day. On that day, also, the graves of both Union and Confederate soldiers buried near Columbus were decorated with flowers.

Previous to that time the women of Columbus had written to their friends in other Southern states telling them of their idea for a memorial day and a similar

service was held in Montgomery, Ala., on the same date. Up in Fredericksburg, Va., May 10, the anniversary of the death of Gen. "Stonewall" Jackson, was chosen as the date for such a service and that date survives as Confederate Memorial Day in these Southern states.

First in the North.

Meanwhile a similar idea was taking form up in the North and at least one memorial service was held there in 1866. On May 22 Gen. John J. Murray of Waterloo, N. Y., and some of his comrades in the Union army decorated graves in their home cemetery. But more important to the growth of the idea than this one instance was a series of events which had been taking place out in Illinois.

One of the regiments in Gen. W. T. Sherman's expedition to Meridian, Miss., in February 1864, was the Fourteenth Illinois infantry. One of the officers of the regiment was Maj. Benjamin Franklin Stephenson, who had been a doctor before entering the service in 1862, and his tent-mate and bosom companion was Rev. W. J. Rutledge, chaplain of the regiment. During that campaign Rutledge suggested to Stephenson that the soldiers so closely allied in the fellowship of hardship and suffering would, after they had been mustered out of the service, naturally desire to form some kind of an association to preserve the friendships and memories of their war days. The idea appealed to Stephenson and the two men agreed, if they were spared, to work it out.

After the war they kept alive the subject by correspondence and in the winter of 1865 Stephenson, who had returned to his medical practice in Springfield, Ill., showed to his friends there notes on a proposed ritual for such an organization. In March, 1866, Rutledge came to Springfield and the two men spent considerable time working on the ritual. So far, no name had been selected for the organization but it is quite likely that the title of an order, started the previous year in Missouri and named the "Advance Guard of America, or, The Grand Army of Progress," suggested the title which was finally adopted—the Grand Army of the Republic.

When at last the ritual was ready for printing, Gov. Richard J. Oglesby of Illinois suggested that, in order to insure secrecy, it be set in type and printed in the office of the Decatur (Ill.) Tribune, whose owners, I. W. Coltrier and Joseph Prior, as well as all their compositors and pressmen, had served in the Union army.

The G. A. R. Is Born.

While this work was under way Dr. J. W. Routh of Decatur, a friend of Stephenson's, went to Springfield accompanied by Capt. M. F. Kanan, to make inquiries about the proposed organization. After calling upon Stephenson, they resolved to organize a "post" in their city at once. Within a short time they had enough signatures to an application for a charter and they hurried again to Springfield to present the application in person and arrange for the first muster. Accordingly on April 6, 1866 Stephenson, assisted by Phelps, organized Decatur Post No. 1 of the Grand Army of the Republic. Thus it was that the G. A. R., which was destined to become the founder of a national Memorial Day came into existence.

By a curious turn of fate this organization which had been principally Stephenson's "brain child" was to bring him one of the greatest disappointments of his life. For when his comrades gathered at Springfield to form a department, another man was selected as its commander and a still further sorrow came to him when the national encampment was formed at Indianapolis. Instead of being made national commander, as he had expected he would be, he was passed over and given the subordinate office of adjutant-general. Disheartened by this experience and broken by work and his disappointment, Stephenson removed his family from Springfield to Rock Creek, Ill., where he died in 1871. Several years later his body was removed to the Soldiers' Plot in Rose Hill cemetery on the banks of the Sangamon river, at which time tardy tribute was paid to his memory as the "Father of the G. A. R."

Two Versions.

As for the succession of events which led to the establishment by the G. A. R. of the day which we now celebrate as National Memorial Day, there is some dispute as to exact details. In 1868 Gen. John A. Logan was the



Clara Barton, founder of the Red Cross, and Mrs. John A. Logan, who had a part in the founding of Memorial Day.

commander-in-chief of the Grand Army and N. P. Chipman was adjutant-general. According to one story, Chipman was told by a former private in the Union army, a German, that in his native land it was the custom of the people to gather in the spring-time and scatter flowers on the graves of the dead. He suggested to Chipman that the Grand Army inaugurate such an observance in memory of this nation's soldier dead, whereupon Chipman, much impressed with the idea, immediately made a rough draft of general orders covering the subject and laid it before the commander-in-chief. Logan, warmly approving the idea, added several paragraphs of his own and signed what has since become history as "General Orders No. 11," establishing May 30 as National Memorial Day.

Another account brings into the picture a woman—or rather, several women. And for the proper background for this version it is necessary to go back to 1864 and bring into the story the reason for Petersburg, Va., being the only city in the United States that had a Memorial Day all of its own.

On June 9, 1864 General Kautz with a division of 20,000 Union cavalry approached Petersburg as a preliminary to Grant's attempt to break in the "back door" of the Confederate capital by capturing this important railroad center. At that time Petersburg was unguarded but Gen. R. E. Colston and Col. F. H. Archer, wounded Confederate officers home to convalesce, were notified of the ap-



BENJAMIN F. STEPHENSON
Founder of the G. A. R.

proach of the Union horsemen. Summoning the home guard of old men and boys, who were exempt from military service, they marched out to meet the invaders. They engaged a detachment of 1,300 so fiercely that Kautz, believing he was facing a much larger body of men, delayed his advance.

The home guard held their own until they were outflanked, but by this time Lee had hurried reinforcements to Petersburg and the city was saved.

Honoring the Home Guard.

In May, 1866, the Petersburg Ladies Memorial association, with Mrs. W. T. Joynes as president and Mrs. Stephen Fenn as secretary, was organized, probably in response to word from the women of Columbus, Miss., in regard to their observance of a memorial day. But instead of joining with them in observing April 26 as that day, the women of Petersburg chose June 9, the anniversary of the heroic defense of their city by its home guard, and since that year they have

strewn the graves of the Confederate dead in ancient Blandford cemetery in commemoration of that event. The connection of this observance with the establishment of a National Memorial Day by the G. A. R. came about in this way:

In March, 1868, Col. Charles L. Wilson, editor of the Chicago Journal, invited a party consisting of his niece, Miss Anna Wilson, his fiancée, Miss Farrar, General Logan and Mrs. Logan to visit the battlefields around Richmond. Logan, then a congressman from Illinois, was detained in Washington by some urgent legislation pending in congress but he insisted upon Mrs. Logan accompanying the party. Among the battlefields which they visited were those in and around Petersburg and in the cemetery there they saw the withered wreaths and tiny Confederate flags placed on the graves of the dead on June 9 of the previous year.

Mrs. Logan, for many years known as "The Grand Old Lady of Washington," has left this account of what followed:

"In the bleak March wind and light-falling snow, the desolation seemed most oppressive. Returning to the old Willard hotel, where we then lived, sitting in our parlor after dinner, we recounted to General Logan the incidents of the trip and how deeply touched we were by the devastation and ravages of war. In the churchyard around an old historic church at Petersburg, every foot of the ground seemed occupied by the graves of the Confederate dead. Upon them lay wreaths, once beautiful flowers, now crumbling, which had been placed there by loving hands. Little faded Confederate flags marked each grave, mute evidence of the devotion of the southern people to their loved and lost.

"General Logan was much impressed by our description, saying, 'The Greeks and Romans in the day of their glory were wont to honor their hero dead by chaplets of laurel and flowers, as well as in bronze and stone,' and that as commander-in-chief of the Grand Army of the Republic and member of congress from Illinois he would issue an order establishing Memorial Day, then called Decoration Day. He declared at the same time that he believed that he could secure the adoption of a joint resolution making it a national holiday and a national ceremony. He then took up a pencil and paper and wrote the matchless order No. 11."

As a result of this order formal exercises were held at Arlington, Va. (later the site of the present Arlington National Cemetery) on May 30, 1868, the principal ceremony being the decoration with flags and flowers of a monument to the "Unknown Dead," a memorial that had been erected to the memory of 2,111 unidentified dead found on the fields of Bull Run and the route to the Rappahannock.

Who gave us Memorial Day?

No one person can be honored as the giver. Many contributed something to it—James C. Redpath; Miss Lizzie Rutherford and the women of Columbus, Miss.; Benjamin Franklin Stephenson; the women of Petersburg, Va.; Gen. John A. Logan and Mrs. Logan. Thus both the North and the South had a part in bringing it about but today it knows no North, no South, no East, no West. It is the day, whether April 26, May 10, June 3 or June 9, when Americans pay reverent tribute to the memory of their soldier dead.

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"Yes, My Darling Daughter."

"Daughter, dear, how do you run on! Imitate Sis; put your apron on and have the dusting done when I get back from the Civic Improvement League meeting. And speaking of aprons, that is the cleverest one Sis ever had. I love the way it crosses in the back."

"So do I, Mom, and see how it covers up my dress all over. Good-by, Mom, have a good time."

Sisterly Chit Chat.

"Sis, run upstairs for my apron, won't you? I wouldn't have a spot on this, my beloved model, for all the world. It's my idea of smooth: all these buttons; no belt; these here new puffed sleeves; and this flare that's a flare."

"Just you wait, Miss, till I grow up! Your clothes won't have a look in because I've already been to Sew-My-Own. All right. I'm going."

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My Favorite Recipe

By Ann Harding Actress

Chicken Salad.

1 quart cold chicken
1 pint finely cut celery
3 hard-boiled eggs
2 cups mayonnaise
Small bottle of olives
Salt to taste
Paprika

Joint the dressed chicken and boil until tender. Allow it to cool, then cut into small pieces until the required amount is obtained. Use only the whitest celery, and none with coarse strings. Cut two of the eggs, not too fine. Mix chicken, celery, eggs and seasoning. Allow the mixture to stand with a little French dressing for an hour or more in a cool place. To serve, the mayonnaise may be mixed with the chicken or served as a top dressing, according to taste.

Serve on fresh lettuce leaves. Garnish with slices of the third egg and stuffed olives. Sprinkle with paprika.

Voyage of Life

Today, in the voyage of thy life down the dark tide of time, stand boldly to thy tiller, guide thee by the pole star, and be safe.—Martin F. Tupper.

Ask Me Another

A General Quiz

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1. When was the "conscience fund" in the United States treasury started?
2. How far away from the earth is the nearest star?
3. From where was the inscription on the Liberty bell in Philadelphia reading: "Proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof" taken?
4. From where did the word "geyser" come?
5. What is the size of Yellowstone National park?
6. How many different types of holly are there?

Answers

1. In 1811, by a contribution from some anonymous person whose conscience hurt him. The fund has grown until today it totals over \$650,000.
2. About 25,500,000,000 miles.
3. From the Bible—Leviticus 25:10.
4. Geyser is an Icelandic word—the original pronunciation being "geeser," later changed to "gayer" and finally Americanized to "gyser."
5. It covers 3,438 square miles of territory, of which 237 are in Montana, 25 in Idaho and the remainder in Wyoming.
6. There are 175 different type or species of holly found throughout the world.

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