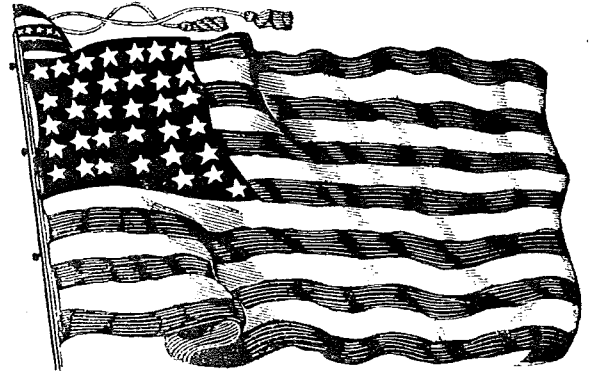


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“Guard the one flag of the earth—
It is waving still, I dimly see,
Waving, 'mid shouts of victory.”

“THE UNKNOWN.”

WRITTEN BY

MISS E. LATIMER,

FOR

THE ORPHANS' HOMESTEAD.

“His Sculptured Stone.”

SECOND EDITION.

PHILADELPHIA:

1867.

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1905
1905
"THE UNKNOWN."

THE SOLDIER'S HISTORY.

THE ENLISTMENT.

WIFE of my bosom, listen—
I haste from my daily toil,
The tear-drop, on my work did glisten,
From noon to darkness' fall.

Our flag is again dishonored,—the flag
Is trampled by the traitor, as "the worthless rag."
Our flag is again dishonored, heard not the knell?
Borne on the chilling winds—the sad note of the bell.

I heard the bell, and looked out through the rain,
Wondered what kept you. Ah! Again
Listen! I hear the fife and drum,—
What is it husband? Another summons come?
Yes, my own.—I read you but last night,
Of the beleaguered fort, the after fight—
How brave men stood there to the last,
"But the spell is broken!"—"the die is cast!"
Our country's flag all soiled.—
Each generous effort foiled.—

I must leave thee wife, I must away,—
I must speed me onward, cannot stay.—
I am but one, poor, humble, man,
Still ready, to stand in the foremost van,
Ready to dare, at my country's call,
Yes, ready to stand, ready to fall,
Glorious flag, of my native land,
Would strike for thee!—I wait command.

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Yes, bravely can dare, or fearless die.

What do I hear? "Would dare?" "Would die?"

Where then thy orphans find a home?

And this fond heart, how sad, how lone.

Think again—I implore, do not go.—

Others will meet the brother foe.

See, this lowly shed is open to the rain,

And ere the winter comes again,

Thou hast promised greater comfort here,

Do not leave us, husband dear—

See—I pray thee, see, the constant care,

To shield our loved, from the chill, night air,

They are now asleep, the *precious three*,

So sweetly sleeping, come and see.—

This, the first born, mark his noble face,

This, thy Alice, with her girlish grace,

Speak to them, say thou wilt not go,

It will break my heart, if you leave us, so.

Dear wife, these pleadings *rend my heart*.

How can I from my loved ones part,—

Leaving them thus, to the pitiless power

Of a poverty, their only dower!

I have done wrong, my loving wife;

Forgive, and my whole after life,

Shall, in truth, all be free

From the wild lessons, learned at sea.

Yet have I labored, the sweat of an honest brow

I bear, from the work-shop, even now.

I labor, day by day, but have not care,

My money goes, for the idlest prayer.

My hand is open, and my heart you know
Is touched, I cannot help it, by the tale of woe.
Forgive thine, the impulsive,—wife dry that tear,
Let me kiss thee, my own, my dear.—
You shall be better sheltered from the rain,
And ere the winter comes again,
These walls, this roof, shall better shield.
Though I leave you now, for the tented field,
The villagers will repair the cot, care for thee, wife,
Care for my children, through the strife.

My soul finds strength, this trying hour,
I feel with deep reproach, still new power—
A faith in God—and while I love thee more
For each privation, we have shared before,
Loving thee, as the idol of my heart,

Insulted freedom, bids us part,—
Say to me go, thy blessing speed me on,—

My name enrolled, before another sun
Looks down, again, on fields of battle lost
On a campaign, that a thousand lives has cost.

In deepest tenderness, would pause to say
The summons brought the pastor, kind, to day,
Although before, he counseled me to stay.

Now sees we falter—hopes, yet fears
Spoke as an angel—but spoke in tears.
Promised to watch, befriend, our babes and thee,
But the strong man, the fearless, and free,
That has braved the dangers of the sea,

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Must now repair to the raging fight,
Must die, if need be, must die for the right.
Wife, tremble not, kiss me, bless me,—the three,
For each, a thousand kisses, I leave with thee.

Send me their picture, by an early mail,
Send to the camp, do not fail.—

I will keep it dearest, near my heart,
Nothing shall tear it thence,—we part,
Be firm, be brave, be nobly true,
God keep thee,—my loved,—adieu.

* * * Silence and sobs, kept vigil that sad night
Alternate, in the cot—but morning bright
Rouses the prattlers, from their rest—
Sweet faces cheered the saddened breast.

Each day for toil, the night for rest.
And sometimes came the message blest
From the far off field,—or when the fray
Had passed,—and it was granted, he would say
"All is well."

Then the cottage would seem bright,
For many a day, and many a night,
Until forboding fear, would quite dispel,
The joy that came with "all is well."

So passed weeks, months, years.

Lightened, by hope, saddened, by tears.

But the sweet picture, of the gentle three,
How oft the soldier thought, what trinity
Of b' hoodness is here, my children dear.
Who, not be brave, with so much to save?

Who not bless God, from the pillowed sod,
For such angel faces, through the night,
And the joy they bring, in the morning light!
Ah! changeful was life in the humble cot,
But a calm, pure, faith did God allot
To the soldier, who dared, endured, and prayed,
That the cruel strife, might be allayed.
Saw in the glorious banner, waving free
The triumph of law, and liberty.

But rages the strife,—still weeps the wife.

* * A boundary is passed, by the warring host,
Filled the green glades, and sent through the quiet shades,
The screech of the bursting shell,—
Followed by the battle's fearful yell,
Until the rounded hill, and leafy dell,
And wide plain, were hidden, neath the slain.

On that blood-red field, where legions reeled
And sunk, by thousands, on that field
When the fearless North, and flaming South,
Poured forth their tides of noblest blood,
Surging in a common flood.—

Where an insane pride was stayed,—
Where was broken, the traitorous blade.—
Where the one flag, sacred to the free,
Triumphed, at length, and gloriously,
There, under its fold, with its blue, and red, and gold,
Was found the soldier, chill and cold!
He had stood through the first, rude shock,
Firm, like the granite rock,

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Or rushed, as the charge was made,
Daring the point of the deadly blade.

But there, where the conflict had begun,
Where the field, was lost, and won.

Where the murderous shot and shell,
Round wasting columns, thickest fell,
Sunk the soldier, near the close,
And his life blood, rushing flows.

Drags himself, from out, the fray,
To clasp the picture, and once more, pray
God bless the country, of my birth,
Guard the one flag, of the earth.—

It is waving still, I dimly see,
Waving, 'mid shouts of victory.

Thanks, Oh! God.—My spirit comes again,
As I quench the burning thirst, from the running stream,
And seems to see, my childhood's home,

Yes, comes back, when almost gone,—
Catches a breath, from the shining seas,
Marks the waving palms, and lovelier trees,
Now, hovers o'er the lonely cot,
Lonely, but lovely, the one spot,
The last, the soul would visit here,
Where centres all, all most dear.

My children are playing round the door,
My wife is watching, loving, no more,
I ask, no more, O! God of love, I come,
In Christ accept,—receive my spirit home.

BURIAL.

There they lie, pale, noble, still,
Stretched, side by side, on plain, and hill,
What a fearful sight, to thrill
A nation's bleeding heart; palsy the hand
That had drawn the traitorous brand!
Here, let it be stayed, its vengeful ire,
Purged, *forever*, in freedom's fire.
Earth, open thy quiet breast,
Let the patriot brave, find rest.

Let the freeman, once the slave,
Find here, an honored grave.

* * Out of the trampled fight, in the dawn of day,
Beautiful, in death, the unknown hero lay.

Angel forms had watched him, there,
Chilled, and stiff, in the morning air.

The expressive face, still shone
With a noble impress, of the soul gone.

"This is another of our manliest dead,"
As paused "the detail," in his heavy tread.
"Here, he died, by the streamlet's brink,
Trying, may be, in vain, to drink."

Dear one,—and a picture on his breast.
Shall we take it? Or let it rest?

It is his children,—one, two, three,
Take it to his widow, it will soothe her agony.
Tell her, nobly her husband died,
It will bind up her heart in her country's pride.
But who is she? Where is she? What can tell?

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NOTHING BUT THE NAME OF THE
OF WHICH IN THE YEAR 1864
WAS TAKEN IN THE BATTLE OF
PETERSBURG, VIRGINIA
ORIGINAL IN THE
MUSEUM OF THE
ARMY AND NAVAL
MEMORIALS

No name—but a soldier brave, he fell.

We shall find her, without a name ;

This picture, sometime, will tell whence he came.

Take it lovingly, for its place of rest,

Take it carefully, see, how it is pressed,

As if caressingly, to his noble breast.

We must mark his grave "unknown,"

But sometime, a sculptured stone

Will tell the name, and whence he came.

See how composed, and calm, he died,

As these deep wounds poured forth their tide.

What a manly face! What a manly grace!

Lay him down, as a prince, to rest,

Lay him composed, on the earth's fond breast.

It is done.

RECOGNITION.

Providence's blest smile rested the while

On the effort kind, the bereaved to find,

Months pass, and the story, everywhere

Was told, when lo! in the cot of the pastor's care

Was born the tale of the picture fair!

The *lone* one read,—the heart knew, too well,

It was *his* story—there he fell.

"The Unknown," clasping the picture of the three,

Was her own. The deep, the tearless agony,

The suffering of that hour, is only known

To hearts thus *pierced*, thus *desolate* and *lone*.

At length the little group, each pale with fear,

She calls. Come near, my children dear,

Kneel beside me, on the cottage floor ;
Let us kneel together, we, the stricken four,
And pray to the orphan and widow's God,—
Bless Him, for each promise of His holy word—
Bless Him that the father, lost, is found,
Though he sleeps, in death, on Pennsylvania ground ;
Nobly, bravely, there he fell,
God help us utter His "All is well."

THE PICTURE RECEIVED, AND THE APPEAL.

A stranger, generous and humanely kind,
Speeds his way, the bereaved to find,
To bear the picture, dying hands had pressed,
And the parting soul, touchingly blest.

* * How beautiful this humanity, that wrought
For the bereaved, in the humble cot.
How beautiful, to honor the patriot dead,
To raise the tasteful tablet at his head,
To make his resting place, cheerful and fair.
But more like Christ, *more deeply kind*,
To shield his orphan, left behind.
Snatch him from the perilous grasp,
In which poverty and vice would clasp.

So truest humanity seeks to find
An Orphan Homestead on sacred ground—
On the same turf where the noble and brave
Was tenderly laid, in an "unknown grave,"

Would build here, the Nation's Orphan Home,
 With enduring roof, and walls of stone,
 Enclosed within an ample green,
 With sylvan shades and waters sheen,

A cheerful Home for the child whose sire,
 A nation's gratitude, may well inspire,
 Would build it *soon*, would build it *well*,
 Where the soldier's orphan child might dwell
 Safe, through his early, helpless, years.

Thus, wipe his own, his mother's tears.
 Rear him a man, a patriot, as his sire,—

A nation's faith, his heart inspire.

* * To rear this National Orphan home,
 Let every happier child lay *one stone*.
 Charity, is so beautiful in the child,
 This true charity, so undefiled.
 Come prompt, to its aid, the *manly youth*,
 In such, charity is beautiful, in truth.
 Come, strongly to aid, *man of wealth*,
 True charity is the soul's health.
 Come to its aid, with instinct true,
Generous, and *Christian woman*, it is to you,
 The orphan looks, and hoping prays,
 Charity wreathes thy brow, with heavenly bays.
Patriot statesman, a nation's faith you guard,
 Give to the orphan of your soldier, just award.
Man of the holy mission, and the blest,
 Give for the orphan, succor the distressed.
 Each in his place, each in his might,
 List to the appeal, yield to the right.
 The HOMESTEAD, be it ample, massively grand.
 Endowed, as the offering of a *grateful land*.

SKETCH.

FEW readers of the public journals will fail to remember that after the battle of Gettysburg, a dead soldier was found on the field, clasping in his hand a Ferrotypes of his three little children. No other incident of the war is known to have so touched the heart of the nation. For months after the battle, the soldier's name, and the home of his family, were a mystery. The Ferrotypes found within his clasped hands, was obtained by J. FRANCIS BOURNS, M. D., of Philadelphia, who had it photographed in the hope that its circulation might lead to the discovery of the family, and the soldier's own recognition, and at the same time, that the sales of the copies might result in a fund for the support and education of the little ones thus left fatherless. Publicity was also given to the incident in many newspapers throughout the country. From many quarters letters were soon received of affecting inquiry, concerning soldiers who had not been heard from since the great battle; but still the mystery of this soldier was unsolved. At length, four months after the battle, a letter arrived with the intelligence that a soldier's wife, at a little town in Western New York, had seen the account of the picture. She had sent her husband such a Ferrotypes, and had not heard from him since the battle. With trembling anxiety she awaited the reply to her letter, and the coming of the picture. A copy of the relic came, and was the identical likeness of her own children, and told the painful story that she was a widow and her three little ones were orphans. The unknown soldier was thus ascertained to be AMOS HUMISTON, late of Portville, Cattaraugus County, New York, Sergeant in the 154th N. Y. Volunteers.

Rev. ISAAC G. OGDEN, pastor of the Presbyterian Church at Portville, wrote respecting the deceased, that "he was a man of noble impulses, a quiet citizen, a kind neighbor, and devotedly attached to his family. When the rebellion first took the form of open war upon the country, he was anxious to enlist; but his duty to his family seemed then to be paramount to his duty to his country. But after the disastrous Peninsular Campaign—when there was a call for three hundred thousand more volunteers, and when he received assurance from responsible citizens that his family should be cared for during his absence,—then, without the prospect of a large bounty, he enlisted as a private in the 154th N. Y. State Volunteers. He was with his regiment in the battle of Chancellorville, and was promoted to the office of Orderly Sergeant. At Gettysburg he fought with great gallantry, and on its bloody field laid down his life for his country.

The sequel of the story is also of touching interest. The stricken family of Sergeant HUMISTON—both widowed mother and three little ones—are now comfortably residing in the *National Homestead at Gettysburg*, an Institution the foundations of which were laid by the soldier's hand as he grasped in death the picture of his darling children. The Home, already sheltering soldiers' orphans from Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, New York, New Jersey, Maryland and Pennsylvania, was inaugurated November 20th, 1866, and stands in sight both of the spot where HUMISTON fell, and that where he now lies buried. The day following the arrival of the family at the Institution, flowers were found strewn by little hands on the Sergeant's honored grave.

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