

# Memorial Day

## at our

# National Cemeteries

By WALDON FAWCETT

THE fact that President Lincoln was so intent to devote the first Memorial Day since the Civil War to the office of chief magistrate to participation in the duties of the executive offices at the Gettysburg national cemetery serves to focus public attention upon the annual Decoration day observance in our great national cemetery. Not that it is anything unusual for the chief executive to spend the first day of Memorial Day since the Civil War in the office of one of our national cemeteries. On the contrary, the custom observed by practically every president since the Civil War has made it almost an unwritten law that the highest official of the nation shall at this spring festival of remembrance accept some form of public attention upon the annual Decoration day observance in our great national cemetery. Not that it is anything unusual for the chief executive to spend the first day of Memorial Day since the Civil War in the office of one of our national cemeteries. On the contrary, the custom observed by practically every president since the Civil War has made it almost an unwritten law that the highest official of the nation shall at this spring festival of remembrance accept some form of public attention upon the annual Decoration day observance in our great national cemetery. Not that it is anything unusual for the chief executive to spend the first day of Memorial Day since the Civil War in the office of one of our national cemeteries. On the contrary, the custom observed by practically every president since the Civil War has made it almost an unwritten law that the highest official of the nation shall at this spring festival of remembrance accept some form of public attention upon the annual Decoration day observance in our great national cemetery.



The exceptional interest in the war's greatest defeat at the nation's foremost Memorial day event arose from the fact that it was held in the cemetery at Gettysburg, Pa., the site of the greatest of our most celebrated military triumphs. Lincoln delivered his most celebrated address—the speech for the government of the people by the people, for the people's which is famous on each recurring Memorial day—in every cemetery in the nation. It was the Union general in his last famous leave speech, Lincoln's famous "Call to Arms" address in 1862, which was made on the present date of Memorial day.

It was in 1893 that President Lincoln formally opened the first national cemetery and the following year on this occasion the May 30 date that has ever since been observed. It is informally supposed the second of the national cemeteries, that at Arlington, the "Palmer," which has since attained its first rank among all the national burial grounds in point of size and in number of graves. It is at Arlington, it may be mentioned incidentally that the president of the United States usually delivers his Memorial day address, but there have been numerous exceptions to the custom, along the lines of President Taft's chosen plan for his first presidential recognition of Memorial day.

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## ENMITY FORGOTTEN

Capt. J. F. Hermal told a pretty story of an incident during the battle of Perryville, Ky., on October 8, 1862. Captain Hermal thus relates it: "I had been assigned to the rear of the army. The numbers were compelled to surrender the ground that had been fought over, back and forth, three times, being held alternately by the Federals and Confederates, this while I hid by side the wounded and dead of each army. As our men were retreating, Corporal Allen, Battery, of Company H, was passing a wounded Confederate, who bled for water. Though at danger of rank of capture, Corporal Gentry divided his own scarce supply with his enemy of half an hour before. They were no longer enemies. One of my own comrades lay dying near a Confederate. The comrade's throat slaked, the canteen passed into the hands of a young Confederate, who also lay dying—the ghastly look of death in his eyes drank the water, the last drop, then—as did the Federal soldier—held his head to rest in the long sleep. "They drank from the same canteen."

Another story told by Captain Hermal brings out a bit of war-revelation history in army life. He says:

"It is well known that the men comprising the Army of the Cumberland, as they were, reduced to night tents, or to field tents, shined and about the site of an ordinary battlefield, when Chattanooga, Tenn., was beleaguered by the Confederate lines. My army, inspired by the courage of the height of our enemy, displayed the possibility of doing much damage to them, either by artillery or small arms, but by artillery the enemy bombarded the entire Federal lines. Now, the center were open at both ends, it happened one day that a 24-pound shell was thrown into the center and, entering the top of a camp, exploded, blowing the tent-trest high, earth and all. Two boys in blue were killed by one of the shells, the tent and the other said:

"There, you blasted fool, you see what you get by leaving the tent door open."

The Quoten.

"You never quote poetry in your speeches!"

"No," replied Senator Borah; "meeting poetry is too often like using an anonymous letter. A man reports to it that he wants to do something and shift the responsibility of authorship."

How Much of a Target.

Borah—How did you feel, Jones, when the burglar had you covered with his revolver pretty smartly?

Jones—Smart! Great smart, no! I felt as an the side-side of a burglar.

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