

4th of July Poetry Suggestions

Spirit, that made those heroes dare
To die, and leave their children free,
Bid Time and Nature gently spare
The shaft we raise to them and thee.

– Ralph Waldo Emerson
Concord Hymn

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If you're looking for [Revolutionary War poems for kids](#), try Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's *Paul Revere's Ride*. For a [short Revolutionary War poem](#), you might like *The Divine Source of Liberty* by Samuel Adams. A good [long Revolutionary War poem](#) is Oliver Wendell Holmes's *Lexington*. And for a [famous Revolutionary War poem](#), try Ralph Waldo Emerson's *Concord Hymn*. Below is a more complete, categorized list of suggestions.

Revolutionary War Poems for Kids

- *Paul Revere's Ride* by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
- *The Veteran and the Child* by Hannah Flagg Gould
- *Battle of Trenton* by Anonymous
- *Song of Marion's Men* by William Cullen Bryant

Short Revolutionary War Poems

- *The Divine Source of Liberty* by Samuel Adams
- *Concord Hymn* by Ralph Waldo Emerson
- *George Washington* by James Russell Lowell
- *Warren's Address* by John Pierpont

Famous Revolutionary War Poems

- *Paul Revere's Ride* by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
- *Lexington* by Oliver Wendell Holmes
- *Concord Hymn* by Ralph Waldo Emerson

Long Revolutionary War Poems

- *Paul Revere's Ride* by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
- *Lexington* by Oliver Wendell Holmes
- *Ticonderoga* by V.B. Wilson
- *Valley Forge* by Thomas Buchanan Read
- *Song of Marion's Men* by William Cullen Bryant
- *Nathan Hale* by Francis Miles Finch
- *Molly Maguire at Monmouth* by William Collins
- *A Ballad of the Boston Tea Party* by Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr.

Related Poems

[4th of July Poems](#)[Civil War Poems](#)[Patriotic Poems](#)

Poems About the American Revolution

The following poems are listed by order of event where possible.

1. A Ballad of the Boston Tea Party

by Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr. Read at a meeting of the Massachusetts Historical Society in 1874. Holmes' account of the background of this poem is as follows:

"The tax on tea, which was considered so odious and led to the act on which A Ballad of the Boston Tea Party is founded, was but a small matter, only twopence in the pound. But it involved a principle of taxation, to which the Colonies would not submit. Their objection was not to the amount, but the claim. The East India Company, however, sent out a number of tea-ships to different American ports, three of them to Boston.

The inhabitants tried to send them back, but in vain. The captains of the ships had consented, if permitted, to return with their cargoes to England, but the consignees refused to discharge them from their obligations, the custom house to give them a clearance for their return, and the governor to grant them a passport for going by the fort. It was easily seen that the tea would be gradually landed from the ships lying so near the town, and that if landed it would be disposed of, and the purpose of establishing the monopoly and raising a revenue effected. To prevent the dreaded consequence, a number of armed men, disguised like Indians, boarded the ships and threw their whole cargoes of tea into the dock. About seventeen persons boarded the ships in Boston harbor, and emptied three hundred and forty-two chests of tea. Among these "Indians" was Major Thomas Melville, the same who suggested to me the poem, The Last Leaf."



Full Text

No! never such a draught was poured
Since Hebe served with nectar
The bright Olympians and their Lord,
Her over-kind protector,—
Since Father Noah squeezed the grape
And took to such behaving
As would have shamed our grandsire ape
Before the days of shaving,—
No! ne'er was mingled such a draught
In palace, hall, or arbor,
As freemen brewed and tyrants quaffed
That night in Boston Harbor!
It kept King George so long awake
His brain at last got addled,
It made the nerves of Britain shake,
With sevenscore millions saddled;

Before that bitter cup was drained,
Amid the roar of cannon,
The Western war-cloud's crimson stained
The Thames, the Clyde, the Shannon;
Full many a six-foot grenadier
The flattened grass had measured,
And many a mother many a year
Her tearful memories treasured;
Fast spread the tempest's darkening pall,
The mighty realms were troubled,
The storm broke loose, but first of all
The Boston teapot bubbled!

An evening party,— only that,
No formal invitation,
No gold-laced coat, no stiff cravat,
No feast in contemplation,
No silk-robed dames, no fiddling band,
No flowers, no songs, no dancing,—
A tribe of red men, axe in hand,—
Behold the guests advancing!
How fast the stragglers join the throng,
From stall and workshop gathered!
The lively barber skips along
And leaves a chin half-lathered;
The smith has flung his hammer down,—
The horseshoe still is glowing;
The truant tapster at the Crown
Has left a beer-cask flowing;
The cooper's boys have dropped the adze,
And trot behind their master;
Up run the tarry ship-yard lads,—
The crowd is hurrying faster,—
Out from the Millpond's purlieus gush
The streams of white-faced millers,
And down their slippery alleys rush
The lusty young Fort-Hillers;
The rope walk lends its 'prentice crew,—
The Tories seize the omen:
"Ay, boys, you'll soon have work to do
For England's rebel foemen,
'King Hancock,' Adams, and their gang,
That fire the mob with treason,—
When these we shoot and those we hang
The town will come to reason."

On— on to where the tea-ships ride!
And now their ranks are forming,—
A rush, and up the Dartmouth's side

The Mohawk band is swarming!
See the fierce natives! What a glimpse
Of paint and fur and feather,
As all at once the full-grown imps
Light on the deck together!
A scarf the pigtail's secret keeps,
A blanket hides the breeches,—
And out the cursèd cargo leaps,
And overboard it pitches!
O woman, at the evening board
So gracious, sweet, and purring,
So happy while the tea is poured,
So blest while spoons are stirring,
What martyr can compare with thee,
The mother, wife, or daughter,
That night, instead of best Bohea,
Condemned to milk and water!

Ah, little dreams the quiet dame
Who plies with rock and spindle
The patient flax, how great a flame
Yon little spark shall kindle!
The lurid morning shall reveal
A fire no king can smother
Where British flint and Boston steel
Have clashed against each other!
Old charters shrivel in its track,
His Worship's bench has crumbled,
It climbs and clasps the union-jack,
Its blazoned pomp is humbled,
The flags go down on land and sea
Like corn before the reapers;
So burned the fire that brewed the tea
That Boston served her keepers!

The waves that wrought a century's wreck
Have rolled o'er whig and tory;
The Mohawks on the Dartmouth's deck
Still live in song and story;
The waters in the rebel bay
Have kept the tea-leaf savor;
Our old North-Enders in their spray
Still taste a Hyson flavor;
And Freedom's teacup still o'erflows
With ever fresh libations,
To cheat of slumber all her foes
And cheer the wakening nations!

2. Paul Revere's Ride



Paul Revere's Midnight Ride

by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Paul Revere's heroic actions in the cause of American freedom were immortalized in this poem which recounts the story Paul Revere's midnight ride of April 18-19, 1775 to warn the Massachusetts countryside of the coming British invasion.

▼ Full Text

Listen my children and you shall hear
Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere,
On the eighteenth of April, in Seventy-five;
Hardly a man is now alive
Who remembers that famous day and year.

He said to his friend, "If the British march
By land or sea from the town to-night,
Hang a lantern aloft in the belfry arch
Of the North Church tower as a signal light,—
One if by land, and two if by sea;
And I on the opposite shore will be,
Ready to ride and spread the alarm
Through every Middlesex village and farm,
For the country folk to be up and to arm."

Then he said "Good-night!" and with muffled oar
Silently rowed to the Charlestown shore,
Just as the moon rose over the bay,
Where swinging wide at her moorings lay
The Somerset, British man-of-war;
A phantom ship, with each mast and spar
Across the moon like a prison bar,
And a huge black hulk, that was magnified
By its own reflection in the tide.

Meanwhile, his friend through alley and street
Wanders and watches, with eager ears,
Till in the silence around him he hears
The muster of men at the barrack door,
The sound of arms, and the tramp of feet,

And the measured tread of the grenadiers,
Marching down to their boats on the shore.

Then he climbed the tower of the Old North Church,
By the wooden stairs, with stealthy tread,
To the belfry chamber overhead,
And startled the pigeons from their perch
On the sombre rafters, that round him made
Masses and moving shapes of shade,—
By the trembling ladder, steep and tall,
To the highest window in the wall,
Where he paused to listen and look down
A moment on the roofs of the town
And the moonlight flowing over all.

Beneath, in the churchyard, lay the dead,
In their night encampment on the hill,
Wrapped in silence so deep and still
That he could hear, like a sentinel's tread,
The watchful night-wind, as it went
Creeping along from tent to tent,
And seeming to whisper, "All is well!"
A moment only he feels the spell
Of the place and the hour, and the secret dread
Of the lonely belfry and the dead;
For suddenly all his thoughts are bent
On a shadowy something far away,
Where the river widens to meet the bay,—
A line of black that bends and floats
On the rising tide like a bridge of boats.

Meanwhile, impatient to mount and ride,
Booted and spurred, with a heavy stride
On the opposite shore walked Paul Revere.
Now he patted his horse's side,
Now he gazed at the landscape far and near,
Then, impetuous, stamped the earth,
And turned and tightened his saddle girth;
But mostly he watched with eager search
The belfry tower of the Old North Church,
As it rose above the graves on the hill,
Lonely and spectral and sombre and still.
And lo! as he looks, on the belfry's height
A glimmer, and then a gleam of light!
He springs to the saddle, the bridle he turns,
But lingers and gazes, till full on his sight
A second lamp in the belfry burns.

A hurry of hoofs in a village street,
A shape in the moonlight, a bulk in the dark,
And beneath, from the pebbles, in passing, a spark
Struck out by a steed flying fearless and fleet;
That was all! And yet, through the gloom and the light,
The fate of a nation was riding that night;
And the spark struck out by that steed, in his flight,
Kindled the land into flame with its heat.
He has left the village and mounted the steep,
And beneath him, tranquil and broad and deep,
Is the Mystic, meeting the ocean tides;
And under the alders that skirt its edge,
Now soft on the sand, now loud on the ledge,
Is heard the tramp of his steed as he rides.

It was twelve by the village clock
When he crossed the bridge into Medford town.
He heard the crowing of the cock,
And the barking of the farmer's dog,
And felt the damp of the river fog,
That rises after the sun goes down.

It was one by the village clock,
When he galloped into Lexington.
He saw the gilded weathercock
Swim in the moonlight as he passed,
And the meeting-house windows, black and bare,
Gaze at him with a spectral glare,
As if they already stood aghast
At the bloody work they would look upon.

It was two by the village clock,
When he came to the bridge in Concord town.
He heard the bleating of the flock,
And the twitter of birds among the trees,
And felt the breath of the morning breeze
Blowing over the meadow brown.
And one was safe and asleep in his bed
Who at the bridge would be first to fall,
Who that day would be lying dead,
Pierced by a British musket ball.

You know the rest. In the books you have read
How the British Regulars fired and fled,—
How the farmers gave them ball for ball,
From behind each fence and farmyard wall,
Chasing the redcoats down the lane,
Then crossing the fields to emerge again

Under the trees at the turn of the road,
And only pausing to fire and load.

So through the night rode Paul Revere;
And so through the night went his cry of alarm
To every Middlesex village and farm,—
A cry of defiance, and not of fear,
A voice in the darkness, a knock at the door,
And a word that shall echo for evermore!
For, borne on the night-wind of the Past,
Through all our history, to the last,
In the hour of darkness and peril and need,
The people will waken and listen to hear
The hurrying hoof-beats of that steed,
And the midnight message of Paul Revere.

[More information at "The Paul Revere House"](#)

The eyes of all America are upon us. As we play our part posterity will bless or curse us.

— Henry Knox, officer of the Continental Army
written after the *Declaration of Independence* in 1776

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3. Lexington

by Oliver Wendell Holmes

▼ [Full Text](#)

Slowly the mist o'er the meadow was creeping,
Bright on the dewy buds glistened the sun,
When from his couch, while his children were sleeping,
Rose the bold rebel and shouldered his gun.
Waving her golden veil
Over the silent dale,
Blithe looked the morning on cottage and spire;
Hushed was his parting sigh,
While from his noble eye
Flashed the last sparkle of liberty's fire.

On the smooth green where the fresh leaf is springing
Calmly the first-born of glory have met;
Hark! the death-volley around them is ringing!
Look! with their life-blood the young grass is wet!
Faint is the feeble breath,

Murmuring low in death,
"Tell to our sons how their fathers have died";
Nerveless the iron hand,
Raised for its native land,
Lies by the weapon that gleams at its side.

Over the hillsides the wild knell is tolling,
From their far hamlets the yeomanry come;
As through the storm-clouds the thunder-burst rolling,
Circles the beat of the mustering drum.
Fast on the soldier's path
Darken the waves of wrath,
Long have they gathered and loud shall they fall;
Red glares the musket's flash,
Sharp rings the rifle's crash,
Blazing and clanging from thicket and wall.

Gayly the plume of the horseman was dancing,
Never to shadow his cold brow again;
Proudly at morning the war-steed was prancing,
Reeking and panting be droops on the rein;
Pale is the lip of scorn,
Voiceless the trumpet horn,
Torn is the silken-fringed red cross on high;
Many a belted breast
Low on the turf shall rest,
Ere the dark hunters the herd have passed by.

Snow-girdled crags where the hoarse wind is raving,
Rocks where the weary floods murmur and wail,
Wilds where the fern by the furrow is waving,
Reeled with the echoes that rode on the gale;
Far as the tempest thrills
Over the darkened hills,
Far as the sunshine streams over the plain,
Roused by the tyrant band,
Woke all the mighty land,
Girded for battle, from mountain to main.

Green be the graves where her martyrs are lying!
Shroudless and tombless they sunk to their rest,—
While o'er their ashes the starry fold flying
Wraps the proud eagle they roused from his nest.
Borne on her Northern pine,
Long o'er the foaming brine
Spread her broad banner to storm and to sun;
Heaven keep her ever free
Wide as o'er land and sea
Floats the fair emblem her heroes have won!

4. The Battle of Lexington

by Sidney Lanier

▼ [Full Text](#)

Now haste thee while the way is clear,
Paul Revere!
Haste, Dawes! but haste thee not, O Sun!
To Lexington.

Then Devens looked and saw the light:
He got him forth into the night,
And watched alone on the river-shore,
And marked the British ferrying o'er.

John Parker! rub thine eyes and yawn:
But one o'clock and yet 'tis Dawn!
Quick, rub thine eyes and draw thy hose:
The Morning comes ere darkness goes,
Have forth and call the yeomen out,
For somewhere, somewhere close about
Full soon a Thing must come to be
Thine honest eyes shall stare to see
Full soon before thy patriot eyes
Freedom from out of a Wound shall rise.

Then haste ye, Prescott and Revere!
Bring all the men of Lincoln here;
Let Chelmsford, Littleton, Carlisle,
Let Acton, Bedford, hither file—
Oh hither file, and plainly see
Out of a wound leap Liberty.

Say, Woodman April! all in green,
Say, Robin April! hast thou seen
In all thy travel round the earth
Ever a morn of calmer birth?
But Morning's eye alone serene
Can gaze across yon village-green
To where the trooping British run
Through Lexington.

Good men in fustian, stand ye still;
The men in red come o'er the hill.
Lay down your arms, damned Rebels! cry
The men in red full haughtily.
But never a grounding gun is heard;
The men in fustian stand unstirred;

Dead calm, save maybe a wise bluebird
Puts in his little heavenly word.

O men in red! if ye but knew
The half as much as bluebirds do,
Now in this little tender calm
Each hand would out, and every palm
With patriot palm strike brotherhood's stroke
Or ere these lines of battle broke.

O men in red! if ye but knew
The least of the all that bluebirds do,
Now in this little godly calm
Yon voice might sing the Future's Psalm—
The Psalm of Love with the brotherly eyes
Who pardons and is very wise—
Yon voice that shouts, high-hoarse with ire,
Fire!

The redcoats fire, the homespuns fall:
The homespuns' anxious voices call,
Brother, art hurt? and Where hit, John?
And, *Wipe this blood, and Men, come on,*
And *Neighbor, do but lift my head,*
And *Who is wounded? Who is dead?*
Seven are killed. My God! my God!
Seven lie dead on the village sod.
Two Harringtons, Parker, Hadley, Brown,
Munroe and Porter,—these are down.
Nay, look! stout Harrington not yet dead!
He crooks his elbow, lifts his head.
He lies at the step of his own house-door;
He crawls and makes a path of gore.
The wife from the window hath seen, and rushed;
He hath reached the step, but the blood hath gushed;
He hath crawled to the step of his own house-door,
But his head hath dropped: he will crawl no more.
Clasp, Wife, and kiss, and lift the head:
Harrington lies at his door-step dead.

But, O ye Six that round him lay
And bloodied up that April day!
As Harrington fell, ye likewise fell—
At the door of the House wherein ye dwell;
As Harrington came, ye likewise came
And died at the door of your House of Fame.

5. [Concord Hymn](#)



The Shot Heard 'Round the World

by Domenick D'Andrea

for the National Guard Heritage Series

by Ralph Waldo Emerson. Sung at the Completion of the Battle Monument, July 4, 1837

▼ [Full Text](#)

By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood
And fired the shot heard round the world.

The foe long since in silence slept;
Alike the conqueror silent sleeps;
And Time the ruined bridge has swept
Down the dark stream which seaward creeps.

On this green bank, by this soft stream,
We set today a votive stone;
That memory may their deed redeem,
When, like our sires, our sons are gone.

Spirit, that made those heroes dare
To die, and leave their children free,
Bid Time and Nature gently spare
The shaft we raise to them and thee.

6. The Rising

by Thomas Buchanan Read. The following selection is abridged from "The Wagoner of the Alleghanies."

▼ [Full Text](#)

Out of the North the wild news came,
Far flashing on its wings of flame,
Swift as the boreal light which flies
At midnight through the startled skies.

And there was tumult in the air,
The fife's shrill note, the drum's loud beat,
And through the wide land everywhere
The answering tread of hurrying feet,

While the first oath of Freedom's gun
Came on the blast from Lexington.
And Concord, roused, no longer tame,
Forgot her old baptismal name,
Made bare her patriot arm of power,
And swelled the discord of the hour.

The yeoman and the yoeman's son,
With knitted brows and sturdy dint,
Renewed the polish of each gun,
Recoiled the lock, reset the flint;
And oft the maid and matron there,
While kneeling in the firelight glare,
Long poured, with half-suspended breath,
The lead into the molds of death.

The hands by Heaven made silken soft
To soothe the brow of love or pain,
Alas! are dulled and soiled too oft
By some unhallowed earthly stain;
But under the celestial bound
No nobler picture can be found
Than woman, brave in word and deed,
Thus serving in her nation's need:
Her love is with her country now,
Her hand is on its aching brow.

Within its shade of elm and oak
The church of Berkley Manor stood:
There Sunday found the rural folk,
And some esteemed of gentle blood,
In vain their feet with loitering tread
Passed 'mid the graves where rank is naught:
All could not read the lesson taught
In that republic of the dead.

The pastor rose: the prayer was strong;
The psalm was warrior David's song;
The text, a few short words of might,—
"The Lord of hosts shall arm the right!"

He spoke of wrongs too long endured,
Of sacred rights to be secured;
Then from his patriot tongue of flame
The startling words for Freedom came.
The stirring sentences he spake
Compelled the heart to glow or quake,
And, rising on his theme's broad wing,
And grasping in his nervous hand

The imaginary battle brand,
In face of death he dared to fling
Defiance to a tyrant king.

Even as he spoke, his frame, renewed
In eloquence of attitude,
Rose, as it seemed, a shoulder higher;
Then swept his kindling glance of fire
From startled pew to breathless choir;
When suddenly his mantle wide
His hands impatient flung aside,
And, lo! he met their wondering eyes
Complete in all a warrior's guise.

A moment there was awful pause,—
When Berkley cried, "Cease, traitor! cease!
God's temple is the house of peace!"
The other shouted, "Nay, not so,
When God is with our righteous cause:
His holiest places then are ours,
His temples are our forts and towers
That frown upon the tyrant foe:
In this the dawn of Freedom's day
There is a time to fight and pray!"

And now before the open door—
The warrior priest had ordered so—
The enlisting trumpet's sudden soar
Rang through the chapel, o'er and o'er,
Its long reverberating blow,
So loud and clear, it seemed the ear
Of dusty death must wake and hear.
And there the startling drum and fife
Fired the living with fiercer life;
While overhead with wild increase,
Forgetting its ancient toll of peace,
The great bell swung as ne'er before:
It seemed as it would never cease;
And every word its ardor flung
From off its jubilant iron tongue
Was, "WAR! WAR! WAR!"

"Who dares"—this was the patriot's cry,
As striding from the desk he came—
"Come out with me, in Freedom's name,
For her to live, for her to die?"
A hundred hands flung up reply,
A hundred voices answered "!!"

7. Ticonderoga

by V. B. Wilson

▼ [Full Text](#)

The cold, gray light of the dawning
On old Carillon falls,
And dim in the mist of the morning
Stand the grim old fortress walls.
No sound disturbs the stillness
Save the cataract's mellow roar,
Silent as death is the fortress,
Silent the misty shore.

But up from the wakening waters
Comes the cool, fresh morning breeze,
Lifting the banner of Britain,
And whispering to the trees
Of the swift gliding boats on the waters
That are nearing the fog-shrouded land,
With the old Green Mountain Lion,
And his daring patriot band.

But the sentinel at the postern
Heard not the whisper low;
He is dreaming of the banks of the Shannon
As he walks on his beat to and fro,
Of the starry eyes in Green Erin
That were dim when he marched away,
And a tear down his bronzed cheek courses,
'T is the first for many a day.

A sound breaks the misty stillness,
And quickly he glances around;
Through the mist, forms like towering giants
Seem rising out of the ground;
A challenge, the firelock flashes,
A sword cleaves the quivering air,
And the sentry lies dead by the postern,
Blood staining his bright yellow hair.

Then with a shout that awakens
All the echoes of hillside and glen,
Through the low, frowning gate of the fortress,
Sword in hand, rush the Green Mountain men.
The scarce wakened troops of the garrison
Yield up their trust pale with fear;

And down comes the bright British banner,
And out rings a Green Mountain cheer.

Flushed with pride, the whole eastern heavens
With crimson and gold are ablaze;
And up springs the sun in his splendor
And flings down his arrowy rays,
Bathing in sunlight the fortress,
Turning to gold the grim walls,
While louder and clearer and higher
Rings the song of the waterfalls.

Since the taking of Ticonderoga
A century has rolled away;
But with pride the nation remembers
That glorious morning in May.
And the cataracts' silvery music
Forever the story tells,
Of the capture of old Carillon,
The chime of the silver bells.

8. [The Battle of Bunker's Hill](#)

by F. S. Cozzens

▼ [Full Text](#)

It was a starry night in June, the air was soft and still,
When the "minute-men" from Cambridge came, and gathered on the hill;
Beneath us lay the sleeping town, around us frowned the fleet,
But the pulse of freemen, not of slaves, within our bosoms beat;
And every heart rose high with hope, as fearlessly we said,
"We will be numbered with the free, or numbered with the dead!"

"Bring out the line to mark the trench, and stretch it on the sward!"
The trench is marked, the tools are brought, we utter not a word,
But stack our guns, then fall to work with mattock and with spade,
A thousand men with sinewy arms, and not a sound is made;
So still were we, the stars beneath, that scarce a whisper fell;
We heard the red-coat's musket click, and heard him cry, "All's well!"

See how the morn, is breaking; the red is in the sky!
The mist is creeping from the stream that floats in silence by;
The "Lively's" hall looms through the fog, and they our works have spied,
For the ruddy flash and round-shot part in thunder from her side;
And the "Falcon" and the "Cerberus" make every bosom thrill,
With gun and shell, and drum and bell, and boatswain's whistle shrill;
But deep and wider grows the trench, as spade and mattock ply,
For we have to cope with fearful odds, and the time is drawing nigh!

Up with the pine-tree banner! Our gallant Prescott stands
Amid the plunging shells and shot, and plants it with his hands;
Up with the shout! for Putnam comes upon his reeking bay,
With bloody spur and foaming bit, in haste to join the fray.
But thou whose soul is glowing in the summer of thy years,
Unvanquishable Warren, thou, the youngest of thy peers,
Wert born and bred, and shaped and made, to act a patriot's part,
And dear to us thy presence is as heart's blood to the heart!

Hark! from the town a trumpet! The barges at the wharf
Are crowded with the living freight; and now they're pushing off;
With clash and glitter, trump and drum, in all its bright array,
Behold the splendid sacrifice move slowly o'er the bay!
And still and still the barges fill, and still across the deep,
Like thunder clouds along the sky, the hostile transports sweep.

And now they're forming at the Point; and now the lines advance:
We see beneath the sultry sun their polished bayonets glance;
We hear anear the throbbing drum, the bugle-challenge ring;
Quick bursts and loud the flashing cloud, and rolls from wing to wing;
But on the height our bulwark stands, tremendous in its gloom,—
As sullen as a tropic sky, and silent as a tomb.

And so we waited till we saw, at scarce ten rifles' length,
The old vindictive Saxon spite, in all its stubborn strength;
When sudden, flash on flash, around the jagged rampart burst
From every gun the livid light upon the foe accursed.
Then quailed a monarch's might before a free-born people's ire;
Then drank the sward the veteran's life, where swept the yeoman's fire.

Then, staggered by the shot, he saw their serried columns reel,
And fall, as falls the bearded rye beneath the reaper's steel;
And then arose a mighty shout that might have waked the dead,—
"Hurrah! they run! the field is won! Hurrah! the foe is fled!"
And every man hath dropped his gun to clutch a neighbor's hand,
As his heart kept praying all the while for home and native land.

Thrice on that day we stood the shock of thrice a thousand foes,
And thrice that day within our lines the shout of victory rose;
And though our swift fire slackened then, and, reddening in the skies,
We saw from Charlestown's roofs and walls the flamy columns rise,
Yet while we had a cartridge left, we still maintained the fight,
Nor gained the foe one foot of ground upon that blood-stained height.

What though for us no laurels bloom, and o'er the nameless brave
No sculptured trophy, scroll, nor hatch records a warrior grave!
What though the day to us was lost!—upon that deathless page
The everlasting charter stands for every land and age!

For man hath broke his felon bonds, and cast them in the dust,
And claimed his heritage divine, and justified the trust;
While through his rifted prison-bars the hues of freedom pour,
O'er every nation, race and clime, on every sea and shore,
Such glories as the patriarch viewed, when, mid the darkest skies,
He saw above a ruined world the Bow of Promise rise.

9. Warren's Address



The Battle of Bunker's Hill, June 17, 1775

by John Trumbull
by John Pierpont

▼ [Full Text](#)

Stand! the ground's your own, my braves!
Will ye give it up to slaves?
Will ye look for greener graves?
Hope ye mercy still? What's the mercy despots feel?
Hear it in that battle-peal!
Read it on yon bristling steel!
Ask it,—ye who will.

Fear ye foes who kill for hire?
Will ye to your homes retire?
Look behind you! they're afire!
And, before you, see Who have done it!—From the vale
On they come!—And will ye quail?—
Leaden rain and iron hail
Let their welcome be!

In the God of battles trust!
Die we may,—and die we must;
But, O, where can dust to dust
Be consigned so well,
As where Heaven its dew shall shed
On the martyred patriot's bed,
And the rocks shall raise their head,
Of his deeds to tell!

10. The Prayer on Bunker's Hill

by Lydia Sigourney. During the battle of Bunker's Hill, a venerable clergyman of Massachusetts, knelt on the field, with hands upraised, and grey head uncovered, and while the bullets whistled around him, prayed for the success of his people.

▼ Full Text

It was an hour of fear and dread,
High rose the battle cry,
And round in heavy volumes spread
The war-cloud to the sky.

'Twas not, as when in rival strength,
Contending nations meet,
Or love of conquest madly hurls
A monarch from his seat.

But many a warm cemented tie,
Was riven in anguish wild,
Ere with a foe-man's vengeful eye
The parent met the child.

O'er the green hill's beleagur'd breast,
Swept on the conflict high,
And many a gallant leader prest
The trampled turf to die.

Yet one was there unus'd to tread,
The path of mortal strife,
Who but the Saviour's flock had led
Beside the fount of life.

He knelt him where the black smoke wreath'd
His head was bow'd and bare,
While for an infant land, he breath'd
The agony of prayer.

The shafts of death flew thick and fast,
'Mid shrieks of ire and pain,
Wide wav'd his white locks on the blast,
And round him fell the slain.

Yet still with fervency intense
He prest the endanger'd spot,
The selfish thought, the shrinking sense
O'ermaster'd, and forgot.

'Twould seem as if a marble form
Wrought in some quarried height,
Stood fix'd amid that battle storm,
Save that the eye was bright.

Save that the deeply-heaving breast,
The hand uprais'd in air,
The smile, yet moving lips, exprest
That strong life wrestled there.

Then loud upon their native soil,
Peal'd forth their victor's cry,
And thinn'd beneath the desperate toil,
The wearied host swept by.

But 'mid that strange and fierce delight,
A chief of other days.
Gave up your falchions broad and bright,
Your own light arms the praise.

Or thought ye still how many a prayer,
Amid the deathful fray,
From cottage homes, and heads of care,
Rose up for you that day?

The column red with early morn,
May tower o'er Bunker's height,
And proudly till a race unborn
Their patriot father's might.

But thou, Oh patriot, old and grey,
Thou prophet of the free,
Who knelt amid the dead, that day,
What fame shall rise to thee?

It is not meet that brass or stone,
Which feel the touch of time,
Should keep the record of a faith
That woke thy deed sublime.

We trace it on a tablet fair
Which glows when stars wax pale,
A promise that the good man's prayer
Shall with his God prevail.

11. [Battle of Trenton](#)



Washington Crossing the Delaware

by Emanuel Leutze

by Anonymous

▼ [Full Text](#)

On Christmas-day in seventy-six,
Our ragged troops with bayonets fixed,
For Trenton marched away.
The Delaware see! the boats below!
The light obscured by hail and snow!
But no signs of dismay.

Our object was the Hessian band,
That dared invade fair freedom's land,
And quarter in that place.
Great Washington he led us on,
Whose streaming flag, in storm or sun,
Had never known disgrace.

In silent march we passed the night,
Each soldier panting for the fight,
Though quite benumbed with frost.
Greene on the left at six began,
The right was led by Sullivan,
Who ne'er a moment lost.

Their pickets stormed, the alarm was spread,
That rebels risen from the dead
Were marching into town.
Some scampered here, some scampered there,
And some for action did prepare;
But soon their arms laid down,

Twelve hundred servile miscreants,
With all their colors, guns, and tents,
Were trophies of the day.
The frolic o'er, the bright canteen
In centre, front, and rear was seen
Driving fatigue away.

Now, brothers of the patriot bands,
Let's sing deliverance from the hands

Of arbitrary sway.
And as our life is but a span,
Let's touch the tankard while we can,
In memory of that day.

12. Across the Delaware

by Will Carleton

▼ [Full Text](#)

The winter night is cold and drear,
Along the river's sullen flow; The cruel frost is camping here—
The air has living blades of snow. Look! pushing from the icy strand,
With ensigns freezing in the air. There sails a small but mighty band,
Across the dang'rous Delaware.

Oh, wherefore, soldiers, would you fight
The bayonets of a winter storm? In truth it were a better night
For blazing fire and blankets warm! We seek to trap a foreign foe.
Who fill themselves with stolen fare; We carry freedom as we go
Across the storm-swept Delaware!

The night is full of lusty cheer
Within the Hessians' merry camp; And faint and fainter on the ear
Doth fall the heedless sentry's tramp. O hirelings, this new nation's rage
Is something 't is not well to dare; You are not fitted to engage
These men from o'er the Delaware!

A rush—a shout—a clarion call,
Salute the early morning's gray: Now, roused invaders, yield or fall:
The refuge-land has won the day! Soon shall the glorious news be hurled
Wherever men have wrongs to bear; For freedom's torch illumes the world,
And God has crossed the Delaware!

13. Valley Forge



George Washington and Lafayette at Valley Forge

by John Ward Dunsmore
by Thomas Buchanan Read

▼ Full Text

O'er town and cottage, vale and height,
Down came the Winter, fierce and white,
And shuddering wildly, as distraught
At horrors his own hand had wrought.

His child, the young Year, newly born,
Cheerless, cowering, and affrighted,
Wailed with a shivering voice forlorn,
As on a frozen heath benighted.
In vain the hearths were set aglow,
In vain the evening lamps were lighted,
To cheer the dreary realm of snow:
Old Winter's brow would not be smoothed,
Nor the young Year's wailing soothed.

How sad the wretch at morn or eve
Compelled his starving home to leave,
Who, plunged breast-deep from drift to drift,
Toils slowly on from rift to rift,
Still hearing in his aching ear
The cry his fancy whispers near,
Of little ones who weep for bread
Within an ill-provided shed!

But wilder, fiercer, sadder still,
Freezing the tear it caused to start,
Was the inevitable chill
Which pierced a nation's agued heart,—
A nation with its naked breast
Against the frozen barriers prest,
Heaving its tedious way and slow
Through shifting gulfs and drifts of woe,
Where every blast that whistled by
Was bitter with its children's cry.

Such was the winter's awful sight
For many a dreary day and night,
What time our country's hope forlorn,
Of every needed comfort shorn,
Lay housed within a hurried tent,
Where every keen blast found a rent,
And oft the snow was seen to sift
Along the floor its piling drift,
Or, mocking the scant blankets' fold,
Across the night-couch frequent rolled;
Where every path by a soldier beat,
Or every track where a sentinel stood,

Still held the print of naked feet,
And oft the crimson stains of blood;
Where Famine held her spectral court,
And joined by all her fierce allies:
She ever loved a camp or fort
Beleaguered by the wintry skies,—
But chiefly when Disease is by,
To sink the frame and dim the eye,
Until, with seeking forehead bent,
In martial garments cold and damp,
Pale Death patrols from tent to tent,
To count the charnels of the camp.

Such was the winter that prevailed
Within the crowded, frozen gorge;
Such were the horrors that assailed
The patriot band at Valley Forge.

It was a midnight storm of woes
To clear the sky for Freedom's morn;
And such must ever be the throes
The hour when Liberty is born.

The chieftain, by his evening lamp,
Whose flame scarce cheered the hazy damp,
Sat toiling o'er some giant plan,
With maps and charts before him spread,
Beholding in his warrior scan
The paths which through the future led.

14. **Song of Marion's Men**

by William Cullen Bryant

▼ [Full Text](#)

Our band is few, but true and tried,
Our leader frank and bold;
The British soldier trembles
When Marion's name is told.
Our fortress is the good greenwood,
Our tent the cypress-tree;
We know the forest round us,
As seamen know the sea;
We know its walks of thorny vines,
Its glades of reedy grass,
Its safe and silent islands
Within the dark morass.

Woe to the English soldiery
That little dread us near!
On them shall light at midnight
A strange and sudden fear;
When, waking to their tents on fire,
They grasp their arms in vain,
And they who stand to face us
Are beat to earth again;
And they who fly in terror deem
A mighty host behind,
And hear the tramp of thousands
Upon the hollow wind.

Then sweet the hour that brings release
From danger and from toil;
We talk the battle over,
And share the battle's spoil.
The woodland rings with laugh and shout,
As if a hunt were up,
And woodland flowers are gathered
To crown the soldier's cup.
With merry songs we mock the wind
That in the pine-top grieves,
And slumber long and sweetly
On beds of oaken leaves.

Well knows the fair and friendly moon
The band that Marion leads-
The glitter of their rifles,
The scampering of their steeds.
'Tis life to guide the fiery barb
Across the moonlight plain;
'Tis life to feel the night-wind
That lifts his tossing mane.
A moment in the British camp-
A moment — and away,
Back to the pathless forest,
Before the peep of day.

Grave men there are by broad Santee,
Grave men with hoary hairs;
Their hearts are all with Marion,
For Marion are their prayers.
And lovely ladies greet our band,
With kindest welcoming,
With smiles like those of summer,
And tears like those of spring.
For them we wear these trusty arms,
And lay them down no more

Till we have driven the Briton,
Forever, from our shore.

15. The Message of the Liberty Bell

by Mrs. Elvira Robinson

▼ [Full Text](#)

Around the congress with closed door
Thousands of anxious people pour
To wait till all suspense be o'er.

And still above the bellman waits
The slow decision of the fates,
While fears depress and hope elates.

"Passed, it has passed," at length they cry,
Ten thousand glad mouths make reply,
And send the echoes to the sky.

"Ring! ring!" exclaims the watching boy;
The bell responds with notes of joy.
Freedom's proclaim its sweet employ.

Loud and more loud the proud notes swell,
The people's shouts responding well,
All o'er the land the glad news tell.

From sea to sea, from pole to pole,
The echoes of that bell shall roll,
Till freedom comes to every soul.

16. Seventy-Six

by William Cullen Bryant

▼ [Full Text](#)

What heroes from the woodland sprung,
When, through the fresh awakened land,
The thrilling cry of freedom rung,
And to the work of warfare strung
The yeoman's iron hand!

Hills flung the cry to hills around,
And ocean-mart replied to mart,
And streams, whose springs were yet unfound

Pealed far away the startling sound
Into the forest's heart.

Then marched the brave from rocky steep,
From mountain river swift and cold;
The borders of the stormy deep,
The vales where gathered waters sleep,
Sent up the strong and bold.

As if the very earth again
Grew quick with God's creating breath
And, from the sods of grove and glen,
Rose ranks of lion-hearted men
To battle to the death.

The wife, whose babe first smiled that day
The fair fond bride of yestereve,
And aged sire and matron gray,
Saw the loved warriors haste away,
And deemed it sin to grieve.

Already had the strife begun;
Already blood on Concord's plain
Along the springing grass had run,
And blood had flowed at Lexington,
Like brooks of April rain.

That death-stain on the vernal sward
Hallowed to freedom all the shore;
In fragments fell the yoke abhorred—
The footstep of a foreign lord
Profaned the soil no more.

17. [Betsy's Battle Flag](#)



Betsy Ross 1777

by Jean Leon Gerome Ferris
by Minna Irving

▼ [Full Text](#)

From dusk till dawn the livelong night
She kept the tallow dips alight,

And fast her nimble fingers flew
To sew the stars upon the blue.
With weary eyes and aching head
She stitched the stripes of white and red,
And when the day came up the stair
Complete across a carven chair
Hung Betsy's battle flag.

Like shadows in the evening gray
The Continentals filed away,
With broken boots and ragged coats,
But hoarse defiance in their throats;
They bore the marks of want and cold,
And some were lame and some were old,
And some with wounds untended bled,
But floating bravely overhead
Was Betsy's battle flag.

When fell the battle's leaden rain,
The soldier hushed his moans of pain
And raised his dying head to see
King George's troopers turn and flee.
Their charging column reeled and broke,
And vanished in the rolling smoke,
Before the glory of the stars,
The snowy stripes, and scarlet bars
Of Betsy's battle flag.

The simple stone of Betsy Ross
Is covered now with mold and moss,
But still her deathless banner flies,
And keeps the color of the skies.
A nation thrills, a nation bleeds,
A nation follows where it leads,
And every man is proud to yield
His life upon a crimson field
For Betsy's battle flag!

18. George Washington



General George Washington Resigning His Commission

by John Trumbull

by James Russell Lowell

Soldier and statesman, rarest unison;
High-poised example of great duties done
Simply as breathing, a world's honors worn
As life's indifferent gifts to all men born;
Dumb for himself, unless it were to God,
But for his barefoot soldiers eloquent,
Tramping the snow to coral where they trod,
Held by his awe in hollow-eyed content;
Modest, yet firm as Nature's self; unblamed
Save by the men his nobler temper shamed;
Never seduced through show of present good
By other than unsetting lights to steer
New-trimmed in Heaven, nor than his steadfast mood
More steadfast, far from rashness as from fear,
Rigid, but with himself first, grasping still
In swerveless poise the wave-beat helm of will;
Not honored then or now because he wooed
The popular voice, but that he still withstood;
Broad-minded, higher-souled, there is but one
Who was all this and ours, and all men's—WASHINGTON.

“first in war, first in peace, first in the hearts of his countryman”

– Henry "Light-Horse Harry" Lee on Washington

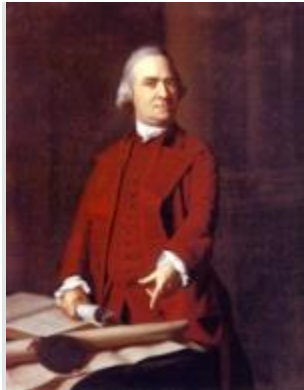
Henry Lee was a cavalry officer in the Continental Army and father of Confederate general Robert E. Lee

“

WASHINGTON is the mightiest name of earth. Long since mightiest in the cause of civil liberty; still mightiest in moral reformation. On that name no eulogy is expected. It cannot be. To add brightness to the sun, or glory to the fame of Washington, is alike impossible. Let none attempt it. In solemn awe pronounce the name and in its naked, deathless splendor leave it shining on.

“

19. [The Divine Source of Liberty](#)



Portrait of Samuel Adams

by John Singleton Copley

by Samuel Adams. Samuel Adams was an American statesman, political philosopher, Founding Father, and second cousin to 2nd President of the United States, John Adams. He helped to shape the principles and foundations of American Government. In this poem, he expresses his thoughts on the source and authority of the liberty in America he wished to defend.

All temporal power is of God,
And the magistratal, His institution, laud,
To but advance creaturely happiness aubaud:
Let us then affirm the Source of Liberty.

Ever agreeable to the nature and will,
Of the Supreme and Guardian of all yet still
Employed for our rights and freedom's thrill:
Thus proves the only Source of Liberty.

Though our civil joy is surely expressed
Through hearth, and home, and church manifest,
Yet this too shall be a nation's true test:
To acknowledge the divine Source of Liberty.

20. **Nathan Hale**

by Francis Miles Finch

▼ [Full Text](#)

To drum-beat and heart-beat,
A soldier marches by:
There is color in his cheek,
There is courage in his eye,
Yet to drum-beat and heart-beat
In a moment he must die.

By starlight and moonlight,
He seeks the Briton's camp;
He hears the rustling flag,
And the armed sentry's tramp;
And the starlight and moonlight
His silent wanderings lamp.

With slow tread and still tread,
He scans the tented line;
And he counts the battery guns
By the gaunt and shadowy pine;
And his slow tread and still tread
Gives no warning sign.

The dark wave, the plumed wave,
It meets his eager glance;
And it sparkles 'neath the stars,
Like the glimmer of a lance—
A dark wave, a plumed wave,
On an emerald expanse.

A sharp clang, a steel clang,
And terror in the sound!
For the sentry, falcon-eyed,
In the camp a spy hath found;
With a sharp clang, a steel clang,
The patriot is bound.

With calm brow, steady brow,
He listens to his doom;
In his look there is no fear,
Nor a shadow-trace of gloom;
But with calm brow and steady brow
He robes him for the tomb.

In the long night, the still night,
He kneels upon the sod;
And the brutal guards withhold
E'en the solemn Word of God!
In the long night, the still night,
He walks where Christ hath trod.

'Neath the blue morn, the sunny morn,
He dies upon the tree;
And he mourns that he can lose
But one life for Liberty;
And in the blue morn, the sunny morn,
His spirit-wings are free.

But his last words, his message-words,
They burn, lest friendly eye
Should read how proud and calm
A patriot could die,
With his last words, his dying words,
A soldier's battle-cry.

From the Fame-leaf and Angel-leaf,
From monument and urn,
The sad of earth, the glad of heaven,
His tragic fate shall learn;
And on Fame-leaf and Angel-leaf
The name of HALE shall burn.

“I only regret that I have but one life to give for my country.”

– Nathan Hale

Hale's famous last words before before being hanged by the British.

“

21. [Molly Maguire at Monmouth](#)



Molly Pitcher

by George Alfred Williams
by William Collins

▼ [Full Text](#)

On the bloody field of Monmouth
Flashed the guns of Greene and Wayne,

Fiercely roared the tide of battle,
Thick the sward was heaped with slain.
Foremost, facing death and danger,
Hessian, horse, and grenadier,
In the vanguard, fiercely fighting,
Stood an Irish Cannonier.

Loudly roared his iron cannon,
Mingling ever in the strife,
And beside him, firm and daring,
Stood his faithful Irish wife.
Of her bold contempt of danger
Greene and Lee's Brigades could tell,
Every one knew "Captain Molly,"
And the army loved her well.

Surged the roar of battle round them,
Swiftly flew the iron hail,
Forward dashed a thousand bayonets,
That lone battery to assail.
From the foeman's foremost columns
Swept a furious fusillade,
Mowing down the massed battalions
In the ranks of Greene's Brigade.

Fast and faster worked the gunner,
Soiled with powder, blood, and dust,
English bayonets shone before him,
Shot and shell around him burst;
Still he fought with reckless daring,
Stood and manned her long and well,
Till at last the gallant fellow
Dead—beside his cannon fell.

With a bitter cry of sorrow,
And a dark and angry frown,
Looked that band of gallant patriots
At their gunner stricken down.
"Fall back, comrades, it is folly
Thus to strive against the foe."
"No! not so," cried Irish Molly,
"We can strike another blow."

Quickly leaped she to the cannon,
In her fallen husband's place,
Sponged and rammed it fast and steady,
Fired it in the foeman's face.
Flashed another ringing volley,
Roared another from the gun;

"Boys, hurrah!" cried gallant Molly,
"For the flag of Washington."

Greene's Brigade, though torn and shattered,
Slain and bleeding half their men,
When they heard that Irish slogan,
Turned and charged the foe again.
Knox and Wayne and Morgan rally,
To the front they forward wheel,
And before their rushing onset
Clinton's English columns reel.

Still the cannon's voice in anger
Rolled and rattled o'er the plain,
Till there lay in swarms around it
Mangled heaps of Hessian slain.
"Forward! charge them with the bayonet!"
'T was the voice of Washington,
And there burst a fiery greeting
From the Irish woman's gun.

Monckton falls; against his columns
Leap the troops of Mayne and Lee,
And before their reeking bayonets
Clinton's red battalions flee.
Morgan's rifles, fiercely flashing,
Thin the foe's retreating ranks,
And behind them onward dashing
Ogden hovers on their flanks.

Fast they fly, these boasting Britons,
Who in all their glory came,
With their brutal Hessian hirelings
To wipe out our country's name.
Proudly floats the starry banner,
Monmouth's glorious field is won,
And in triumph Irish Molly
Stands beside her smoking gun.

22. To the Memory of the Brave Americans

by Philip Freneau. Note - The complete title is: "To the Memory of the Brave Americans under General Greene, in South Carolina, who fell in the action of September 8, 1781."

▼ [Full Text](#)

At Eutaw Springs the valiant died;
Their limbs with dust are covered o'er—

Weep on, ye springs, your tearful tide;
How many heroes are no more!

If in this wreck or ruin, they
Can yet be thought to claim a tear,
O smite your gentle breast, and say
The friends of freedom slumber here!

Thou, who shalt trace this bloody plain,
If goodness rules thy generous breast,
Sigh for the wasted rural reign;
Sign for the shepherds, sunk to rest!

Stranger, their humble graves adorn;
You too may fall, and ask a tear;
'Tis not the beauty of the morn
That proves the evening shall be clear.—

They saw their injured country's woe;
The flaming town, the wasted field;
Then rushed to meet the insulting foe;
They took the spear—but left the shield.

Led by thy conquering genius, Greene,
The Britons they compelled to fly;
None distant viewed the fatal plain,
None grieved, in such a cause to die—

But, like the Parthian, famed of old,
Who, flying, still their arrows threw,
These routed Britons, full as bold,
Retreated, and retreating slew.

Now rest in peace, our patriot band,
Though far from nature's limits thrown,
We trust they find a happier land,
A brighter sunshine of their own.

23. The Revolutionary Soldier's Bequest

by Hannah Flagg Gould

▼ [Full Text](#)

"Behold," the hoary veteran said,
"The silver scattered o'er my head;
A remnant of the auburn hair,
That curled in sunny clusters there,
When, in the land that now is thine,

With bounding flock and fruitful vine,
While Freedom's banner waves unfurled,
The envy of a gazing world,
Life was but slavery to me;
And when I fought, my son, for thee.

"Thy father's forehead time has bared;
The few white locks, that yet are spared
And lonely round my temples stray,
Soon from thy sight must pass away.
So thinned, so scattered o'er the land
Is now that valiant, patriot band,
Who, when their country gave the word,
' To arms! to arms! gird on thy sword!'
Sprang forth, resolved her chains to break,
Or earth their gory bed to make.
And, gathering where their chieftain led,
Thick as the hairs that clothed his head,
Marched onward, where the foeman stood
Waiting to dip his foot in blood.

"Though many a groan was heard around
From quivering lips that strewed the ground;
Yet none could pause to bid farewell,
When at his side his brother fell,
To close alone the dying eye—
To heave unheard the final sigh,
With none to stay the fleeting breath,
Or wipe away the damps of death.
For struggling Liberty impelled,
When nature's ties had fain withheld;
Until the God of armies spake
The word, that made her bonds to break.
And Independence, shouting loud,
Burst glorious from the fiery cloud
That rolled upon the battle-field,
And scenes of blood and death concealed!
'T was thus thy liberty was won,
'T was thus I fought for thee, my son!

"Yes, on the earth I've sought my rest,
The hoar-frost gathering o'er my breast;
And oft the freezing, midnight air
That chilled my blood, has warmed my prayer,
That He, who governs all, would ride
With victory on our injured side.
Through winter's cold, and summer's heat,
With aching head and weary feet,
And hunger's cravings I have gone;

And when I saw the morning dawn,
Have thought my day of life must close,
Ere the first star of evening rose.

"But now those toils have long been o'er,
And Plenty spreads from shore to shore;
While Peace and Freedom join to sing
The praises of our heavenly King.
And long his eye has sweetly slept,
Who then in lonely sorrow wept,
And bowed with years beneath the stroke,
When his last earthly prop was broke,
And his fair son, upon the plain,
Lay pale, and numbered with the slain.
The widow too, has made her bed
Low as her soldier's when he bled,
And waning life could only spare
A breath to waft the soldier's prayer,
*'Receive, O God, my soul—and bless
The widow and the fatherless!'*

"And now, the dimpled babe that smiled,
When the armed warrior clasped his child;
And felt a father's parting kiss
Distend his little heart with bliss;
Nor knew that parting kiss must sever
His father's face from his for ever;
That infant's face is altered now,
Life's Autumn rays are on his brow.
While bending o'er the grave I stand
Waiting a few last grains of sand,
To drop my clay beneath the sod
And give my spirit back to God.

"No glittering wealth that stored the mine,
Will at thy father's death be thine.
The scanty portion earth bestows
Just lasts me to my journey's close!
But then, I feel I leave thee more
Than sparkling gems, or dazzling ore;
Thy heritage is worth them all—
Thy lines in pleasant places fall,
Thou hast the land of liberty,
Which I have fought to win for thee.
O, keep the dear bequest I make
Unsullied, for my memory's sake!
Let no usurping tyrant tread
Upon my low and peaceful bed—
No cringing slave retire to weep

For freedom, where my ashes sleep.
But when the hand of Time shall trace
His name in furrows on thy face;
When four-score years have plucked thy hair,
And bowed thy form their weight to bear;
When thou the minute hand shalt see
Pointing thy feet to follow me,
To God, and to thy country true,
Then, for a heavenly home in view,
Thou to thy son this land resign
As blessed and free, as I to mine."

24. Lexington's Dead

by Hannah Flagg Gould

▼ [Full Text](#)

They come from the grave to attest to the story
That we, of their struggle for Liberty, tell!—
From silence and shade, that her mantle of glory
May fold o'er the first of her Martyrs who fell!

They come, that the balm of her breath may perfume them,
And peacefully then to return to their rest;
That we, from her arms, may receive and entomb them,
Assured that they once have reposed on her breast.

All hail, sacred Relics! from sixty years' sleeping
Beneath the green turf, where so freely ye bled;
Who, shrouded in gore, still the battle-ground keeping,
Forsook not the field, though your vital fire fled!

In valor's proud bed, with its rich purple o'er you,
The first blood for Freedom that gushed on the sod,
Ye lay, when the souls, to the onset that bore you,
Had passed with her cause, through your wounds, to their God.

Behold, blessed Spirits, who, nobly defending
Your country, rushed forth from your dwellings of clay,
The tribute of sorrow and joy we are blending
To you, o'er their dear hallowed ruins, to pay!

The hearts of a nation, your monument rearing,
Have built it of gratitude, fair and sublime.
It rises to heaven, your honored names bearing,
With earth not to sink, nor to crumble with time.

The ground that, as brothers, in pain ye were sowing,
Imbosomed the seed for a root firm and deep,
When life's crimson fountains were opened and flowing
To moisten the soil for the harvest we reap!

Forgive then the view that we take, ere we sever
From these broken wails, that for us ye forsook!
On them or their like again never, O never,
Are we, or the eye that is mortal, to look!

We give them to earth, till the Saviour, descending
With beauty for ashes, and glory for gloom,
Shall speak, while the dead to his voice are attending,
And life, light and freedom are poured through the tomb!

25. Liberty: An Ode for the Celebration of the Battle of Lexington

by Hannah Flagg Gould

▼ [Full Text](#)

Dear is our Liberty,
For great the price that bought her;
And dear the memory
Of those, who nobly sought her!
When war awoke with din and smoke,
By numerous foes surrounded,
With battered life, they braved the strife,
In death their arms were grounded!
How blest the memory
Of those, who stood defying
The foes of Liberty,
And breathed her name in dying!

Take, holy Liberty,
Their story on thy pinion,
And wing it high and free,
Throughout thy proud dominion!
Their blood was free and warm for thee,
From fearless bosoms streaming,
Like stars, on thine, their deeds must shine,
To all the nations beaming.
Then, keep thy balmy wing
Still growing broad and broader,
And let their story ring
To Earth's remotest border!

Fair daughter of the skies,
As million after million,

In other days, shall rise
Beneath thy wide pavilion,
There may they find their names enshrined,
Their memory, green and spreading,
That all may know to whom they owe
The gifts thy hand is shedding!
O live, sweet Liberty,
The course of time pervading,
Here may thy glory be
Still pure and never fading!

26. LaFayette

by Dolly Madison

Born, nurtured, wedded, prized, within the pale
Of peers and princes, high in camp—at court—
He hears, in joyous youth, a wild report,
Swelling the murmurs of the Western gale,
Of a young people struggling to be free!
Straight quitting all, across the wave he flies,
Aids with his sword, wealth, blood, the high emprise!
And shares the glories of its victory.
Then comes for fifty years a high romance
Of toils, reverses, sufferings, in the cause
Of man and justice, liberty and France,
Crowned, at the last, with hope and wide applause.
Champion of Freedom! Well thy race was run!
All time shall hail thee, *Europe's noblest Son!*

27. On Independence

by Jonathan Mitchell Sewall

▼
[Full Text](#)

Come all you brave soldiers, both valiant and free,
It's for Independence we all now agree;
Let us gird on our swords and prepare to defend
Our liberty, property, ourselves and our friends.

In a cause that's so righteous, come let us agree,
And from hostile invaders set America free,
The cause is so glorious we need not to fear
But from merciless tyrants we'll set ourselves clear.

Heaven's blessing attending us, no tyrant shall say
That Americans e'er to such monsters gave way,

But fighting we'll die in America's cause
Before we'll submit to tyrannical laws.

George the Third, of Great Britain, no more shall he reign,
With unlimited sway o'er these free States again;
Lord North, nor old Bute, nor none of their clan,
Shall ever be honor'd by an American.

May Heaven's blessing descend on our United States,
And grant that the union may never abate;
May love, peace, and harmony ever be found,
For to go hand in hand America round.

Upon our grand Congress may Heaven bestow
Both wisdom and skill our good to pursue;
On Heaven alone dependent we'll be.
But from all earthly tyrants we mean to be free.

Unto our brave Generals may Heaven give skill
Our armies to guide, and the sword for to wield,
May their hands taught to war, and their fingers to fight,
Be able to put British armies to flight.

And now, brave Americans, since it is so,
That we are independent, we'll have them to know
That united we are, and united we'll be,
And from all British tyrants we'll try to keep free.

May Heaven smile on us in all our endeavors,
Safe guard our seaports, our towns, and our rivers,
Keep us from invaders by land and by sea,
And from all who'd deprive us of our liberty.