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Address of Armistead Burwell

May 10, 1898

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ADDRESS  
OF  
ARMISTEAD BURWELL, Esq.

MAY 10th, 1898

CONFEDERATE MEMORIAL SERVICES  
ELMWOOD CEMETERY  
CHARLOTTE, N. C.





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Address of  
**Armistead Burwell, Esq.**

May 10th, 1898

Confederate Memorial Services  
Elmwood Cemetery  
Charlotte, N. C.

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Almost a third of a century has passed since the host that followed Lee and Johnston laid down its arms before that which followed Grant and Sherman—the one returning to homes made desolate by defeat, the other to a land made joyful by victory.

The years that have flown by have brought wisdom to all those, whether victors or vanquished, who have had “attending ears” to hear their teachings, and those years have borne to the brave hearts that were once estranged the sweet charity that is ever kind.

Time has touched with its beneficent power the places of strife—

“Where brothers faced each other’s steel,  
Grim suitors in the last appeal”—

and they are places of restful peace.

Enchantment has fallen on the now distant scenes. Gettysburg and Chickamauga are beautified by nature and by art. The glory of heroic action lightens the fields

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once darkened by the smoke of battles, and instead of the roar of conflict there is heard the loud acclaim of a wondering people.

Some enemies of that seeming yesterday are our heroes of to-day.

We think of Grant, not as the stern warrior whose mailed hand struck down our kin, but as the mighty man of war, who, in all the crises of his life, ruled himself, and, pleading that there might be peace between his countrymen, was more heroic in the chamber of his death than ever on tented field where victory perched upon his standard.

And those who fought with Bragg at Chickamauga salute with unfeigned respect the steadfast Thomas, who stood unmoved amidst the dreadful disasters of that September day.

Time has clothed with a new glory our friends of that yesterday.

We think of Lee now, not as he led his often victorious columns to newer heights of fame, but as the majestic man who bore defeat with equanimity, and turned from the paths that might have led to wealth to that other way that led to duty and to God.

We have ceased to mourn that Jackson died, because he lives in the hearts of his countrymen, and because, himself removed from trouble and sorrow, his fame has grown until America proclaims him one of the greatest soldiers since the world began. "His body is buried in peace, but his name liveth forevermore."

And this nation of States, united now, and in its union invincible, if its cause be just, says of all—both those that wore the blue, and those that wore the gray—

“My sons—they have demeaned themselves  
Like men born to renown by life or death.”

With these words, and in the spirit they evince, with charity for all, with malice towards none, we come to deck these graves with the flowers of spring, testifying thus again that we who survive have not forgotten those who “sleep in fame.”

We turn away for a while from the busy walks of life to this city of the dead, hoping that the memory of noble lives, here and now revived, may make us faithful to the true and right, as it is given to us to know it, though faithfulness to such high purpose seem to lead to defeat or to death.

And, as is most fitting, we invoke the blessing of Him who rules the destinies of nations upon those by whose loving labor this monument was made.

May it ever stand, not less to their gracious memory than to that of the heroic dead for love of whom they placed it here.

Let us, then, scatter beautiful flowers on these slopes where sleep the honored dead, neglecting no grave where a soldier rests, and, from year to year, as blooms come forth to deck with their beauty this Southland that we love, let her children perform this pious duty so long as valor is here revered.



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