

MEMORIAL DAY – A DAY TO REMEMBER



Memorial Day, legal holiday observed annually on the last Monday in May in the United States, in honor of the nation's armed services personnel killed in wartime. The holiday was originally called Decoration Day because it is a time for decorating graves with flowers and flags. Over time, the designation Memorial Day became far more common.

In the United States, local observances to honor the war dead became widespread following the American Civil War (1861-1865), which had taken more than 600,000 lives. These local observances inspired General John Alexander Logan, the leader of a Union veterans' group called the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR), to issue a general's order in 1868 designating May 30 as a day for "strewing with flowers, or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who died in defense of their country during the late rebellion, and whose bodies now lie in almost every city, village, and hamlet churchyard in the land." (By "the late rebellion," Logan meant the Civil War, also known as the War of Rebellion.) Accordingly, on May 30, 1868, several thousand people gathered to observe Decoration Day at Arlington National Cemetery, in Arlington, Virginia, across the Potomac River from Washington,

D.C. In 1966 President Lyndon B. Johnson signed a proclamation that declared Waterloo, New York, the birthplace of Memorial Day. Townspeople there had begun decorating graves of soldiers, flying flags at half-mast, and organizing parades of veterans 100 years earlier, in May 1866. Waterloo has continued this tradition every year.

In 1873 New York became the first state to declare a holiday on May 30. By the end of the 1800s, states throughout the nation had declared Memorial Day a holiday.



With Honor & Gratitude
We Remember