

# WHAT SO ★ PROUDLY ★ WE HAIL

*The American Soul in Story, Speech, and Song*

## Roy's Decoration Day

NINETTE M. LOWATER

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*In this selection, first published by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction as a resource for its public schools in 1904, the poetess Ninette Maine Lowater (1844–1932) delicately addresses how the living care for and “keep alive” their dead. What is the mood of the poem? How—and why—do Roy and his Grandma care for Grandpa as they do? What is the meaning of the last two lines? Why is the poem called “Roy’s Decoration Day”?*

I brought blue violets from the dell  
For Grandpa’s grave today,  
For Grandma says he loved them well  
Before he marched away.

The other Grandpas all are old,  
With thin hair almost gray,  
But he has curls that shine like gold,  
And blue eyes full of play.

Grandma showed me his picture, hung  
Upon a chain of gold;  
How strange that he should be so young,  
And she should be so old.