



Contributed to Maine Memory Network by Maine Historical Society
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Description: A poem written to commemorate Hiram G. Berry, a carpenter, navigator, banker, and politician in Rockland, who also served as commander of the Rockland Guard, a militia unit before the Civil War.

Columbia Mourns
For
Maj. Gen. Hiram G. Berry,
Who Fell in the Battle of Chancellorsville.
Composed By A. W. Harmon.
Air "Springfield Mountain."

Officers and soldiers now attend
To these few lines that I've now penned
Concerning General Berry of fame,
Who once resided in Rockland, Maine.

He gladly left his native land
And for his country took command,
His brave division to lead o'er,
Where grape shot fly and cannons roar.

He had command of a valiant train,
And as brave a man as came from Maine.
In an engagement his voice you'd hear,
Fright bravely, men! we know no fear.

In sixty-three, how sad to tell,
In the battle of Chancellorsville he fell,
With many of his braves, no more
To stand amid the Cannon's roar.

On Sunday morning, the third of May,
General Howard to Berry did say,
'I fear I'm ruined, the disaster's plain,
The eleventh corps, I fear, is slain.'

Thus General Berry did reply,
"Take courage, now on me rely,
I have a division that will not flinch
They never yet were drove an inch."

He took his position, and orders gave
"Fight bravely, men, the ground to save."
They boldly fought, no mind to run,
Retook the ground the Rebels won.

Then General Berry quickly sent
To General Hooker, Greenhalgh went,
For to enquire in Berry's name,
If they should hold the ground they gain'd

General Berry dismounted then
To communicate with some brave men,
Not fearing any fire alarm,
But a minnie ball went through his arm,

Passed through his lungs, yet his desire
How goes the battle, was to enquire,
He says, "I'm dying, it does appear,
Lieutenant, take me to the rear."

The last words the General spoke,
He told his men to have hearts of oak;
And boldly fight was his reply,
And let the Stars and Stripes wave high.

Thus died the General in the prime of life.
'Midst proud career of war and strife,
Like Wolfe and Warren on the field,
Determined that he would not yield.

Eighteen thousand men he did command,
And great artillery, as I understand.
Many a battle this General won,
But now his work on earth is done.

No more his sword he'll have to wield
Where cannons roar on the battlefield
He rests in peace among the brave,
He died our country's fame to save.

His body it was quickly graced,
Conveyed to its last resting place,
In his native town where he was born.
Near Blackington Corner, I was informed

When to the grave they did proceed
A solemn looking sight indeed
To see the horse on which he rode
Bearing him to his last abode.

The music played in mournful strains
As they bore away his last remains;
The bells they tolled till half-past four,
And loudly did the cannon roar.

A nation feels the heavy loss
And mourns his absence with remorse;
May God still with his army be,
And lead them on to victory.