

JULIA WARD HOWE (1819—1910)

Julia Ward Howe's accomplishments did not end with the writing of her famous poem. "**The Battle Hymn of the Republic**", set to William Steffe's already-existing music, was first published in the Atlantic Monthly in 1862 and quickly became one of the most popular songs of the Union during the American Civil War.

She saw some of the worst effects of the war -- not only the death and disease which killed and maimed the soldiers. She worked with the widows and orphans of soldiers on both sides of the war, and realized that the effects of the war go beyond the killing of soldiers in battle. She also saw the economic devastation of the Civil War, the economic crises that followed the war, the restructuring of the economies of both North and South.

In 1870, Julia Ward Howe took on a new issue and a new cause. Distressed by her experience of the realities of war, determined that peace was one of the two most important causes of the world (the other being equality in its many forms) and seeing war arise again in the world in the Franco-Prussian War, she called in 1870 for women to rise up and oppose war in all its forms. She wanted women to come together across national lines, to recognize what we hold in common above what divides us, and commit to finding peaceful resolutions to conflicts. She issued a Declaration, hoping to gather together women in a congress of action.

In 1870 Howe was the first to proclaim Mother's Day, with her Mother's Day Proclamation. She would become an activist for Pacifism, the legal rights of the Blacks and Women's Suffrage.

By 1868, Julia Ward Howe was helping to found the New England Suffrage Association. In 1869 she led, with her colleague Lucy Stone, the American Woman Suffrage Association (AWSA). She began to lecture and write frequently on the subject of woman suffrage.

From 1872 to 1879, she assisted editing the Woman's Journal. She pulled together a series of essays by writers of the time, disputing theories that held that women were inferior to men and required separate education. This defense of women's rights and education appeared in 1974 as Sex and Education.

In 1843 she married physician Dr. Samuel Gridley Howe who founded the Perkins Institute for the Blind. The couple made their home in South Boston and had six children.

Julia Ward Howe died on October 17, 1910, at her home, Oak Glen, in Portsmouth, Rhode Island, at the age of 91. "**Mine eyes have seen the Glory of the Coming of the Lord**".