

Lincoln Lore

Bulletin of the
LINCOLN HISTORICAL RESEARCH
FOUNDATION
Louis A. Warren - - - Editor

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A LIVING MEMORIAL

At this season when the cap and gown vies with the bridal veil for attention, it seems timely that this broadside, following the one on the marriage of Lincoln's parents, should be dedicated to the Lincoln Memorial University. This institution is our greatest living memorial to Abraham Lincoln.

The idea which finally culminated in the establishment of this unique educational project originated with Lincoln himself. The story is told by General Oliver O. Howard who, in conference with President Lincoln in the Autumn of 1863, reviewed the military actions which centered about Cumberland Gap, and spoke of the loyalty and splendid service of these southern mountaineers. This is General Howard's report of Lincoln's reaction to his story:

"I shall never forget the look of that wonderful man as he listened to me. Those were 'his people' and his big heart went out to them. He laid his hand on my shoulder and said to me: 'Howard, if you come out of all this horror and misery alive, and I hope that you may, I want you to do something for these people who have been shut out from the world all these years. If I live I will do all I can to aid you and between us we may do them the justice they deserve. Please remember, and if God is good to us we may be able to speak of this later!'

"That time never came," General Howard continued, "but at the close of the war I decided that my one aim in life would be to carry out the president's wish, and I watched my chance. It did not come for many years but when it did come I put my soul into the work and now we have Lincoln Memorial University just where Mr. Lincoln would have wanted it to be."

Along with General Howard, who sponsored the founding of the University, should be mentioned Dr. John Wesley Hill, the present chancellor. To him, more than any other individual, should be given the credit for bringing the University into a place of national prominence. He is literally giving his life for these mountain people, and has the satisfaction of feeling that he is helping to carry out one of the unfinished tasks of the great emancipator.

LINCOLN'S PLANK ON EDUCATION

When Lincoln prepared his first circular to be distributed among the voters of Sangamon County, Illinois, in the summer of 1832, he worked into his political platform a plank on education. The following excerpt shows his interest in the subject when he was but twenty-three years old.

"Upon the subject of education, not presuming to dictate any plan or system respecting it, I can only say that I view it as the most important subject which we as a people can be engaged in. That every man may receive at least a moderate education, and thereby be enabled to read the histories of his own and other countries, by which he may duly appreciate the value of our free institutions, appears to be an object of vital importance, even on this account only, to say nothing of the advantages and satisfaction to be derived from all being able to read the Scriptures and other works both of a religious and moral nature, for themselves.

"For my part, I desire to see the time when education—and by this means, morality, sobriety, enterprise, and industry—shall become much more general than at present, and should be gratified to have it in my power to contribute something to the advancement of any measure which might have a tendency to accelerate that happy period."

ARTS AND CRAFTS DEPARTMENT

One of the most interesting features at the University is the arts and crafts department located in the Nancy Hanks Building. It is maintained for the young women who find it necessary to earn their way through the college years. Many quaint and beautiful pieces of hand work are on display at their sales room. These have been made during the vacation period in their cabin homes, or after school hours on the campus. This is rather an incomplete list of some of the items one notices on exhibition there: heavy cord, mercerized, and chenille bags; table runners, old patterns in wool; coverlets, patchwork quilts, hooked rugs in both wool and cotton; braided, and wool mats for chairs; smocks and aprons; baskets of various shapes and materials; rings and chains, log cabin, hit and miss rag rugs; towels; luncheon and breakfast sets, and Kentucky pottery in blue consisting of teapots, candlesticks, rose bowls, French baskets, jardiniers, vases, pitchers, etc. Those desiring to purchase any of these items may address the University at Harrogate, Tennessee.

WHERE THREE STATES MEET

One of the reasons for the success and achievement of Lincoln Memorial University is its strategic location. Its campus spreads out into three states; Virginia, Tennessee, and Kentucky. Here in the very heart of the mountain districts of these states it is accessible to that large population of Anglo-Saxons who have had so few educational privileges. The roads in this section of these three states converge at Cumberland Gap and bring those who would pass, from one state to another or over the Cumberland Mountains, right by the University. The old Wilderness Road from Virginia to Kentucky and the Daniel Boone trail from North Carolina to the blue grass country join at this place. The community, where the university has grown up, is called Harrogate, Tennessee.

DISTINGUISHED PATRONS

The appeal of the university has found a ready response from many distinguished Americans. The last commencement brought together as many as five governors, several capitalists, and a group of leaders in the professions. The two vice-presidents of the University, Honorable John Hays Hammond and Mr. Ferdinand Lafrentz, as well as the president of the board of directors, Mr. Frank A. Seiberling, have made valuable contributions to the economic welfare of the institution.

A LINCOLN ROOM

One of the features of the 1929 commencement was the dedication of the Lincoln Room in the Hall of Citizenship. Through the efforts of Dr. Hill and his good wife, a very remarkable collection of exhibits has been brought together. The old pieces of furniture associated with Lincoln, the rare paintings, and the autograph letters of the president and his cabinet have been so arranged by Mrs. Hill to create an unmistakable Lincoln atmosphere. Senator Moses of New Hampshire, Emanuel Hertz, a prominent lawyer and Lincoln student of New York, and the editor of Lincoln Lore took part in this dedicatory service. The collection of Lincoln books and pamphlets, which are now housed in the library of the institution, is becoming one of the great collections of Lincolniana in America.

INFORMATION

If any reader of Lincoln Lore cares to learn more about this living memorial to Abraham Lincoln, information may be obtained by addressing Dr. John Wesley Hill, Chancellor, Lincoln Memorial University, Munsey Building, Washington, D. C.