

LINCOLN LORE

No. 169

FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

July 4, 1932

LINCOLN LORE

BULLETIN OF
THE LINCOLN
HISTORICAL
RESEARCH
FOUNDATION



ENDOWED BY
THE LINCOLN
NATIONAL LIFE
INSURANCE
COMPANY

Dr. Louis A. Warren - - - Editor

LINCOLN IN PHILADELPHIA

For some time Lincoln Lore has been anticipating a geographical approach to the Lincoln story and it seems appropriate and timely to begin this series on July 4 with a monograph on Lincoln in Philadelphia.

The Philadelphia Inquirer for Saturday, April 22, 1865, gives a brief review of Lincoln's visits to the city and states that "since President Lincoln was called to his high office he has been in Philadelphia but three times."

Only brief accounts can be given of these visits and the excerpts made from his speeches on these occasions are selected because of some definite bearing on the location or sentiments recalled by the gathering.

February 21, 1861

Abraham Lincoln enroute from Springfield, Illinois to Washington, D. C. for the inauguration arrived in Philadelphia at 4 p. m. February 21, 1861. That evening he was given a reception and welcomed to the city by Mayor Henry. Lincoln replied to the mayor with a brief speech from the balcony of the Continental Hotel.

"Mr. Mayor and Fellow-citizens of Philadelphia: I appear before you to make no lengthy speech, but to thank you for this reception. The reception you have given me tonight is not to me, the man, the individual, but to the man who temporarily represents, or should represent, the majesty of the nation. It is true, as your worthy mayor has said, that there is great anxiety amongst the citizens of the United States at this time. . . . The hope that has been expressed by your mayor, that I may be able to restore peace, harmony, and prosperity to the country, is most worthy of him; and most happy, indeed, will I be if I shall be able to verify and fulfill that hope. I promise you that I bring to the work a sincere heart. Whether I will bring a head equal to that heart will be for future times to determine. . . . Your worthy mayor has expressed the wish, in which I join with him, that it were convenient for me to remain in your city long enough to consult your merchants and manufacturers; or, as it were, to listen to those breathings rising within the consecrated walls

wherein the Constitution of the United States, and, I will add, the Declaration of Independence, were originally framed and adopted. I assure you and your mayor that I had hoped on this occasion, and upon all occasions during my life, that I shall do nothing inconsistent with the teachings of these holy and most sacred walls." . . .

February 22, 1861

In the early morning of Washington's birthday Lincoln participated in the dedication of a new flag for Independence Hall, and with his own hands raised it to the breeze. Just previous to the flag raising ceremony Mr. Lincoln had replied to the remarks of Chairman Theodore Cuyler, Esquire, in the following language:

"Mr. Cuyler: I am filled with deep emotion at finding myself standing in this place, where were collected together the wisdom, the patriotism, the devotion to principle, from which sprang the institutions under which we live. You have kindly suggested to me that in my hands is the task of restoring peace to our distracted country. I can say in return, sir, that all the political sentiments I entertain have been drawn, so far as I have been able to draw them, from the sentiments which originated in and were given to the world from this hall. I have often pondered over the dangers which were incurred by the men who assembled here and framed and adopted that Declaration. I have pondered over the toils that were endured by the officers and soldiers of the army who achieved that independence. I have often inquired of myself what great principle or idea it was that kept this Confederacy so long together. It was not the mere matter of separation of the colonies from the motherland, but that sentiment in the Declaration of Independence which gave liberty not alone to the people of this country, but hope to all the world, for all future time. It was that which gave promise in due time the weights would be lifted from the shoulders of all men, and that all should have an equal chance. This is the sentiment embodied in the Declaration of Independence." . . .

February 22, 1861

Upon arriving at Harrisburg enroute to Washington those in charge of Lincoln's itinerary learned of a plot to assassinate him as he passed through Baltimore. They advised Mr. Lincoln that his route should be changed and he reluctantly submitted to their suggestion and about midnight of the same day, February 22, arrived again in Philadelphia taking the midnight express for Washington.

June 16 1864

During the war funds were raised by conducting Sanitary Fairs by women's organizations. Abraham Lincoln was invited to attend one at Philadelphia and after much urging agreed to be present. A part of his speech delivered at this time follows:

"I suppose that this toast was intended to open the way for me to say something.

"War, at the best, is terrible, and this war of ours, in its magnitude and in its duration, is one of the most terrible. It has deranged business, totally in many localities, and partially in all localities. It has destroyed property and ruined homes, it has produced a national debt and taxation unprecedented, at least in this country; it has carried mourning to almost every home, until it can almost be said that the 'heavens are hung black.' . . .

"It is a pertinent question, often asked in the mind privately and from one to another, when is the war to end? Surely I feel as great an interest in this question as any other man can. But I do not wish to name the day, or the month, or the year, with which it is to end. I do not wish to run the risk of seeing the time come without our being ready for the end, for fear of disappointment because the time had come and not the end.

"We accepted this war; we did not begin it. But we accepted the war for an object, a worthy object, and the war will end when that object is attained; and I hope under God it never will without. Speaking of the present campaign, General Grant is reported to have said: 'I am going through on this line if it takes all summer.' This war has taken three years. It was begun or accepted on the line of restoring the national authority over all the national domain. And for the American people, as far as my knowledge enables me to speak, I say we are going through on this line if it takes three years more."

April 22, 23, 24, 1865

When the lifeless body of Lincoln was removed from Washington to Springfield, Illinois from Saturday, April 22 to Monday, April 24 it lay in state in Independence Hall. The silent Lincoln's body was viewed here by over 300,000 according to reports. It was especially appropriate that his body should rest over Sunday in Philadelphia and one recalls the remarks made by Lincoln on the occasion of his first visit when he said after reviewing the purpose of the Declaration of Independence:

" . . . Now, my friends, can the country be saved upon that basis? If it can, I will consider myself one of the happiest men in the world if I can help to save it. But if this country cannot be saved without giving up that principle, I was about to say that I would rather be assassinated upon this spot than to surrender it."