

# LINCOLN LORE

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## LINCOLN QUOTES WASHINGTON

The fact that Lincoln's and Washington's birthdays come so close together has contributed much to the alliance of these two names in American history.

The earliest biography which came into the hands of Lincoln was *Weems' Life of Washington*. He took occasion to mention this book in an address at Trenton in 1861. He said: "May I be pardoned if upon this occasion I mention that away back in my childhood, the earliest days of my being able to read, I got hold of a small book such a one as few of the younger members have ever seen—*Weems' Life of Washington*."

### *Early Orations*

Lincoln addressed the Young Men's Lyceum at Springfield when he was but twenty-eight years old and reached the climax of his speech in this manner: "that we revered his name (Washington's) to the last, that during his long sleep we permitted no hostile foot to pass over or desecrate his resting place, shall be that which to learn the last trump shall awaken our Washington."

On February 22, 1842, Lincoln spoke before a group in his home town. He wrote to his friend George E. Pickett that he had just addressed the folks at Springfield on "the 110th anniversary of the birth of him whose name, mightiest in the cause of civil liberty, still mightiest in the cause of moral reformation, we mention in solemn awe, in naked, deathless splendor..."

### *Cooper Institute*

In the Cooper Institute Address Lincoln referred many times to Washington. He spoke of the "thirty nine" as our fathers who framed the government, and said "Again, George Washington, another of the 'thirty-nine,' was then President of the United States..."

At another point in the address he remarked, "Some of you delight to flaunt in our faces the warning against sectional parties given by Washington in his Farewell Address. Less than eight years before Washington gave that warning, he had, as President of the United States, approved and signed an act of Congress enforcing the prohibition of slavery in the Northwestern Territory..."

At the very conclusion of this famous address the judgment of Washington is used to serve as a climax. Lincoln said, "Let us be diverted from none of these sophisticated contrivances wherewith we are so industriously plied and belabored. Contrivances...such as invocations to Washington, imploring men to unsay what

Washington said and undo what Washington did."

In speaking at New Haven, Connecticut, on the same eastern trip, about Seward's referring to the "irrepressible conflict," Lincoln remarked: "Almost every good man since the formation of our government has uttered that same sentiment, from General Washington, who 'trusted that we should yet have a confederacy of free states,' with Jefferson, Jay, Monroe, down to the latest days...."

So the echoes of the Cooper Union Speech were heard throughout New England and the words of Washington always occupied a prominent place in each argument.

### *Enroute to the Capitol*

Upon leaving Springfield for the inauguration, in his famous Farewell Address, Lincoln compared his own task with that of Washington's: "I now leave, not knowing when or whether ever I may return, with a task before me greater than that which rested upon Washington. Without the assistance of that Divine Being who ever attended him, I cannot succeed."

At Cincinnati on his way to take the president's chair, he had occasion to refer to a former speech he had made there on September 17, 1859. He said, "I addressed much of what I said to the Kentuckians... I also told them how I expected they would be treated after they should have been beaten; and I now wish to recall their attention to what I then said upon that subject. I then said, 'When we do as we say—beat you—you perhaps want to know what we will do with you. I will tell you, so far as I am authorized to speak for the opposition, what we mean to do with you. We mean to treat you, as near as we possibly can, as Washington, Jefferson, and Madison treated you.'"

At Columbus Lincoln must have been thinking of his Farewell Address at Springfield, as in the Ohio capital, speaking to the Legislature, he said: "I cannot but know what you all know, there has fallen upon me a task such as did not rest even upon the Father of his Country; and, so feeling, I can turn and look for that support without which it will be impossible for me to perform that great task."

On February 22, 1861, Lincoln was in Independence Hall, Philadelphia. That same day he had occasion to address the Legislature of Pennsylvania at Harrisburg. He said in part: "Allusion has been made to the fact—the interesting fact perhaps we should say—that I for the first time appear at the capital of the great commonwealth of Pennsylvania upon the birthday of the Father of his Country. In connection with that beloved anniver-

sary connected with the history of this country, I have already gone through one exceedingly interesting scene this morning in the ceremonies at Philadelphia. Under the kind conduct of gentlemen there, I was for the first time allowed the privilege of standing in old Independence Hall to have a few words addressed to me there, and opening up to me an opportunity of manifesting my deep regret that I had not more time to express something of my own feelings excited by the occasion, that had been really the feelings of my whole life."

### *In the President's Chair*

#### *A Proclamation.*

It is recommended to the people of the United States that they assemble in their customary places of meeting for public solemnities on the 22d day of February instant, and celebrate the anniversary of the birth of the Father of his Country, by causing to be read to them his immortal farewell address.

Given under my hand and seal of the United States, at Washington, the 19th day of February, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-two, and of the independence of the United States of America the eighty-sixth.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

In an address on colonization to a deputation of colored men at the White House on August 14, 1862, he said:

"For the sake of your race you should sacrifice something of your present comfort for the purpose of being as grand in that respect as the white people... In the American Revolutionary War sacrifices were made by men engaged in it, but they were cheered by the future. General Washington himself endured greater physical hardships than if he had remained a British subject, yet he was a happy man because he was engaged in benefitting his race; in doing something for the children of his neighbors, having none of his own."

On November 15 of the same year, Abraham Lincoln issued an order for "Sabbath Observance" in which he stated he would adopt the words used by Washington in 1776: "At this time of public distress men may find enough to do in the service of God and their country without abandoning themselves to vice and immorality." Lincoln then continued, "The first general order issued by the Father of our Country after the Declaration of Independence indicates the spirit on which our institutions were founded and should ever be defended." He again quoted from Washington: "The General hopes and trusts that every officer and man will endeavor to live and act as becomes a Christian soldier, defending the dearest rights and liberties of his country."