

LINCOLN LORE

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THIS LINCOLN YEAR

An anniversary not only invites one to engage in reminiscences, but it often serves as an inspiration for further achievements.

A review of biographical data which has appeared during the past twenty-five years will reveal that Abraham Lincoln is America's outstanding personality. He continues to grow in favor not only with Americans, but with all men everywhere.

This Lincoln anniversary year should furnish sufficient inspiration to encourage the completion of many projects, which have either been delayed because of wavering interest or retarded because of insufficient enthusiasm to give them momentum.

A list of some of these projects might assist in visualizing the possibilities of this Lincoln year.

A Festival of Patriotism

One of the most lamentable shifts of emphasis in our American life, when observed from the viewpoint of patriotism, is the capture of our national holidays by commercialized sport. The automobile races at Indianapolis and elsewhere have demoralized the Memorial Day services throughout the entire nation. Fourth of July is now a day of double headers, water carnivals, and air races. The greater part of Thanksgiving Day is spent in some bowl or amphitheater or in going to or coming from the scene of gridiron hostilities. The national holidays in spring, summer, and fall, so well distributed through the year, are lost for appeals to the building up of any spirit of patriotism.

There is one last hope, and it comes in the winter. It is not in the observance of a single day but in the setting apart of an interval between the birthdays of our great national heroes, Lincoln and Washington. Year by year greater emphasis is being placed on the observance of these days, and there seems to be a continual overlapping of the celebrations. This is bringing about, during the period from February 12 to February 22, inclusive, what might well be called a Festival of Patriotism.

The schools, churches, patriotic organizations, clubs, etc. are all keenly alive to this opportunity to build up a love for the country and her great benefactors.

With the 200th anniversary of Washington's birthday just over, and the 125th anniversary of Lincoln's birth just dawning, would it not be an opportune time to place greater emphasis on these days which might invite a more general use of this season for patriotic programs.

A Major Radio Broadcast

Radio is presenting some coast to coast programs, which because of their popularity might be called national institutions. There has not appeared as yet, as far as the writer has learned, an outstanding historical series of broadcasts which might be comparable, for instance, to some of the great moving pictures which have visualized epochs in the history of the nation.

Is there not genius enough, among our creators of outstanding broadcasts, to give to the radio audience, during this anniversary year of Lincoln's birth, a radio masterpiece inspired by the dramatic life of the emancipator? Such a broadcast, if released over a coast to coast network, would not only build up much good will for radio, but serve as a lasting memorial to Lincoln, which by electrical transcription might be utilized for subsequent anniversaries of Lincoln's birth.

A Newspaper Biography of Lincoln

The newspaper files of America constitute the most valuable history of the nation. This fact is especially noticeable when one attempts to compile data about

prominent individuals. More has been written about Lincoln than any other American, and, if one would learn all about the details of his life, there is but one exhaustive source, the American press.

The centennial of Lincoln's birth, which was celebrated in 1909, found many of the great daily papers giving over whole sections to the Lincoln story. While there is no way in which a proper division of subject matter might be assigned, it is within the power of the press to present to the American people on the occasion of the 125th anniversary of Lincoln's birth, next February, the most complete biography of the emancipator ever written.

If the papers published in all the states, counties, cities, and towns touched by Lincoln at any time during his life would be willing to confine their Lincoln data to the incidents occurring within their boundaries, and the papers outside these geographical divisions would take special interest in compiling the reminiscences of their citizens who knew the President, a tremendous contribution would be made to Lincolniana.

The Lincoln National Life Foundation would be very glad to co-operate with any newspaper, which would like to engage in such an effort, by supplying leads, and would also be pleased to act as a depository for newspaper biographies of Lincoln which would result from such a comprehensive geographical approach.

The issue of Lincoln Lore for January 8 will contain a list of the places which Abraham Lincoln is known to have visited during his life.

Lincoln Memorial Highway

For the past twenty years Kentucky, Indiana, and Illinois have been more or less engaged in planning a unified road project, which would extend from the birthplace of Abraham Lincoln at Hodgenville, Kentucky, to his burial place at Springfield, Illinois, and pass by the Lincoln cabin home site in Indiana.

Three commissions appointed by the governors of the respective states have submitted their reports, and for the first time it might be said an official route has been established. Much of the Memorial Way is routed over roads already constructed and a Lincoln Memorial Bridge has been built across the Wabash River at Vincennes, Indiana.

The fact that this thoroughfare will serve as an important utility road as well as a memorial highway should hasten its completion and encourage the road commissions of the three interested states to start construction, at least, during this anniversary year.

Educational Emphasis on Lincoln

Outstanding American statesmen have advocated for many years that a place be made in our school curriculum for a brief course on Lincoln.

Biographies of great Americans have had little place in our educational system, except as reference books. Information about Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, and others, has come mostly through indirect sources.

It is to be hoped that at least in Kentucky, Indiana, and Illinois, where Lincoln lived before going to Washington, some initiative may be taken in placing in the program of public instruction a brief course on Lincoln.

Much has been written recently about training our prospective statesmen in a political "West Point." Abraham Lincoln made politics a science and actually put in practice some of the fundamental principles in government. No one had a better grasp on the essential verities in democracy and no statesman was ever motivated by a higher purpose in trying to interpret the Constitution in the light of the country's welfare.