

LINCOLN LORE

Bulletin of the Lincoln National Life Foundation - - - - - Dr. Louis A. Warren, Editor
Published each week by The Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, Fort Wayne, Indiana

Number 734

FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

May 3, 1943

JUVENILE BOOKS ABOUT LINCOLN

There seems to be a revival of interest in the widespread influence which the life and writings of Abraham Lincoln have exerted in other lands. The visit of Madam Chiang Kai-Shek to this country has revealed how deeply Sun Yat Sen, the first president of the China republic, admired Lincoln, and how thoroughly both General Chiang Kai-Shek and his wife are in sympathy with the Lincoln philosophy.

It was not Lincoln as a statesman or philosopher who was first introduced to the people of foreign countries, but Abraham Lincoln, "The Pioneer Boy of the West." The first book about the newly-elected President of the United States to be widely distributed outside of America was not a formal biography, but a juvenile story of Lincoln by William M. Thayer. It appeared in dialect form and traced Lincoln up to the time he left New Salem, Illinois for Springfield, when he was twenty-eight years old. The book was published in 1863 before Lincoln had delivered either the Gettysburg Address or the Second Inaugural, or before he had written the famous letter to the Widow Bixby.

This juvenile publication not only served as a source book for subsequent American authors, but is very widely distributed in other lands allowing it to become the basic source book for stories written about Lincoln by many foreign authors. In some instances it was translated verbatim. Recently a well-known New York bookstore listed eleven rare Lincoln books for sale. Two of the books priced at \$100.00 each were in foreign language, one in Greek and the other in Hawaiian. Both of these books, one published in 1865 and the other in 1869, were translations of Thayer's *Pioneer Boy*. It is the "Pioneer Boy of the West," along with the stories of his later roll of Emancipator, that has largely been responsible for Lincoln's enthusiastic acceptance as an international figure.

Although Thayer's book easily outsold all contemporary Lincoln volumes, very little attention has been paid to the Lincoln juvenile books of today. It is true that four years ago Ingri and Edgar Parin d'Aulaire's *Abraham Lincoln* was awarded the 1939 Caldecott Medal for the most distinguished American picture book for children. Aside from that with the exception of one or two editions by writers of popular books for boys, no emphasis has been given to the rather large number of the Lincoln books written primarily to interest the younger generation.

Juvenile books referred to in this issue of *Lincoln Lore* are largely biographical in character. There are a great many publications of sayings and speeches of Lincoln compiled for use in schools, as selected readings, which do not fall in this plan. There are also many pieces of fiction, where Lincoln is introduced as one of the leading characters, but they are ineligible for mentioning here. Still a third class of literature is eliminated—biographical studies of Lincoln's boyhood for adult reading.

Possibly there are four of the more modern juvenile publications which should be called to the attention of the reader as they are all available as new books and each is of some merit. All of them are for children under high school age. The book by d'Aulaire is a highly colored picture book for smaller children with brief reading text to be read by adults for explanation. The Stevenson volume is especially prepared for children who are beginning to read with some freedom and the illustrations are in silhouette; it contains 186 pages. The most inexpensive book of the four is for children 10 or 12 years old and has beautifully colored illustrations but only 45 pages. Possibly the finest of all the juveniles is by Meadowcroft and is just recently from the press. It is written for children in later childhood or the junior high school period, and contains

189 pages. Fuller titles of all these books are to be found in the following list:

Juvenile Books About Lincoln

- Aitken, W. Francis: *The Boys' Life of Greatheart Lincoln, the Martyr President.*
- Alger, Horatio, Jr.: *Abraham Lincoln the Backwoods Boy, or How a Young Rail-Splitter Became President.*
- Babcock, Bernie: *Little Abe Lincoln.*
- Bacheller, Irving: *A Boy for the Ages.*
- Bailey, Bernadine: *Abe Lincoln's Other Mother.*
- Barton, William E.: *The Great Good Man, How the Boy Lincoln Grew to Manhood, and Achieved Immortality.*
- Britt, Albert: *Abraham Lincoln for Boys and Girls.*
- Brooks, Elbridge S.: *The True Story of Abraham Lincoln, the American, Told for Boys and Girls.*
- Brooks, Noah: *Abraham Lincoln, A Biography for Young People.*
- Butterworth, Hezekiah: *In the Boyhood of Lincoln, A Tale of the Tunker Schoolmaster and the Times of Black Hawk.*
- Courtney, Calista McCabe: *Abraham Lincoln.*
- Cravens, Frances: *The Story of Lincoln for Children.*
- d'Aulaire, Ingri: *Abraham Lincoln.*
- Gore, J. Rogers: *The Boyhood of Abraham Lincoln.*
- Gordy, Wilbur F.: *Abraham Lincoln.*
- Gray, William Cunningham: *Life of Abraham Lincoln for the Young Man and the Sabbath School.*
- Hamilton, Mary A.: *The Story of Abraham Lincoln, The Children's Heroes Series.*
- McSpadden, J. Walker: *The Story of Abraham Lincoln.*
- Madison, Lucy Foster: *Lincoln.*
- Meadowcroft, Enid LaMonte: *Abraham Lincoln.*
- Moore, Charles W.: *The Life of Abraham Lincoln for Boys and Girls.*
- Mudge, Z. A.: *The Forest Boy, a Sketch of the Life of Abraham Lincoln.*
- Nicholay, Helen: *The Boys Life of Abraham Lincoln.*
- Putnam, Harriet: *The Life of Abraham Lincoln for Young Folks told in Words of one Syllable.*
- Putnam, M. Louise: *The Children's Life of Abraham Lincoln.*
- Rutherford, W. G.: *Abraham Lincoln, Plowboy, Statesman, Patriot.*
- Sandburg, Carl: *Abe Lincoln Grows Up.*
- Sheppard, Robert D.: *Abraham Lincoln, a Character Sketch.*
- Sparhawk, Frances Campbell: *A Life of Lincoln for Boys.*
- Stevenson, Augusta: *Abe Lincoln, Frontier Boy.*
- Stoddard, W. O.: *The Boy Lincoln.*
- Tarbell, Ida M.: *Boy Scout's Life of Lincoln.*
- Thayer, W. M.: *The Pioneer Boy and How He Became President.*
- Whipple, Wayne: *The Story of Young Abraham Lincoln.*
- Yeaton, Clyde E.: *Boy of the Backwoods.*