

LINCOLN LORE

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ABRAHAM LINCOLN AND MARY TODD LINCOLN IN STATUARY

An heroic statue of Abraham and Mary Todd Lincoln was dedicated at Racine, Wisconsin, on July 4, 1943. It is said to be "The first monument to be dedicated to a President of the United States and his wife," and it is the first attempt to portray Mrs. Lincoln in sculptural art.

The Donor

It seems appropriate that a woman should be the donor of this unique statue in which the figure of Mrs. Lincoln, in some respects, overshadows the likeness of her husband. There lived in Racine for many years a woman named Miss Lena Rosewall, who became a great admirer of the martyred President. In her casual reading of the Lincoln story she had come to believe that Mrs. Lincoln never was given proper credit for the part she played in the development of President Lincoln.

Miss Rosewall died on May 9, 1935 and her entire estate of about \$20,000 was made the basis of a bequest which designated that a statue of Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln be created and presented to the city of Racine. The provisions of the will were fully consummated when Mayor Francis H. Wendt received the statue on behalf of the city of Racine. The law firm of Potter and Smith were executors for the estate and superintended the carrying out of the bequest.

The Sculptor

This new creation of Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln in stone is the work of Frederick C. Hibbard, of Chicago. While it is to be regretted that funds were not sufficient, and the times not propitious, to allow the statue to be cast in bronze, however, many of Mr. Hibbard's best works have been done in stone. This is the sculptor's first heroic study of Lincoln, although he has done many of Lincoln's contemporaries, including a statue of Jefferson Davis, erected at Frankfort, Kentucky, and one of Ulysses S. Grant, at Vicksburg, Mississippi.

The Statue

The sculptor has presented a rather pleasing portrait of Mrs. Lincoln, using as a study for her attire, the dress worn at the First Inaugural; in fact, the work is an attempt to portray Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln at the time they entered the White House, and before the cares of the administration began to tell in the features of both the President and his wife.

Flowers and jewelry which contributed to the grandeur of Mrs. Lincoln's apparel are very much in evidence. While it may not be difficult to chisel in granite a pioneer woman in

frontier garb, it is a task for a master to create an acceptable figure in formal evening dress, out of cold, hard stone.

The sculptor has given us a submissive husband in Mr. Lincoln and his seated position beside his wife, so short of stature, is just as Mary would have it. There was never any photograph taken of Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln in a group; if there had been we are inclined to believe that the pose prepared by Mr. Hibbard would not be objectional to either of them.

Historical Significance

It was the intention of the sculptor and the executor of the Rosewall es-

fortunate, indeed, that the new Mary Lincoln book, by Anne Colver, came from the press preliminary to the dedication of the statue, and it contributed much to the interest of this new artistic interpretation of Mrs. Lincoln and her husband.

Location

The location of the statue is in East Park and faces Main Street, along which Mrs. Lincoln often walked in 1869, when for a brief time she was a resident of Racine. It would appear that in this city she found some rest and quiet, and the park entirely surrounded by private homes is all that could be desired for the atmosphere of a statue which emphasizes the domestic phase of the Lincoln story.

Among the letters of Mary Lincoln which have been preserved is one written from Racine on June 30, 1869, to Mrs. Atwood. Her reaction to Racine is well set forth in this paragraph.

"I find the house where I am staying very neat, clean, and everyone anxious to please. I have a parlor and bedroom fronting Lake Michigan and I find the air very refreshing. I may probably remain here some weeks. I am finding the rest very beneficial to me . . . The walks here are shady and very pleasant. Each morning I have walked two miles . . ."

The letter also tells of her visit to Racine College which she thought very impressive, situated on the shores of the lake. She contemplated sending Tad to school here and commented, "Everything is beautiful and comfortable—yet how could I, who have been deprived of so much and have so little left to love, be separated from my precious child."

Racine seems to be one place where no incidents occurred to disturb the troubled mind of the widow Mary Lincoln, and students of the Lincoln saga, who find it convenient to visit this new shrine, will be invited by the very environment surrounding the statue, to spend a few moments in meditation on the life and works of Abraham and Mary Todd Lincoln.

This new monument is not the only Lincoln memorial in Racine, as there is an heroic bronze statue of the President situated on a plot at the intersection of State, Summit, and Hamilton Streets. It is a replica of the statue by Van Den Bergen at Clinton, Illinois, although a plate on the Racine statue states it was done by Volk. This bronze study was sponsored by the Lincoln Monument Association and financed by popular subscriptions and special gifts from graduates of the Lincoln school. It was dedicated February 12, 1934.

STATUE DEDICATION PROGRAM

Dr. John I. Meck.....	Presiding
Musical Selections.....	2:00-2:30
Invocation.....	Reverend Raymond A. Parr
Address—"The Bequeather".....	Honorable Louis A. Potter
Dedicatory Address.....	Dr. Louis A. Warren
Unveiling of Monument.....	Emil C. Wiegand
Presentation of Monument to City of Racine, Wisconsin.....	Honorable William H. Smith, Executor
Acceptance Address.....	Honorable Francis H. Wendt, Mayor
Address.....	Frederick C. Hibbard, Sculptor
Memorial Address.....	Dr. Clarence Seidenspinner
Musical Selection.....	"Star Spangled Banner"

tate to have the statue ready for dedication on November 4th, 1942, the 100th anniversary of the marriage of Abraham Lincoln and Mary Todd, but delay in the completion of the statue caused the postponement of the event until July 4, 1943. This date, however, falls within the 100th anniversary year, so something of the centennial aspect was contributed to the dedication atmosphere. Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln lived together over twenty-two years and the part she played in the making of Mr. Lincoln is here memorialized in a permanent form for the first time.

Those who had any part in the creation of the statue and the planning for its final acceptance by the city of Racine will be greatly disappointed if its presence does not keep continually in the foreground the need of a more sympathetic study of Mrs. Lincoln. It is