

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 831

FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

March 12, 1945

THE NEW LINCOLN BIBLIOGRAPHY

The new Lincoln bibliography, by Jay Monaghan, which has just come from the press, represents a tremendous amount of labor, and every Lincoln student should feel under great obligation to the compiler for making possible this exhaustive list of books and pamphlets relating directly to Abraham Lincoln.

The Illinois State Historical Library should also come in for a large share of the credit in bringing out the two-volume work, as it was through the planning of the library trustees that Mr. Monaghan's services were made available for this particular task.

Possibly the most deeply appreciated achievement in relation to the publishing of the Bibliography is the keeping of the price within range of the great numbers of Lincoln students, who have, heretofore, found it impossible to acquire any of the previous books in this field, because of limited editions or prohibitive costs. Coming at a time when one might anticipate an inflated value, the privilege of acquiring two volumes of valuable data, containing more than 500 pages each, for the total sum of \$5.00, seems almost incredible.

It would be difficult to exaggerate the importance of the work, especially from the viewpoint of the Lincoln authors of the future. The chronological arrangement must have been anticipated more especially for their needs, as it will now be possible, without too much tireless research, to discover the time element in the presentation of facts and fables as they have made their appearance in the Lincoln story. This approach will allow a more careful system of annotating future books and a proper credit for discoveries already made.

From the viewpoint of the collector, who has looked forward to the appearance of the Monaghan Bibliography with more interest than any other person, there may not be so enthusiastic a reception of the chronological method of arrangement, although the index used with an intelligent understanding of its purpose, may allow one to locate almost immediately the descriptive citation under its proper chronological sequence.

For the past twelve years *Lincoln Lore* has been publishing each quarter an Accumulative Bibliography of new Lincoln items, using a chronological system of arrangement. It is needless to say that the approximately 1000 items listed by the Foundation in its 1930-1939 check list, constituting the index for the accumulative bibliography, was of great help to the compilers of the new bibliography. The large number of books recorded during that decade totals nearly as many items as appeared in the Daniel Fish work.

One of the most interesting questions about the Bibliography which confronted the collector of Lincolniana was the type of measuring rule by which the new Bibliography was to include or exclude Lincoln items. There seems to be no drastic change in the new requirements from the rules laid down by Fish in his early attempt to classify authentic Lincolniana. In some few instances the rules are more liberal than in Fish and in others classifications more strict, but all in all very little change is noted.

It is very doubtful that the Bibliography Committee of the Lincoln Foundation Advisory Group will find it necessary to change their present method of selecting items to be in harmony with the requirements of the new Bibliography. This viewpoint is supported by the statement of the compiler, Mr. Monaghan, who affirms that "The ma-

jority of the discarded titles (in Fish, Oakleaf, and Starr) are broadsides, newspapers, supplements, excerpts from magazines, irrelevant accounts such as biographies of Douglass, etc." None of these discarded items, with the possible exception of some few magazine excerpts, have been accepted heretofore by the Advisory Group Bibliography Committee.

One very valuable departure from the Fish, Oakleaf, and Starr plan, already adopted by the Accumulative Bibliography, is the eliminating of the name Lincoln as an author when possible, and the substituting the name of compiler or editor. This relieves much confusion. The grouping of all items in foreign tongue in one section is also an improvement over other bibliographies, and will create a new interest in foreign publications.

Another added feature of Mr. Monaghan's work is the citing of various libraries in which the listed Lincoln items can be found. Of course, as a working basis for the Bibliography the citation, IHI, indicating the Illinois State Historical Library, is most often observed, but forty-three other libraries are noted which also have items not found in the Illinois collection.

Although the preliminary pages, which display the symbols used in citing where the items listed in the Bibliography can be found, may not have been published as a directory of the larger collections of Lincolniana, most of the outstanding institutional collections are recorded. Of the forty-four Lincoln libraries listed, thirty are in institutions, while the remaining fourteen personal libraries are among the best known collections of Lincoln books and pamphlets in private hands.

There are several private collections, however, not named, which rank in size and importance along with many of those mentioned. It would have been physically impossible for Mr. Monaghan to have visited all who may have outstanding collections. Possibly the two most noticeable groups among the omissions in this directory are the Detroit "Big Four," Howard, Jones, Springer, and Starr, and four well-known Boston collectors—Bullard, Rich, Simmons, and Stone.

As important as the new Bibliography will prove to be, it is anticipated it will not replace the works of Fish, Oakleaf, Starr and the Foundation bibliographies, but will supplement them. A valuable help has been made available in checking the first three of the former bibliographies against the new work, by noting the identification numbers. There have been some expressions of regret that the same treatment was not given to the items appearing in the *Accumulative Bibliography*, published by the Foundation, which would have allowed a complete comparative study up to the year 1940 with the exception of the 1926-1929 period.

Mr. Monaghan, as indicated in the introduction of the book, is aware that the Bibliography is not complete, and admits the physical impossibility of making it so. His work, however, will contribute more to the bringing out of untabulated items than any other former effort, and he will not be surprised in having called to his attention many numbers eligible for inclusion in Lincolniana which have escaped him.

All Lincoln students and collectors will join in congratulating Mr. Monaghan on his most helpful publication, which marks another milestone in the history of Lincoln book compilations.