

# LINCOLN LORE

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## THE SPRINGFIELD JUBILEE

There was great rejoicing in Springfield, Illinois upon the election of Abraham Lincoln and the people immediately began preparing for a grand celebration which was designated as "The Springfield Jubilee." The assembly was held at The Wigwam on Tuesday evening, November 20 with many prominent guests. The principle speaker on the occasion was the newly elected senator, Lyman Trumbull, and among the other orators who contributed to the program was Richard Yates, the governor-elect of the state of Illinois.

Apparently it is not known among bibliographers and Lincoln students in general that the speech of Richard Yates on that occasion was put in print, and the discovery of a copy of the pamphlet becomes at once an important and valuable contribution to early Lincolniana. The recent acquisition of the rarity by the Foundation allows *Lincoln Lore* to share with its readers some of the most interesting paragraphs of the six page address, which dwells almost exclusively upon the Lincoln victory and the qualifications of the newly elected President to carry the nation safely through the "Impending Crisis." One episode related by the speaker gives an interesting recital of the political rebirth of Lincoln in 1854 which started him on the road to the presidency.

The caption title of the pamphlet, is "Speech/of/Hon. Richard Yates, Delivered in the Wigwam, at the Springfield/Jubilee, November 20, 1860." The type is set in double columns and there are six numbered pages of printed text, followed by two blank pages. There is no indication as to where it was printed, but it was issued as a contemporary printing. A few excerpts are presented:

"Fellow Citizens:

"We have had a splendid triumph, and we have met to rejoice over it. We rejoice, not with vindictive triumph over our opponents, but in the success of principle. We desire not to make them feel bad, but for ourselves to feel glad. Say no hard things against them, for their cup is full and running over. (Laughter.) We rejoice because we have had a solemn and deliberate verdict of the American people in favor of the great, the undying principle of human liberty. (Applause).

"Our victory is thorough, ample, complete. Why, we have carried the Legislature, the State, and the Nation. (Applause). Up to '58, Illinois was the banner State of Democracy, and rolled up her majorities by uncounted thousands. In '58 we carried the popular vote for Lincoln—but by reason of unfair apportionment, our opponents had the Legislature; but now, in spite of unfair apportionment and gerrymandered districts, we have carried both branches of the Legislature. (Applause.)

". . . When I come to speak of the triumph of our own Lincoln, I find prose rather dry and I exclaim with the poet:

"Now is the winter of our discontent  
Made glorious summer by this sun of York,  
And all the clouds that lower'd upon our house  
In the deep bosom of the ocean buried."

"All New England has spoken. The old Keystone gives her 80,000. New York has spoken with a voice louder than the cataract which thunders upon her western border. Ohio, the first born of the Ordinance of '87, and the whole of our young but giant North West has rolled up her accumulated thousands for Republican liberty and the child of the people, Illinois' great and gallant son, Abraham Lincoln. (Long continued applause.)

". . . And we will rejoice because he is one of our boys. ('That's so! That's so!') And though he is to go to the White House, that shining height of human power,

though you were to bind his brow with all the laurels of a Roman conqueror, or crown him with a diadem, yet, for his humble neighbor, he would ever have a warm heart and a cordial hand. (Loud applause).

". . . Now the Republican party was born at 4 o'clock, on the 5th day of March, 1854, when the Kansas Nebraska Bill, repealing the Missouri Compromise, passed the Senate. ('That's so! That's so!') I know it's so, for I was there, and though it is now only a six year old, yet all will admit what the thunder of the ballot-box has proclaimed that it is this day and hour the mightiest party upon the continent of North America. (Applause).

"I refer to this history for this purpose: I had spoken and voted against the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, and when on my return home at the close of the long session of 1854, having published a card that I would not be a candidate for re-election, I was met at the depot in Springfield by Mr. Lincoln. He said I had taken the right course on this question, and though he could not promise me success in a district so largely against us, yet he hoped for the sake of the principle, I would run, ('That's just like Old Abe,') and if I would, he would take the stump in my behalf. I remember his earnestness, and so deeply did he impress me that the question was one worthy of our noblest efforts whether in victory or defeat, that I consented. From the circumstances I believe that the only consideration with Mr. Lincoln was a disinterested and patriotic desire for the success of correct principle. Little did he or I then dream that for the advocacy of that principle he was to be made President of the greatest nation on earth, and his humble friend at the depot, Governor of one of the greatest Commonwealths of that nation. (Prolonged applause.) These were the circumstances under which Mr. Lincoln entered upon his great career, dreaming of no reward, save the greatest reward of the true patriot, the consciousness of duty performed to his country—he wielded his ponderous logic with such tremendous effect as to make his antagonists quail before him—he afterwards met the great captain of the pro-slavery Democracy in the grandest debates which ever occurred in the whole history of political controversy, and triumphed over him in every contest; his enunciations of Republican truths, his statesmanlike comprehension and exposition of the true policy of the country upon the most complicated of all subjects brought him conspicuously before the people; the story of his plain and simple life struck deep into the popular heart till there was a universal conviction among the people, and they felt it in their heart of hearts that Abraham Lincoln was the man for the highest office within their gift. (Loud applause.) . . .

"I cannot speak for Mr. Lincoln, nor do I know the emergencies he has to meet, but I have every confidence in his ability to meet, whatever crisis may come. I have known him too long and too well to doubt either his prudence or his courage. I know that every desire of his heart is for peace, but, if occasion demands, South Carolina will find in him the true metal, the fire and flint, the pluck of Old Hickory himself. (Tremendous applause.) I would disdain to utter the words of the mere political braggart, but, then, I do say, that while the most abundant caution should be used and the olive branch of peace and conciliation should be extended, yet the election of a President by a majority of the people is no excuse for treason, and that all the power of the Government should be brought to bear to crush it out wherever it shall rear its unsightly head. (Long and loud applause)."