

LINCOLN LORE

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THE NANCY HANKS LINCOLN MEMORIAL

October 5th marks the anniversary of Lincoln's Mother's death and the effort to properly preserve and memorialize her burial place and the surrounding acres is now approaching completion. With the exception of a few walks to be laid, some trees and shrubbery to be replaced and an heroic oil painting to be hung over the massive fireplace in the Nancy Hanks Hall, a beautification program which has been in progress for twenty years is ready for final inspection.

Direct supervision of the Nancy Hanks burial ground was vested in the Department of Conservation of the State of Indiana in 1825. This group was ably supported by the Indiana Lincoln Union, a citizen's committee appointed by the governor, with the objective before them to adequately recognize by a suitable memorial, the cabin site where Abraham Lincoln lived for fourteen years and the adjacent land where his mother was buried.

The editor of Lincoln Lore having been directly or indirectly associated with the project from its very beginning has watched its development with the keenest interest, and the most critical observer must admit that an impressive tribute has been paid to the mother of Lincoln. The mother motif has been the dominant element in the planning of the memorial from the time the project first came under the guiding influence of the brilliant and sympathetic conservator, the late Richard Lieber.

By far the most impressive spot on the reservation, regardless of all that has been done to create a memorial atmosphere, is the grave of Mrs. Lincoln with its simple but beautiful headstone erected in 1879 by P. E. Studebaker, "a friend of her martyred son."

One is better prepared to appreciate the atmosphere of this sacred spot, however, by a marker standing at the entrance of the impressive allee which bears this inscription:

YOU ARE FACING THE WOODED KNOWL ON WHICH SLEEPS NANCY HANKS LINCOLN, MOTHER OF THE PRESIDENT WHO LIVED IN THIS HOOSIER ENVIRONMENT DURING THE FORMATIVE YEARS OF HIS LIFE FROM 1816 TO 1830.

BEYOND, TO THE NORTH, IS MARKED THE SITE OF THE HUMBLE LOG CABIN WHERE SHE LED HIM FOR A LITTLE WHILE ALONG THE PATH TO GREATNESS.

The memorial edifice, located at the end of the allee is impressive indeed. It consists of two low buildings connected by a cloister with a memorial court in the center. The stone used in these buildings is Indiana limestone and sandstone and the wood is native timber. The companion structures externally are similar in design but the interiors are in severe contrast. The Abraham Lincoln Hall presents a formal auditorium with white benches of colonial influence. The Nancy Hanks Hall displays a huge living room with its mammoth fireplace and furnishing appropriately designed and arranged.

The covered cloistered walk which connects the two halls provides through its apertures, in the form of doors or windows, a vista of the wooded area which was the play-ground of Abraham Lincoln. The walls of the cloistered walk which face the court have been ornamented by the use of five sculptured panels which depict

as many periods in Lincoln history. The Kentucky panel—"Childhood Years," The Indiana panel—"Boyhood Days," The Illinois panel—"Political Ascendency," Washington panel—"Command," and the last, The Apotheosis—"and now he belongs to the ages."

In the nine rectangular spaces over the respective panels and apertures, there have been inscribed these axioms from Lincoln's own writings and speeches. The quotations follow in the clock-wise order in which they appear:

AND HAVING THUS CHOSEN OUR COURSE,
WITHOUT GUILF AND WITH PURE PURPOSE,
LET US RENEW OUR TRUST IN GOD.

Message to Congress, July 4, 1861.

WE MUST NOT BE ENEMIES. THOUGH
PASSION MAY HAVE STRAINED, IT MUST
NOT BREAK OUR BONDS OF AFFECTION.

First Inaugural Address, March 4, 1861.

LABOR IS THE GREAT SOURCE FROM
WHICH NEARLY ALL, IF NOT ALL, HUMAN
COMFORTS AND NECESSITIES ARE DRAWN.

Address at Cincinnati, Sept. 17, 1859.

SURELY EACH MAN HAS AS STRONG A
MOTIVE NOW TO PRESERVE OUR LIBERTIES
AS EACH HAD THEN TO ESTABLISH THEM.

Message to Congress, July 4, 1861.

AND THAT GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE
BY THE PEOPLE, AND FOR THE PEOPLE,
SHALL NOT PERISH FROM THE EARTH.

Address at Gettysburg, Nov. 16, 1863.

HAVE FAITH THAT RIGHT MAKES MIGHT, AND
IN THAT FAITH, LET US, TO THE END, DARE
TO DO OUR DUTY AS WE UNDERSTAND IT.

Address at Cooper Union, Feb. 27, 1860.

IT WILL HAVE BEEN PROVED THAT AMONG
FREE MEN THERE CAN BE NO SUCCESSFUL
APPEAL FROM THE BALLOT TO THE BULLET

Letter to James C. Conkling, Aug. 26, 1863.

TO DO ALL WHICH MAY ACHIEVE AND
CHERISH A JUST AND LASTING PEACE
AMONG OURSELVES AND WITH ALL NATIONS.

Second Inaugural Address, March 4, 1865.

I HOLD THAT, IN CONTEMPLATION OF
UNIVERSAL LAW, AND OF THE CONSTITUTION,
THE UNION OF THESE STATES IS PERPETUAL.

First Inaugural Address, March 4, 1861.