

# LINCOLN LORE

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## CLERGYMEN ASSOCIATED WITH LINCOLN

*Lincoln and the Preachers* by Edgar DeWitt Jones. Cloth, Illustrated, 203 pages, Harpers Brothers, 49 East 33rd St., New York. Price \$2.50.

Ponderous volumes are the order of the day, yet there is something to say in favor of a small book, such as *Lincoln and the Preachers*. Long dissertations seem to be the writers' favorite form of script in this era. Nevertheless, a word of commendation should be forthcoming for an essayist, Edgar DeWitt Jones, author of the above mentioned book. Even the introduction to the volume by William H. Townsend is noteworthy in that it has the quality of allure-ment so often lacking in more lengthy presentations. For instance, Mr. Townsend relates how Mr. Jones, like Joseph of biblical lore, "dreamed a dream" that he visited a bank to borrow a sum of money. The banker, an acquaintance of the author, requiring a second signature, suggested to Mr. Jones that inasmuch as Abraham Lincoln appeared to be his personal friend that he would probably sign with him. By dream transportation—faster than a jet plane—Mr. Jones was conveyed from Detroit to Springfield, Illinois, and entered the office of Lincoln and Herndon. Here he was greeted by Mr. Lincoln who asked what he might do for him. Upon hearing Mr. Jones' request Mr. Lincoln said, "Let me have the note." Just as the note was handed to Lincoln, Mr. Jones awakened. Although he failed to get a valuable autograph for his collection of Lincolniana, Mr. Townsend suggests: "In just a minute more we would have known whether or not Mr. Jones' credit was good with Abraham Lincoln."

Some of the essays in the book take the form of memoirs at which type of writing Dr. Jones is at his best—witness his autobiographical sketches published a short time ago in the *Christian Evangelist*. His residence at Bloomington, Illinois, placed him in a community where Lincoln's very closest associates had lived, and where there were then still living a half a dozen men who had known the President in the circuit riding days.

Dr. Jones, a former president of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, approaches the task of presenting the various ministerial candidates for recognition in the text, with the same caution as if he were presiding at a meeting of the

Federal Council. All the denominations must be recognized without a shade of partiality.

The chapter on Pioneer Preachers placed the emphasis on the Baptists with whom Lincoln's parents were affiliated in the Kentucky and Indiana days. He rightfully stresses the influence of these exhorters of the wilderness over Abraham Lincoln during the youth's impressionable, formative years.

Under the caption "Two Gentlemen of the Cloth" two Presbyterians emerge, each having the honor of serving as ministers of the Lincoln family—Rev. James Smith, for five years in Springfield, Illinois, and Rev. Phineas D. Gurley, for five years in Washington. An exhaustive theological discussion entitled "The Christian's Defense" by Dr. Smith came

### LOUIS A. WARREN'S 1949 SPEAKING ITINERARY

The speaking itineraries of the editor of *Lincoln Lore* are so arranged that over a period of three years nearly every large city in the United States is visited. The twenty-first annual trip in 1949 is largely confined to eastern states. Program committees desiring to schedule a speech by Dr. Warren should contact the office of the Lincoln National Life Insurance Company in the city where the address is planned. No remuneration is accepted for this service. The cities where Dr. Warren can be reached and the dates he will be accessible follow:

Louisville, Ky., January 18, 19;  
Charleston, West Va., January 20, 21;  
Miami, Fla., January 24-26;  
Jacksonville, Fla., January 27, 28;  
Charlotte, N. C., January 30, 31;  
Raleigh, N. C., February 1, 2;  
Norfolk, Va., February 3-8;  
Washington, D. C., February 9-12;  
Baltimore, Md., February 14-17;  
Philadelphia, Pa., February 18-21;  
Newark, N. J., February 22, 23;  
Hartford, Conn., February 24, 25;  
Providence, R. I., February 28, March 1;  
Boston, Mass., March 2, 3;  
Worcester, Mass., March 4;  
Pittston, Pa., March 7, 8;  
Pittsburgh, Pa., March 9-11;  
Akron, Ohio, March 14, 15;  
Cleveland, Ohio, March 16-18.

under Lincoln's scrutiny, and it was Dr. Gurley who offered the final prayer at the closing of the funeral rites of Lincoln at Springfield.

The Methodists have their day in two chapters, as the two clergymen representing this faith could not well be introduced in any dual presentation. One, Peter Cartwright, "son of Thunder" was politically opposed to Lincoln. The other, Bishop Matthew Simpson, was Lincoln's most influential political ally among the clergy. It was Bishop Simpson who preached the final Lincoln funeral oration at Springfield.

In the Frank W. Howes Memorial at the Garrett Biblical Institute in Evanston, Illinois, emphasis has been placed on the beauty and historical significance of the stained glass windows, seventeen in number. The only one representing the nineteenth century portrays President Lincoln asking Bishop Simpson "to pray for the nation."

Each of the two Congregational ministers featured also require a chapter of his own. While Rev. Owen Lovejoy and Rev. Henry Ward Beecher saw eye to eye on the slavery question, their congregations, one at Princeton, Illinois, and the other in Brooklyn, New York, were as widely separated in many other respects as they were geographically.

The church body with which Dr. Jones is affiliated, The Disciples of Christ, is not overlooked, as the chapter on the Reverend Benjamin Smith presents an almost unknown episode in the religious experience of Abraham Lincoln. For good measure, the memoirs of Dr. Jones himself at Bloomington and also at Detroit, might be credited to this religious body.

True to the spirit of Dr. Jones' broad outlook in the field of Religion, the Catholic Church, represented by Bishop John J. Hughes, and the Jewish faith, with the spokesman Dr. Isaac Markens, are not overlooked.

Special recognition is given to Rev. Dr. Robert J. Breckenridge and there also appears in the appendix a "Who's Who of the Preachers in the Lincoln story." The book is brought to an appropriate conclusion with the sermon preached by Henry Ward Beecher in Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, New York, Sunday morning, February 20, 1860, when Abraham Lincoln was one of his attentive listeners.