

LINCOLN LORE

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THE LINCOLN BOOK OF THE YEAR—1950

Nineteen hundred and forty-nine was a banner year for books about Abraham Lincoln. More cloth bound volumes featuring him came from the press during this period than have appeared during any other year since the Lincoln Centenary, save two years, 1940 and 1943. All together Lincoln books by sixteen different authors were offered to the public.

The large field of eligible publications reviewed gives to Dr. Kenneth P. Williams, author of the two volume work, *Lincoln Finds a General* an added distinction for writing the "Lincoln Book of the Year," selected as such by the Foundation advisory group. Highly commendable also from the viewpoint of the group is Helen Nicolay's *Secretary*. Inasmuch as Dr. Williams' book was reviewed in *Lincoln Lore* No. 1074 and Miss Nicolay's work in *Lincoln Lore* No. 1061, brief comments only about these two books will appear in this issue.

As a matter of record it might be of interest to note the number of cloth bound books on Abraham Lincoln which have appeared each year since 1909. The list follows: 1910, 11; 1911, 5; 1912, 5; 1913, 7; 1914, 8; 1915, 7; 1916, 8; 1917, 7; 1918, 8; 1919, 7; 1920, 11; 1921, 4; 1922, 6; 1923, 11; 1924, 4; 1925, 11; 1926, 13; 1927, 10; 1928, 11; 1929, 10; 1930, 12; 1931, 7; 1932, 9; 1933, 7; 1934, 6; 1935, 4; 1936, 8; 1937, 4; 1938, 6; 1939, 11; 1940, 18; 1941, 13; 1942, 11; 1943, 20; 1944, 12; 1945, 12; 1946, 12; 1947, 14; 1948, 8; 1949, 16.

Breaking down this compilation into decades we find the following totals 1910-1919, 73; 1920-1929, 91; 1930-1939, 74; 1940-1949, 136. The slight falling off in the thirties over the new publications in the twenties might now show even the variation submitted if we had an accurate number of the many reprints which came from the presses in that period.

The publication of a Cumulative Bibliography each quarter for twenty years has allowed the editor of *Lincoln Lore* to observe with some degree of interest the growing number of Lincoln books which continue to come from the publishers. There is no indication that the interest in Lincoln is abating, although there may be a few less pamphlets printed now than there were in the years just preceding the war. Already this year during the first two weeks of January three Lincoln books are either in hand or on the presses.

BARINGER, WILLIAM E. *Lincoln's Vandalia*

One of the real gaps in Lincoln biography has been filled by the publication of the book which recreates the environment of the state capitol of Illinois during Lincoln's early years in the Legislature. A better understanding of Lincoln's development as a political leader is now possible.

CUTHBERT, NORMA A. *Lincoln and the Baltimore Plot, 1861*

The gathering and publication of important sources is a significant contribution towards the final solution of any controversial subject. The contents of the Pinkerton record, and correspondence of many close friends of Lincoln, bearing on the alleged plot to assassinate Lincoln at Baltimore on his way to the inauguration, is here set forth.

HUBBARD, FREEMAN H. *Vinnie Ream and Mr. Lincoln*

There have been created in America and Europe seventy-four bronze studies and at least fifteen heroic stone statues of Lincoln. Vinnie Ream and Mr. Lincoln appear as characters in a historical novel featuring the modeling in stone of the President from Life by Vinnie Ream when she was but sixteen years old.

LE SUER, MERIDEL *Nancy Hanks of Wilderness Road*
The Lincoln Story oriented in the great American Wilderness at the beginning of the nineteenth century has inspired this book for children. As the title implies it is confined to the Mother and Son relationship which culminates with the death of Nancy Hanks Lincoln, the mother, when Abraham was but nine years old.

MACARTNEY, CLARENCE E. *Lincoln and the Bible*
One who is familiar with the writings of Abraham Lincoln is conscious of the biblical tone of his diction. Dr. Macartney, a student of the Bible, points out that "Lincoln's use of the Bible reveals his knowledge of its words, his reverence for its teachings."

NICOLAY, HELEN *Lincoln's Secretary*
A biographical presentation of John G. Nicolay, private secretary of Abraham Lincoln. The secretary's daughter, Helen, author of the book, assisted her father in preparing for the press his Lincoln compositions.

PORTER, MARY W. *The Surgeon in Charge*
A compilation of documentary sources which present a biographical background for Surgeon George Loring Porter and his service rendered at the time of the assassination of Abraham Lincoln.

RANDALL, J. G. *Living with Lincoln and Other Essays*
Contributions to newspapers and magazines, regardless of how widely they may be distributed to assure a maximum first reading, may soon become obscure unless given a more permanent format. None of Prof. Randall's essays should be lost to students of Lincolniana and four important ones are preserved under the above mentioned title.

RYAN, EDWARD J. *Comes on Echo on the Breeze*
The historical novel is apparently a modern method of teaching history to those who otherwise, through labored study, would not assimilate such knowledge. Mr. Ryan presents Abraham Lincoln as the central character for development of the story drawn from incidents in the Black Hawk War.

SANDBURG, CARL *Lincoln Collector*
The story of the private collection of Oliver R. Barrett of Chicago. Rich in Lincoln's original writings, documents, manuscripts, human interest ephemera, and profusely illustrated it is a Lincoln source book of permanent value.

STICKELBERGER, RUDOLF *Abraham Lincoln. The Relating of His Life*
A short biography which covers Lincoln's life from birth to death and printed in the Swiss language. Printed at Basel, Switzerland.

WHEARE, K. C. *Abraham Lincoln and the United States*
A series of books appearing in England under the general title "Teach Yourself History Library" now presents a short but complete (chronologically speaking) Life of Lincoln. The sources used which are mentioned in the introduction imply a reliable presentation of the Sixteenth President of the United States.

WILSON, WILLIAM E. *Abe Lincoln of Pigeon Creek*
This is a novel with a foreword and we are pleased to note that the author makes the observation that the book "is a novel, not biography." He further states that it is "an imaginative treatment of facts" of Lincoln's years in Indiana. Much of the data used as sources, however, should be classified as folklore and tradition.

WILLIAMS, KENNETH P. *Lincoln Finds a General*
An objective story of the Civil War covering the period from Sumpter to the Antietam preliminaries. A two volume work by a professor of mathematics with a military background whose lifetime hobby has been a study of the Rebellion.