

LINCOLN LORE

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BOOKS THAT ORIENT THE LINCOLNS

The field of collateral Lincoln literature is greatly diversified and can be expanded to include a vast amount of contemporary data. The emphasis on military history would embrace a collection of books including all the ramifications of the Civil War in which Lincoln was the key figure. Biographies of Lincoln's associates and the men who influence him opens up another almost inexhaustible source. Association books, those that Lincoln read, are in reality collateral volumes. Books that may contain a poem on Lincoln or present some of his stories, compilations which feature lives of the Presidents, great American world figures, etc., United States histories with a chapter or two on the Lincoln era, are illustrative of how widely collateral Lincolniana may be extended.

There is one division especially in the collateral department of the Foundation library which contributes much to an understanding of Lincoln. It is called the Orientation collection. It contains about five hundred cloth bound volumes and a generous compilation of pamphlets. One can immediately anticipate the geographic divisions of this collection which emphasizes the communities where the Lincoln generations lived: Massachusetts, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Kentucky, Indiana, Illinois and, of course, Washington, D. C. This bulletin in no sense approaches a bibliography of this collection but merely mentions a few books which might be considered illustrative of the volumes in this orientation section.

The town of Hingham, Massachusetts is usually considered as the cradle of the American Lincolns and here Samuel Lincoln, the President's first American progenitor, settled shortly after his arrival in America in 1637. The first history of Hingham was written by Solomon Lincoln, Jr., also a descendant of Samuel Lincoln and therefore a distant relative of President Lincoln. The book was entitled *History of the Town of Hingham, Plymouth County, Massachusetts*. It contains 183 pages, was published at Hingham in 1827, 300 copies being printed. A committee of twelve citizens were appointed by the town of Hingham in 1883 to bring out a new history of Hingham and it was completed in 1893 and contained four volumes. George Lincoln, Francis H. Lincoln and Arthur Lincoln were on the committee of twelve and George and Francis wrote most of the text for the massive four volume work.

Monmouth County, New Jersey was the next community where the branch of the Lincoln family in which we are interested resided. A *History of Monmouth and Ocean Counties* were written by Edwin Salter and published in 1890. The author was also a kinsman of Abraham Lincoln, both being descendants of the senior Mordecai Lincoln and Richard Salter, whose children Mordecai Jr. and Hannah Salter were married in Monmouth County. For a later supplemental work: *Historical and Genealogical Miscellany* (volume 4) by John E. Stillwell, published in 1916, is recommended.

We have been unable to discover any of the pioneer Lincolns in Berks County, Pennsylvania who were historically minded. The early arrival of the Lincolns in Pennsylvania and the establishment of new counties during the period they remained there, makes the histories of Philadelphia, Chester, Lancaster and Berks Counties of importance. A helpful volume for the orientation of the Lincolns in Pennsylvania upon their arrival there is *Historic Homes and Institutions and Genealogical and*

Personal Memoirs of Chester and Delaware Counties published in 1904 with Gilbert Cope editing the Chester County data. Apparently the pioneer Abraham Lincoln for whom the President was named was born in what was then Lancaster County and the *Authentic History of Lancaster County* by J. I. Mombert, published in 1869, is recommended.

The Virginia residence of the Lincolns was located in that part of Augusta County which later became Rockingham. *Annals of Augusta County* by Joseph A. Waddell, published in 1886, and several titles by Harry M. Strickler and John W. Wayland are timely. However, we can again pick up the historical urge in the Lincoln and cognate families by commending *Settlers by the Long Grey Trail*, a volume of 666 pages published in 1935. The author was J. Houston Harrison, and Hannah Lincoln, sister of the President's grandfather, married a John Harrison.

Of course, when one refers to Kentucky, John Filson's various contributions should be given first place. However, *Pioneer Life in Kentucky* by Daniel Drake is almost indispensable. The *History of Kentucky* by Lewis Collins is probably the outstanding Kentucky publication of early times. Possibly the most desirable book as it relates directly to the environment of Lincoln's parents is *A History of Elizabethtown, Kentucky* by Samuel Haycraft, written in 1869 but published by the Woman's Club of Elizabethtown, Kentucky in 1921. It is now out of print and difficult to acquire.

Several authors brought out Histories of Indiana during the latter half of the nineteenth century: O. H. Smith in 1858, John B. Dillon in 1859. *Perry County, A History* by Thomas de la Hunt, published in 1916, is the best work on the county where the Lincolns first settled in Indiana. *The Lincoln Home* by Logan Esarey, published by R. E. Banta at Crawfordsville in 1943, and a 1951 contribution, *A Home in the Woods* by Howard Johnson, are valuable source books for recreating the Hoosier atmosphere of the Lincolns.

The Illinois environment of the Lincolns can be restricted to the counties where they resided, although possibly one should mention two of Morris Birkbeck's monographs: *Letters from Illinois* and notes on a *Journey in America*, published in 1818. *History of Macon County* by John W. Smith, published in 1876, and *Decatur and Macon County* by Mabel E. Richmond, published in 1930, should be mentioned. John Carroll Power's *History of the Early Settlers of Sangamon County, Ill.*, published in 1876, and a *Portrait Biographical Album of Sangamon County, Ill.*, published by Chapman Bros., Chicago in 1891, are in point. Featuring the authors claiming family connections with the Lincolns as has been done in Massachusetts, New Jersey and Virginia, we might mention the *History of Illinois from 1778 to 1833 and Life and Times of Ninian Edwards* by his son, Ninian W. Edwards, published at Springfield in 1870. The author was a brother-in-law of Abraham Lincoln. Paul Angle's *Here I Have Lived* is classified under Lincolniana and not considered a collateral volume.

Space will not permit a rather extensive compilation of source books about Washington, D. C. contemporary with Lincoln's day, as well as numerous volumes of a religious nature, which are scattered through the collection.