

LINCOLN LORE

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LINCOLN LORE'S 25TH ANNIVERSARY

There may not be anything very significant about anniversaries of publications as we are seldom reminded of their beginnings and less often contemplate the possibility that some day they might be terminated. It seems timely just now, however, to mention that April 15, 1954, marks the beginning of the second quarter century of *Lincoln Lore's* circulation. The Lincoln National Life Foundation had been operating a little over a year when it was thought advisable to create some medium for releasing little known facts about Abraham Lincoln which were being discovered by the research efforts of the director and his associates. It was so planned that *Lincoln Lore* bulletin number one would be issued in 1929 on April 15, the anniversary day of Lincoln's death. Inasmuch as this date fell on a Monday the publication has since appeared on that day of the week.

The bulletin was first printed in black ink on sheets of white paper 8½" x 11" with the caption "Lincoln Lore" in bold type letters. For several weeks the publication was printed on the company's own presses. The first twenty-five issues consisted of short disconnected items which gave the bulletin the appearance of a clip sheet. The fact that it was printed on one side further supported this conclusion. Later, however, single monographs of 1200 words covered the entire sheet, and the blank reverse page offered space for mounting clippings on the same general subject.

The feasibility of accepting manuscripts by contributors outside the organization was considered during the period when the bulletin was beginning to take its permanent form. While it was realized that variety of subject matter might be more easily attained thereby, it was thought that the limited space available could be utilized to the best advantage by allowing all published data to originate with the editor of the bulletin. This policy has continued through all the years. After *Lincoln Lore* had been in circulation for six months, largely as a trial project, the president of the sponsoring company directed a circular letter to the recipients of the bulletin inquiring whether or not there was a place for such a publication among students of Lincoln and educational institutions. In the issue of January 6, 1930, president Hall reported that the response encouraged the continuation of the bulletin.

With the first copy issued in 1930 several improvements were made in the appearance of the publication. A better grade of paper was used to allow the punching of holes for filing in looseleaf binders. The color of the sheets was changed from white to manila and brown ink was used in printing. A new masthead also appeared bearing a silhouette of the Pickett head of Lincoln which the foundation had acquired in the original bronze. Another change was made in the title design, the letters being made of imitation logs, creating a rustic appearance. The covers used for mailing the bulletin were enlarged so that but two instead of three folds were necessary. Another change was made in the masthead on Jan. 1, 1933. The silhouette was removed from the box and the printed data placed between ruled lines under the caption. Whereas the subject matter previously had been confined to three columns, the new format offered a more varied distribution of type.

One other important change was made with respect to mailing. While originally the copies were sent out each week, a nation-wide government economy request for conserving paper and labor caused the bulletins to be

accumulated and mailed monthly. This was also a saving in time and postage which was in keeping with the distribution of a publication sent gratuitously to a greatly increasing number of recipients.

The original mailing list in 1929 consisted of 359 individuals including authors, students and collectors interested in Abraham Lincoln. Within five years the number of subscribers had increased to 1,117 and at present there are 3,500 persons, 1,000 educational institutions, 500 public libraries, 150 newspapers, or a total of 5,200 recipients of *Lincoln Lore*.

One of the earliest and we believe one of the most important features introduced by the bulletin, was the publishing of an accumulative bibliography of Lincoln books and pamphlets. At the time this project was started in 1929 there was at that time no current methodical listing of new Lincoln publications. It soon appeared convenient to print these listings about the close of each quarter and the plan has been continued through the years. The bibliography of Daniel Fish published in 1906 had noted 1,080 titles. The compilation by Benjamin Oakleaf coming from the press in 1925 numbered 1,576 titles not appearing in Fish. New items about Lincoln published in *Lincoln Lore* from 1929 to 1953 inclusive, containing the name of author, title, descriptive notes, sales price of books when known, and also enumeration in systematic order reaches the total of 2,145 books and pamphlets.

Three other interesting features were introduced in *Lincoln Lore* in 1942, made possible by the assistance of members of the Foundation advisory group; the selection of the "Lincoln Book of the Year," "Best Magazine Article for February," and the "Most Timely Editorial," appearing on February 12. One year later a fourth feature was added to the group; "The Most Significant Cartoon," published in a newspaper on Lincoln's birthday. These projects have increased in interest year by year.

As might be anticipated it was observed at the conclusion of the first series of the publication that an index would be necessary and the last issue of the year is utilized to prepare a person and title index. At the conclusion of the publication of *Lincoln Lore* No. 500 and also No. 1,000 more extensive indexes were prepared. These were separately printed indexes of three parts: Part one, Titles of Bulletins; Part two, Index to Subjects; and Part three, Index to Persons.

Desiring to make a major contribution at this anniversary season which would enhance the usefulness of *Lincoln Lore* as a reference medium for Lincolniana, we have planned to reserve the last two issues of the twenty-five year period for the printing of an exhaustive topical index. This will cover the entire output of 1,305 bulletins.

The index will be in two parts, biographical and memorial. The biographical section will compile data under these division captions: genealogy, history, characteristics, public life, administration, civil war, writings and speeches. The memorial section will group information under: books, literature, pictures, sculpture, places, personnel, foundation and projects. This topical index will serve as a cross reference approach to the contents of *Lincoln Lore* and supplement the annual indexes as well as the general indexes referring to the first 1,000 copies.