

# LINCOLN LORE

Bulletin of the Lincoln National Foundation - - - - - Dr. Louis A. Warren, Editor  
Published each week by The Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, Fort Wayne, Indiana

Number 1379

FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

September 12, 1955

## OUR SPONSOR'S GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY

This year marks the fiftieth anniversary of the Lincoln National Life Insurance Co. which for twenty-seven years has been the sponsor of the Lincoln National Life Foundation and the publisher of *Lincoln Lore*. It seems appropriate to pay a tribute to the early executives responsible for the establishment of the foundation and also note the development of the Abraham Lincoln motif which finally evolved into the present research department.

Three historically minded men, Samuel M. Foster, chairman of the board, Arthur F. Hall, president and Franklin B. Mead, executive vice president were in office in February 1928 when the foundation was conceived. All had some part in the development of the company's interest in Lincoln.

A faded rose-bud in one of the library display cases serves as a transitional exhibit between the living and the memorialized Lincoln. It was removed from the casket of the martyred President when the remains were at Indianapolis enroute to Illinois and presented to the mother of Arthur F. Hall who preserved it and in later years presented it to her son. That Mr. Hall was brought up in a home where Lincoln was greatly admired was undoubtedly a primary factor in his lifetime interest in the Emancipator.

Robert Lincoln learned about the organization of the new insurance company in a letter from Mr. Hall and on August 3, 1905 Robert replied and enclosed a picture of his father which he authorized to be used as the insignia of the company. This was the first of an impressive series of episodes relating to Abraham Lincoln in which the company participated.

Samuel M. Foster, the first president of the Lincoln National Life Insurance Company and later the chairman of the board, was appointed in 1915 by Governor Ralston to the Indiana Historical Commission of which he later became president. He served on the commission for ten years. Only one year after this recognition of Mr. Foster's historical interests, the company launched its first Lincoln project, the erection of a log cabin similar to the one enshrined at Lincoln's birthplace near Hodgenville, Kentucky. As far as we know this was the earliest of several Lincoln memorial cabins which have been erected in this and other counties. Mr. Foster made the official presentation of the cabin to the city of Fort Wayne.

As early as 1920 when plans for a new home office building were being

prepared, the blueprints called for a statue of Abraham Lincoln to stand on the plaza in front of the building. However, when the new structure was occupied in 1923, the Lincoln art work featured was not a bronze statue but a famous bronze plaque by Pickett which the company had recently acquired. It was located in the most prominent place in the foyer of the new building.

The acquisition of the Pickett plaque, an oval 24 x 19 inches, was indirectly responsible for another project, the introduction through the state of Lincoln oratorical contests. Replicas of the plaque were made and

and the 1830 Lincoln migratory routes in the state. Later when the Kentucky, Indiana and Illinois memorial highway commissions were combined in the over-all task, Mr. Hall was made chairman of the joint committee. The printed report of the Indiana commission, a valuable item of Lincolniana, was published under the direction of Mr. Hall.

The Indiana Lincoln Union was organized in 1927 to memorialize the site of the Lincoln home and the grave of Abe's mother in Spencer County. Arthur F. Hall was made a member of the executive committee of the organization and became one of its most ardent supporters. The enthusiasm engendered by this campaign for funds was responsible, in a large measure, for bringing to realization the establishing of the research foundation by the company in February 1928. It was officially dedicated on February 11, 1931 with the Dedication Service at 4:00 p.m., the Lincoln Dinner at 6:00 p.m. and the Lincoln Assembly at 8:00 p.m. Mr. Foster, Mr. Hall and Mr. Mead all had prominent places on the programs of the day.

Some of the out-of-town speakers were Richard Lieber, Director of Indiana Conservation Department; Dr. D. B. Waldo, President of Western Michigan Teachers College; Dr. Otto L. Schmidt, President of Illinois State Historical Society; Dr. Christopher B. Coleman, Director of Indiana Historical Bureau and Dr. Edgar DeWitt Jones, Pastor of Central Woodward Christian Church, Detroit, Michigan.

The most widely publicized Lincoln project which the company ever directed was the dedicatory ceremonies associated with the dedication on Sept. 16, 1932 of the ManSHIP heroic bronze statue "Lincoln the Hoosier Youth". The one hour program was broadcast over the entire red and blue network of the National Broadcasting Company. Messages from President Hoover, the widow of Robert Lincoln and Grace Bedell Billings were read. Distinguished guests on the program were Hon. Arthur M. Hyde, Secretary of Agriculture; Hon. James E. Watson, Senator from Indiana; Dr. Joseph Sizoo, pastor of Lincoln's church at Washington; Daniel C. Beard, National Boy Scout Executive; Dr. Otto L. Schmidt, President Chicago Historical Society; Hon. Logan Hay, President Abraham Lincoln Society; Evans Wollens, President Indiana Historical Society; Ida M. Tarbell, noted Lincoln student; Paul ManSHIP, sculptor; and Benjamin Wistar Morris, architect.

### COMPANY PROJECTS FEATURING LINCOLN

1905, Aug. 3. Robert Lincoln authorized picture of his father to be used as company insignia.

1917. Replica of Lincoln's birthplace cabin erected in Foster Park.

1920. Plans for new home office building provided for statue of Lincoln on plaza.

1923, Sept. 14. Famous bronze head of Lincoln by Pickett acquired.

1927. Lincoln oratorical contests in Indiana high schools sponsored.

1928, February 12. Lincoln National Life Foundation established.

1929, April 15. First copy of *Lincoln Lore* published.

1931, February 11. Formal opening of Foundation library and museum.

1932, Sept. 16. Bronze statue by ManSHIP dedicated in front of home office building.

served as presentation awards. Fifty-one of the ninety-one counties in Indiana participated in this effort. The high school in each county to which the winning orator belonged received one of the Pickett plaques.

When the commission for the Indiana segment of the Lincoln Memorial Highway, reaching from the place of Lincoln's birth in Kentucky to New Salem in Illinois, was selected by the governor. Mr. Hall, who had then become president of Lincoln Life, was appointed chairman of the Indiana group. They laid out both the 1816