

1926

Abraham Lincoln, his spirit lives : an appreciation

George Philip Hambrecht

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarsjunction.msstate.edu/fvw-pamphlets>

Preferred Citation

E457.2 .F262 1926: Abraham Lincoln, his spirit lives : an appreciation, Frank and Virginia Williams Collection of Lincolniana, Mississippi State University Libraries.

This Pamphlet is brought to you for free and open access by the Frank and Virginia Williams Collection of Lincolniana at Scholars Junction. It has been accepted for inclusion in Pamphlets by an authorized administrator of Scholars Junction. For more information, please contact scholcomm@msstate.libanswers.com.

504

ABRAHAM LINCOLN HIS SPIRIT LIVES



AN APPRECIATION

by

George P. Hambrecht
Madison, Wisconsin

ABRAHAM LINCOLN
HIS SPIRIT LIVES



AN APPRECIATION

by

George P. Hambrecht
Madison, Wisconsin
Issued February 12, 1926

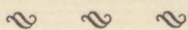


Printed at
The Vocational School
Stoughton, Wisconsin

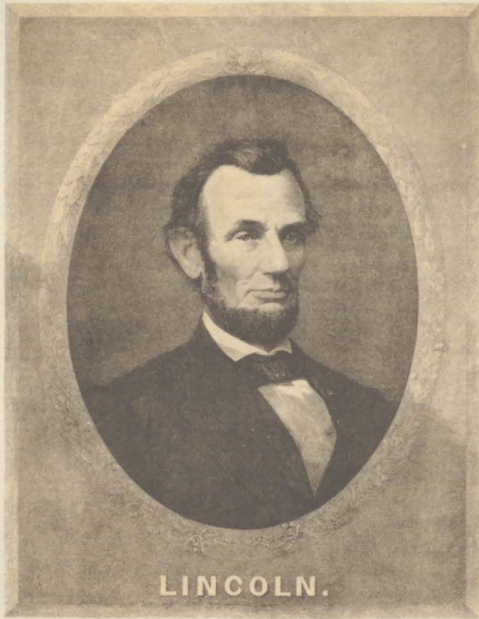
Copyrighted, 1926

by

George P. Hambrecht

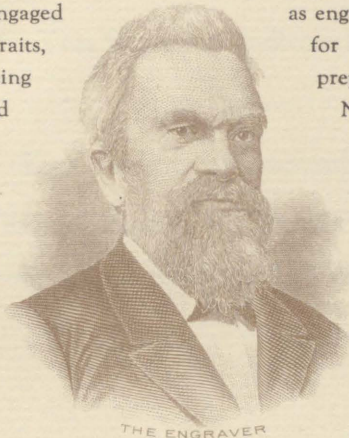


All Rights Reserved



PAINTED BY J. H. LITTLEFIELD. - ENGRAVED BY H. GUGLER.
*Entered according to the Act of Congress in the year 1862 by John H. Littlefield, in the Clerk's Office
of the District Court of the District of Columbia.*
PHOTOGRAPHIC COPYRIGHT SECURED.

Henry Gugler, the engraver of the foregoing portrait of Abraham Lincoln, came to America in 1853, entering one of the Bank Note Companies of New York City as a steel plate engraver. In the early 60's, after the breaking out of the Civil War, when the Government undertook to do its own engraving and printing of paper money, Henry Gugler was engaged as engraver of the vignettes and portraits, issues then being prepared at the newly established National Note Bureau. Some of his work may be seen on certain issues of \$5.00 and \$20.00 bills in use even to this day. In 1866 Henry Gugler was persuaded to leave the employ of the Government to undertake the engraving of what was to be the crowning career: The engraving of Abraham Lincoln. This monumental work represents more than two years of artistic application at a cost of nearly \$10,000.00.



Upon its completion it was immediately pronounced the best likeness of our martyred President in existence. At the same time the magnificent dimensions of the engraving—worthy of its great subject—appealed to the public. No work of life-size steel engraved portraiture had ever been attempted before this.

As the years pass on and a more or less fixed conception of the revered features of Lincoln crystalize in the minds of our people, Henry Gugler's engraving may now, like a composite photograph, be said to represent that collective conception of the features of Abraham Lincoln, which our people individually cherish and carry in their minds and hearts.

This Sketch is dedicated
to my wife
Kate Barrows Hambrecht
Whose friendly suggestions and
loving help is hereby acknowledged

This Edition is limited to 300 copies,
numbered and signed by the writer,
of which this is No. 187.

J. S. Hambrecht

FOREWORD

The writer greatly appreciates the kindness of Mr. O. B. Gugler, President of the Gugler Lithographic Co., of Milwaukee, in furnishing the reproduction of the Littlefield painting as engraved by Henry Gugler shortly after Mr. Lincoln's death. Sincere acknowledgment and thanks are also due to Mr. E. C. Comstock, Director of the Vocational School at Stoughton, Wisconsin, through whose courtesy this monograph was printed as a project of the school print shop; and to Mr. R. H. Landis, the instructor under whose direction the work was done.



ABRAHAM LINCOLN

HIS SPIRIT LIVES

TODAY Lincoln is a world character. His biography, writings, and speeches are translated into every tongue and he is quoted more widely than any other living statesman; and there is a growing tendency in these days of political ferment, disorganization and adjustment, to turn to Lincoln for guidance. We frequently hear the query; "What would Lincoln do today if he were living in our generation?"

On every hand arguments and theories are upheld by quotations from him, and the most divergent opinions fly to Lincoln as their advocate. Still more, wherever men express their views on the vital questions of the day, in legislative halls, on the public platform, the pulpit, in the editorial sanctum or private converse, the testimony of Lincoln on specific problems is sought.

[page 1]



What splendid tribute is this faith in him thus manifested by appeals to his expressed opinion, and what love of a cherished memory is thus demonstrated by the assumption that his opinion constitutes the final word in any controversy! No greater monument could be his than this reaching up of hands to the beloved, the idolized Lincoln.

A FUTILE HOPE

BUT Lincoln is in his grave. The prayer that he solve specific present day problems is as faithless as it is futile. It is unfair to his memory and to the cause. No searching analysis, born of a wide experience, close observation and intensive study, can now be given by him before judgment is pronounced. However loud the call, no response can come from him to the demand for his verdict on questions now confronting the people. In the language of Chauncey M. Depew, "He would probably be the oracle and idol of suc-

[page 2]



ceeding generations, rather than popular in this one." Let Lincoln's own words answer the query: "The dogmas of the past are inadequate to the stormy present." Lincoln constantly warned against "rashness" and urged "ceaseless vigilance." In his well thought out address, delivered at Cooper Union, New York, he said:

"I do not mean to say we are bound to follow implicitly in whatever our fathers did. To do so would be to discard all the lights of current experience, to reject all progress, all improvement. What I do say is, that if we would supplant the opinions and policy of our fathers in any case, we should do so upon evidence so conclusive and argument so clear, that even their authority, fairly considered and weighed, cannot stand; and most surely not in a case whereof we ourselves declare they understand the question better than we."

It is not Lincoln's opinion on a particular subject, nor his wisdom as expressed in his letters, state papers and



speeches which form his greatest contribution. It is the attitude and temper with which he approached his problems and the methods by which he met them which are the guides. When leaders are no longer picked from those who come with prepared formulae and avowed panaceas, but, instead, are selected for those qualities of mind and heart possessed by Lincoln, our problems shall unravel, our troubles dissolve, and our antipathies and prejudices vanish like the dust-cloud before a summer shower.

FOUNDATION STONE

THE foundation stone of Lincoln's character was absolute honesty, an affirmative honesty which leaves no room for a doubt of its presence; an honesty which so negatives insincerity of thought or purpose that suspicion crawls away from it, defeated in advance, dragging its challenge still sheathed. Lincoln was first honest with himself, subjecting his words and actions to the

[page 4]



closest scrutiny, and requiring from himself a higher standard of integrity even than he expected from others. Upon this rock he built, and the life structure he raised grew stronger with the years because of his refusal to swerve in word or deed from this basic principle. When all other virtues are recited and commented upon, underneath them lies this certain, positive, dominating integrity.

The same honesty, which made him walk several miles in New Salem to return money over-paid him through an error in making change, caused him to decide in favor of Great Britain in the "Trent Affair," because it was right, though it subjected his country to apparent humility. The first would have been dismissed by a less honest man as of little consequence, and the second would have been dodged for the sake of political expedience, because of the storm of criticism it was sure to provoke and the personal abuse he would meet. Both incidents reveal essential honesty so pronounced that any other course for him would be im-



possible.

A natural corollary to honesty, is openness of mind. Although Lincoln was a vigorous and independent thinker, he continually sought the advice of others and his door was never closed to anyone who had a view to present or an idea to express, regardless of whether he assented to that view or that opinion at the time. It was this willingness to listen and weigh all the evidence that made him so formidable in debate and it was this trait that helped him to arrive at conclusions so final that they seldom required alteration. It was this quality of mind that made him sympathetic toward the southern people while he remained sternly opposed to the institution of slavery.

It is out of a diversity of ideas and honest differences of opinion that the truth is learned. It would be unnatural if all thought and spoke the same thing. Free and honest discussion of mooted questions stimulates thought and develops power. This, tempered with toleration

[page 6]



for the opinions of others, spells progress. Lincoln believed it to be his duty to inform himself as conscientiously as possible, to express himself freely and honestly, to encourage others to do the same, and to help them to secure a hearing.

ALL MAY PROFIT

THE educational trait of this mental attitude grows in value in proportion to the extent to which it expresses honest opinions, based on careful research, and arouses in others a desire for further inquiry and thought. This intellectual training in Lincoln is within the reach of all, and if honestly applied by those who teach, and by those who would learn, it will go far to stimulate educational values among the great mass of the people today.

There are many well intentioned folk who do not understand the value of hearing the other side of an argument, and of free discussion. William Herndon, Abraham Lincoln's law partner and



an earnest abolitionist, reproached Lincoln, on one occasion, with having around their law offices three or four files of pro-slavery papers from the southern states, for which Lincoln subscribed. But Lincoln said in reply to Herndon that he wanted to know what the South was thinking and saying, whether he agreed with it or not. He insisted on getting their viewpoint, and this habit of reading both sides of a question, which gave him food for reflection, developed him into a real leader and statesman.

His method is a constant lesson in liberality towards others; an encouragement to the recognition of the fact that there may be something to be said of the other man's point of view as well as of your's, that you no more see all the truth than he does; and that if all thus seen can be fused, a larger amount of truth will result. Above all, his method is a revelation of what a man can make out of himself if he will. Indeed, the impression grows that the greatest service Lincoln did this country was the demon-



stration of what could be made of a mind by passionate, persistent effort. To what moral heights might the nation rise if dealt with in perfect candor and honesty!

THE HUMAN VIEWPOINT

LINCOLN was able to view every individual question in its relation to human welfare and human progress. Questions involving moral issues he always interpreted in easily understood terms. Even the complicated issues raised by the Slavery Question, culminating in those historic debates with Douglas, he interpreted as part of a great movement and not alone an isolated question. This is well illustrated in the summary of his debate with Douglas, at Alton, Illinois, when Lincoln said:

“This is the issue that will continue in this country when these poor tongues of Judge Douglas and myself shall be silent. It is the eternal struggle between these two principles — right and wrong — throughout the world. They are the two

[page 9]



principles that have stood face to face from the beginning of time and will ever continue to struggle. The one is the common right of humanity, the other the divine right of kings. It is the same spirit in whatever shape it develops itself. It is the same spirit that says, 'You toil and work and earn bread, and I'll eat it.' No matter in what shape it comes, whether from the mouth of a king who seeks to bestride the people of his own nation and live by the fruit of their labor or from one race of men as an apology for enslaving another race, it is the same tyrannical principle."

A CHALLENGE

LINCOLN'S life is a call to the training of the mind until it can form sound, workmanlike, trustworthy conclusions; a training of the moral nature to justice and rightness; a training of the heart to a sympathetic measuring of human frailty; a training of the will to stand steadfast on the conclusions of the

[page 10]



mind and heart. To this end there must be an openness of mind, a willingness to listen, a desire to know the truth in its entirety before a determination is made. Couple with all this a frankness of approach which negatives unworthy motive and a quality of leadership unfolds which rightly gives him first place in American history, if not in the world:

There is utter futility in trying to conjecture as to how Lincoln would have solved the problems of today. In their moral analysis, however, these problems are no different from those which he faced and solved. It is by the application of the principles which guided Lincoln, that a just solution of these problems can be reached. If Lincoln were living today, he would no doubt have very definite convictions on such questions as The League of Nations, The World Court, Prohibition, Child Labor, Taxation, The Exclusion of Aliens, The Constitutional Prerogatives of the Supreme Court, and the many other issues that impinge upon the present generation. In arriving at



these convictions, he would be guided by those characteristics which have been touched upon in this article.

If the aid of Lincoln is to be enlisted in the solution of the present day problems there must be sought and found in his life the salient elements of his greatness, and these must be transmuted into the fibre of present day leadership.

SIMPLE AND GREAT

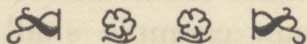
PRESIDENT Lincoln was able to be simple and at the same time great; courteous and yet courageous; yielding and sympathetic, and withal a splendid executive — virtues seldom found combined in one man. It was supreme tact, combined with firmness and confidence in his own judgment which enabled Lincoln to win over his cabinet. The cabinet was made up of a group of men extremely partisan, critical and difficult to handle; at first some of them attempted to belittle him, underestimating his real nature, later some of them lost

[page 12]



confidence in him, when he seemed to stand alone, but finally they all came to recognize in him a real leader among men. This remarkable reversal of judgment of those closely associated with Lincoln is perhaps best expressed by Stanton, his Secretary of War, with whom Lincoln frequently differed in policies. It was Stanton at the death bed scene on the morning of April 15, 1865, when Lincoln, the victim of an assassin's bullet, breathed his last, who paid this remarkable tribute to his chief:

“He now belongs to the ages—
here lies the most perfect ruler
of men the world has ever
known.”



L'ENVOY

LINCOLN lives. The monument at Springfield does not hold him from the world. Such a character never dies. It has so interwoven itself into history and so influenced human action that it endures for all time.

When the pomp of insincerity has finished its parade and the sham of political intrigue has been exposed; when the sacrifice of integrity to a temporary glory has reaped its just harvest of ignominy; when the conscienceless leader shall behold the broken sword of his disgrace; when ambitious greed shall awake to find only husks of possible greatness at its table: then shall Lincoln still live.

When civic courage shall some day have its place with the heroes of the age, Lincoln's name shall lead all the rest. When human example shall be sought for the youth struggling in poverty, through which he shall be inspired to loose the bands of environment or cir-



cumstance to rise to the potential possibility of his life, Lincoln shall help to strike the fetters from him and bid him with confidence meet the future. Wherever men shall strive to find the path to the hearts of the people, Lincoln shall guide them.

If faith in representative government shall totter under the strain of conflicting forces impelled by passion and prejudice, Lincoln shall set it upon its feet again by pointing to the bitterest civil contest ever waged in history met by him with constant appeal to fundamental principles, with an understanding of temper and environment which enabled him to proceed without malice to hold together a union of states so dearly bought, and in which the greatest good for all was the preservation of the common heritage. And so long as time shall turn its hours into history this man shall be a part of the evolution of self-government into unquestioned perpetuity.

Why go on? That life which shall be led throughout by conscious honesty of



purpose, which shall have the courage to follow this lead, however blind may be the road ahead, is an ever continuing force in human action. The bullet of the assassin, the coffin and the grave cannot end it. The voice now silent yet speaks with a million tongues. The pen, fallen from the grasp of nerveless fingers, is caught by countless eager hands to write on and on forever the message of fidelity to principle. Wherever the air of freedom shall be breathed, he breathes. Wherever unmanacled liberty shall walk, he walks. Wherever human eyes shall search for truth they shall take his lens and find it.

Lincoln lives. As said the great Stanton, when the life-light faded and the pulse ceased to beat:

"He now belongs to the ages!"

∞ THE END ∞

[page 16]



