

THE TWENTY-THIRD ANNUAL  
LINCOLN DINNER OF THE  
REPUBLICAN CLUB OF THE  
CITY OF NEW YORK

FEBRUARY TWELFTH, MDCDIX

PROCEEDINGS  
AT THE TWENTY-THIRD  
ANNUAL LINCOLN DINNER  
OF  
THE REPUBLICAN CLUB  
OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK



HELD AT  
THE WALDORF-ASTORIA  
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 12TH, 1909  
CELEBRATING THE  
ONE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH  
OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

# ABRAHAM LINCOLN

EMANCIPATOR

MARTYR

BORN FEBRUARY 12, 1809

ADMITTED TO THE BAR 1837

ELECTED TO CONGRESS 1846

ELECTED SIXTEENTH PRESIDENT OF  
THE UNITED STATES, NOVEMBER, 1860

EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION,  
JANUARY 1, 1863

RE-ELECTED PRESIDENT OF THE  
UNITED STATES, NOVEMBER, 1864

ASSASSINATED APRIL 14, 1865

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## SPEAKERS

MR. CHARLES H. YOUNG, President of the Club, Presiding

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Grace

THE RIGHT-REVEREND DAVID H. GREER

Abraham Lincoln

THE HONORABLE THEODORE E. BURTON

The Republican Party

THE HONORABLE JAMES FRANCIS BURKE

Abraham Lincoln

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON, LL.D.

The State of New York

HOWARD DUFFIELD, D.D.

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ADDRESS OF  
HOWARD DUFFIELD, D.D.

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President Young: We all remember the pleasure we had a few years since in listening to an oration on Abraham Lincoln by our next speaker. To-night he has promised us to respond to the toast of The State of New York. I introduce to you one whom you know fully as well as I do, Reverend Howard Duffield.

**MR. DUFFIELD.**

Mr. President and members of the Republican Club: At this hour of the night and at this point of the programme, I find myself somewhat in the situation of the gentleman who visited a Sunday school and was invited by the superintendent to make an address. Feeling around for an opening he began: "Scholars, I don't know exactly what to say. What shall I say?" And a little hand went up and a little voice piped out, "You had better say amen and sit down." (Laughter.) It would be indeed impossible to withhold a heartfelt amen to the splendid portrayal of that supreme and master spirit to which we have listened to-night and which enkindled within us a new devotion to the country that has mothered such a hero and made us full of new resolution to perpetuate and to develop the liberties which have been purchased at such a price. I congratulate the States of Ohio and of Pennsylvania upon having for their representatives in the Halls of Congress men animated by the spirit which rang and which shown in the

periods of those who have spoken to us, and I congratulate the Republican Club of the City of New York in the fact that upon the centennial anniversary of Mr. Lincoln's birth they have had present in the gentleman whose speech has just been finished a personality that has exhibited more eloquently than the most convincing rhetoric the splendid sweep of Mr. Lincoln's achievement when he erased from the page of America's story the word African and wrote in its stead American. (Applause.)

New York will always remember, though others may forget, that it was one of her adopted sons, Robert Gould, who, crowned with every grace of birth, courtly, gentle, a cultured scholar, a valorous youth of but twenty-six, was the first white man who rode as a colonel at the head of the first regiment of dusky braves that ever marched under the red, white and blue. (Applause.)

Mr. Lincoln knew that there could be no such defenders of the honor of America as those whom America had set free, and the bitter criticism and the outspoken contempt and scorn with which his measure was met was changed into world wonder and applause when that black regiment by its valor at Fort Wagner evinced a chivalry and a daring that was only paralleled by the Charge of the Light Brigade at Balaklava. And it is an honor to the Republican Club to have with it to-night a man who is seeking to develop this very force which shone out so resplendently upon that battlefield and to transform them from a menace into a triumphant guardian of American tradition and the preserver of American destiny.

Gentlemen, the state of New York is the theme which has been assigned to me. It is a somewhat large subject. It claims our attention from its very bigness. It is three hundred years old; it is nearly



fifty thousand square miles in extent. Yesterday it was an island that was bought for a song, to-day, as you have heard, it is the financial centre of the world; it is the nerve centre of the civilization and the political life of this great continent. In New York are the diversities of natural scenery. The state has the greatest coast line of any of the commonwealths, and from the Atlantic upon the one side is echoed, from the other, the organ note of Niagara and the wave-beat of Erie and Ontario. Across its bosom flow the lordly Mohawk to the Hudson. Its ramparts rest in the Catskills and the Adirondacks. It is a stage which nature set for the performance of some great and glorious drama, and upon that stage came trooping all diversities of nationality. There came the Dutch across the sea, fresh from the conquest of Spain; there came the French, chivalrous and brave, over the waters of Champlain; there came the Swedes, trained fighters for liberty, up the highway of the Delaware. Then all roadways centre in New York, and the influences which gathered for the enacting of the tragedy of the drama of which New York was to be the scene, had the outlet and the inlet of the world and of the continent. Do you know that within a stone's throw at the headwaters of the Mohawk there are great rivers that pass through every region east of the Mississippi, from the mouth of the St. Lawrence down to the Gulf of Mexico, so that the people of this state stand on guard over the great highways of the continent. Through its port must come the commercial treasures that are to be distributed to the people of the land, and New Yorkers sentinel the gate of America and New Yorkers stand guard on the highways of the mountain passes and the river waterways that furrow the whole of this land east of the Mississippi.

In 1633 a French statesman said to his monarch, "The St. Lawrence is the gateway to what may be the greatest commonwealth in the world. Plant you a seat, sire, at this point," and the point he selected is where Albany stands to-day. General Scott said, speaking as a military man, "New York is the strategic key to America." General Grant echoed his very words, and history shows the correctness of their suggestion. The pivotal fights of the Revolution were simply to control the mountain passes and the valleys of New York State. During the War of 1812 the battle line where victory was decided lay along the Canadian frontier and across the waters of the northern lakes, and a great Confederate has said that the reason for the final breakdown of the Confederacy was that the mountains opened highways and the rivers led straight from the heart of New York in New York down to the very heart of Virginia. I tell you, friends, New York is more like a nation than like a province. There are not a dozen of the world powers to-day that outnumber it in the number of its inhabitants or in the variety of its industries or in the potency of its influence. Never in all history was there an area of fifty thousand square miles filled so rapidly with a tenantry that has such possibilities of control. Why, it is not an exaggeration of local pride; it is the simple views of sober history, that has christened this commonwealth the Empire State. (Applause.)

The State of New York. No great celebration of national scope is complete until a word has been said about that state. There is a proverb that tells us, as goes New York so goes the Union. And that proverb expresses the deep and vital relation between the forces that are generated in this state and the forces that are sovereign throughout the land. You can easily see it must be so. Go back and ask what ceded

this island of New York, what dominated the development of this commonwealth of New York, and you will find that the very genesis of this country was here cradled, nourished and developed into strength. The Dutch came to Manhattan. Well, give the Dutch a mud bank to stand upon and they will conquer the world for freedom. (Applause.) When the Dutch came here they were the aristocracy of Europe; when the Dutch came here Leyden led the world in scholarship and Amsterdam led the world in art, and Holland led the world in every commercial and industrial activity, and the schoolmaster and clergyman and merchant came across the sea bringing to this land the freedom that had been won with their blood and that had been taught them by William of Orange, who died a martyr for the liberties in behalf of which he drew the sword. The Dutch towns were little republics, the Dutch land breathed an atmosphere which was saturated with the liberties of mankind.

Now look at the result. When the Revolutionary period dawned the first formal paper that was issued against the English throne, came from the New York Assembly. The solitary voice of James Otis had been heard in New England, but Samuel Adams was three months behind the New York Assembly, and Patrick Henry three years before he fulminated his warning against the throne of England. The first call for the organization of a Confederacy of the Colonies came from the Assembly of New York. The first blood that was shed in the cause of liberty was shed on Golden Hill in the lower part of the city, when the soldiers of the King undertook to cut down a liberty pole that stood there in the market place. Then did the inhabitants of the town, without arms, cast themselves against the hirelings of tyranny and blood was shed, the first blood that crimsoned American soil in

defense of American liberty. Washington was inaugurated as President and the principle of government was formed down on Wall Street, where his statue stands to-day proclaiming to men that the first treasures of this country are simple and noble and pure manhood. (Applause.)

Then, gentlemen, just turn the page and you come down to the Civil War, and look at the record of New York. When it was proposed to send the Star of the West to provision Sumpter, three New York merchants formed among themselves a syndicate, and out of their private fortunes paid the whole expense of the undertaking. When Mr. Lincoln called for seventy-five thousand troops the quota assigned to New York was thirteen thousand, and the New York Legislature said, "We will put thirty thousand in the field and we will put them there for two years." By the first of July of that year they had forty-six thousand, seven hundred men at the front of battle, and by the first of the next July one of every six able-bodied men of the State of New York wore the blue and marched under the flag. (Applause.) When the call was made for a war loan, out of two hundred and sixty millions of dollars that were subscribed, New York gave two hundred and ten millions. (Applause.) New York, gentlemen, has written her loyalty to the American Union as an Empire State in an imperial way in characters of gold and in characters of blood.

The State of New York. No celebration that honors the name of President Lincoln is complete without a mention of the Empire State. Its men and measures touched his life, and his influence touched it in such a way that that commonwealth is interlocked with his story.

Let me cite but two instances of the many. Downtown on the Bowery stands one of the noblest build-

ings, the benefaction of our princely Peter Cooper, a building erected for the sake of the people's education, and I tell you, fellow Republicans, the people were educated there in a masterly fashion just before the Chicago Convention met which nominated Mr. Lincoln. Mr. Lincoln was asked to address the Eastern States from that old platform of Cooper Union. Remember the situation of the time. It was a time of extreme confusion; it was a time when the emotions of men were beginning to work as the sea works when the storm wind breathes upon it. There was difference of opinion as to the definitions of history, as to the definitions of patriotism, as to the facts of history, as to the technicalities of the constitution. And there gathered an audience to hear this backwoods lawyer talk to them upon these topics of the hour. It was an audience such as could rarely be gathered in any land—scholars and diplomats, men trained by experience, historians and the makers of history, and unto them enters a long, gaunt and ungainly man, but a man who was a truth seeker, who was a truth lover, who was a truth defender. He was a man who through his slender library had lived in touch with the thought of the mighty spirits of our sires. He was a man who in that lonely forest had communed with the great pioneer souls that launched this nation. He was a man who in the lonely West had pored long and undisturbed over the great fundamental principles of our Government. He was a man who had never lost sight of the stars that shone above the cradle in which our American liberties were rocked. And when he came to discuss the questions of the hour he maintained a singular equipoise and mastery. He did not permit himself to be confused by any mist of self-interest or to be disturbed by any aberration of views arising from any prejudices that were miscar-

ried as fundamental principles. He did not allow himself to be checked by the miasma or irritation from resentment or from criticism. But he simply uttered sentiments that cleared the issues till they shone like the sun. He uttered a voice that crystallized the forces of right in the land into a triumphant host. He stood before that audience in Cooper Union, as patriotic as Demosthenes, but without his passion, as brilliant in his analysis of statesmanship as Burke, but without the dazzle of his rhetoric, with as a keen a mastery of constitutional principles as Webster, but wanting in his Olympic presence; he simply appealed to the common sense and the common honor and the common manhood of his audience, and they heard, as it were, the voice of one crying in the wilderness, and men everywhere in the land heard the voice that went out from Manhattan Island, and on that day they heard what no language could speak; they heard a tone that was an echo of the whispers of the mighty past, that was the beckoning call of the splendid future, that was the imperious summons of the patriotism of the present hour for every man to rise for the honor of his flag and for the preservation of his Union. (Applause.)

Gentlemen, one other circumstance. Let me briefly remind you of what you know so well about the circumstances of the Chicago Convention at which Mr. Lincoln was nominated, and let me remind you of the splendid part that New York took in that convention. The train started from New York carrying a superb delegation to the West, whose hearts beat high with resolve and hope to bring about the triumphant nomination of William H. Seward, splendid son of the Empire State, a man who had served as its Governor, a man who represented it as its Senator, a man of courtly learning and noble character, equipped and

schooled by Providence, as it seemed to those who loved him, for the crisis hour that was then striking in the history of our country. All along the road the clear voice of the leader of the delegation, at city after city, sounded the praises and foretold the triumphs of the son of the Empire State. But as the train neared Chicago more and more ominous grew the whisper that the West was determined to place its champion to the front and would not yield one inch to the claims that came from the Eastern seaboard. The New York delegation were by all odds the finest looking set of men in that whole convention; they were physically splendid in their appearance; they marched through the streets of Chicago with banners flying and with drums beating, with the light of a coming victory in their faces and with a determined resolution in their hearts that the crown that Seward had won should be held for him. There at Chicago there were plenty of secessionists, plenty of disunionists, that were gloating over the sectional clash between the East and the West. Let the East and the West lock one another in a death grapple, and the Union would go and the South would win all that it was contending for. In the early days of that convention when the nominations came out there were cheers that reverberated through the wigwam, not the common applause of a political convention, not the crying of a political clique, not the huzzas of a detached and unanswering sentiment, but there was the loud and tremendous voice of hearts that were tense with emotion. Cry and counter-cry rang through that building until it seemed that men were ready to divide in a final death grapple.

Abraham Lincoln rang out like a trumpet from the West, and the New York delegation yielded not one inch; with set faces, with strong hearts, they marched

with silent tread back to their hotel. Doors were shut. They wrestled in the solitude with themselves over the crisis of the situation. Veteran politicians through the land said the Union is gone, veteran statesmen on the ground said the Union cannot be saved; New York is pledged to Seward and cannot give up; the West is pledged to Lincoln and will not abate his claim. And all that night long the New York delegation, strong men, bowed their heads, and men prayed. They prayed for light, and they prayed for what is a greater boon than light, and that is for power enough from God to go wherever the light shone. Next day they marched like heroes to the battle. As they entered the convention, the same pulsing crowds, the same reverberating and intense cries, the same herald note, "Abraham Lincoln," until the teller cried, "He has the majority." Then every eye went to New York. It seemed as though an abyss were opening into which the union of the states was to fall in irretrievable ruin. The New York delegation rose like men on parade, with white set faces, and their leader, his countenance like marble, his voice like a clarion cry, with an accent that should never die out of our American memories—"New York moves to make the nomination of Abraham Lincoln unanimous." (Applause.)

I tell you, friends, great strong men wept like little babes. The world knew then, or it might have known, that the end had come, that a spirit of self-sacrifice, a spirit of splendid triumphant loyalty, such as spoke out through the leader of the Empire State in that moment, was a spirit that could never be conquered by the forces of disloyalty and disunion.

From that hour Seward and Lincoln stand together. Seward will be remembered as long as Lincoln is not forgotten. William H. Seward, the great son of New



York, was (if to any one man belongs the credit), the creator and leader in that day of the Republican party. By personal bravery, by keenness of intellect, by untiring effort, by magnificent eloquence, he had laid the foundations on which the Republican party stood and marched and won its victories. His speeches were translated into numberless languages, his voice rang in multitudes of hearts; North and South men hailed him as the brilliant leader. Said the South, "William H. Seward is the most dangerous and the most formidable man in connection with the United States Government." Said the North, "Our affections and our judgment go out in loyal fealty to William H. Seward, the brightest political light of this day and generation." And he earned that title.

When the news came from Chicago to Auburn, where he was sitting waiting for the tidings of his triumph, there was not a man in the city with courage enough left to write a paragraph for the Daily Republican stating what had occurred. So William H. Seward took the pen in hand and he wrote, "There are no finer or more splendid specimens of manhood or better fitted to carry forward the banner of the Republican party than those who have been selected for this honor." And while the iron entered into his soul, while he wrote to his wife that he was broken hearted, as a general who has been thrust aside at the very moment that the battle line of his forces is forming for decisive conflict, with distress and disappointment in his heart, but with a smile of proud loyalty on his lip and face, he went up and down the country and wrought nobly for the election of Mr. Lincoln as president. And no one can tell what value his services had rendered in the fateful hour in bringing to Washington that master spirit of our country's destiny. When we speak of Mr. Seward and Mr.

Lincoln men are apt simply to think of the few collisions that occurred early in the administration before Mr. Seward had taken Mr. Lincoln's measure, for few men in the land had had opportunity as yet to take his measure. But when those few days were past, Mr. Lincoln knew Mr. Seward's heart; he knew the fineness of Mr. Seward's mind and he "grappled to himself with bands of steel" that splendid son of New York, and together, together, they stood through all the vicissitudes of the Civil strife. Yes, side by side they stood in the fiery furnace of the Civil War, and side by side they stepped down into the Valley of the Shadow of Death in that fateful night which lowered upon Washington. Together Lincoln and the son of New York had their baptism of fire and together they had their baptism of blood, and it reads like that old story in the Good Book, of Elijah and Elisha going hand in hand across the mysterious Jordan out onto the very confines of eternity, where only the great leader was wrapped to Heaven in a whirlwind, and the other, with slow and laggard step and broken heart, made his way back to tarry yet awhile in the desolated land. (Applause.)

Gentlemen, do you remember what is carved upon Mr. Seward's grave Mr. Seward in early life stood in the court rooms of this state and pleaded the cause of a negro who was on trial for murder. He became a target for the bitterest contempt and criticism, he was hounded, he was abused, he was despised, he was spit upon. He stood in the court and said, "Gentlemen, the time will come when you will see that my position is right. The time will come, perhaps not until I am sleeping in my grave, when there will come some poor, down-trodden representative of the classes for whom I have always fought; there will come perchance some poor negro who will

write over the place where my dust reposes, 'He was faithful.'" It is written there to-day and that is all that is written there. He was faithful. Ah, fellow citizens of the Empire State, there is the great watchword for New York written on the grave where the heart of her great son lies stilled—to be faithful—faithful in the larger conflicts which the years are bringing, faithful in the struggles just as significant as those of the Civil War that are upon you and me to-day, faithful in seeking to shape the larger and the newer civilization that is having birth during these hours while we are living.

Men have said that Mr. Lincoln resembled Washington, that Mr. Lincoln resembled Gladstone. I will tell you who Mr. Lincoln resembled—Mr. Lincoln resembled more than any one else Christopher Columbus. Lincoln was a man who was instinct with the pioneer spirit; Lincoln was a man who could see beyond the horizon; Lincoln was a man who could hear the call of an unseen world; Lincoln was a man who could sail over tempest swept and untracked seas; Lincoln was a pilot who never lifted his hand from the helm until the prow grated upon the coast of a new world. Now, citizens of New York, we are sailing out into a new sea; we are entering into a new era of experience in religion, in business, in politics, in thought. We all feel it and know it. The signs of a new day are flaming up in the eastern sky; the firmament is all alive with the portent of a coming age, and here in New York those questions that are to determine the style and the spirit of the newer society are thronging with most insistent challenge. Right here in New York, as perhaps nowhere else in the world, must be settled the great questions of the use of wealth, the questions of labor, the questions of sanitation, the questions of poverty, the questions of the relation of city to country, the questions of the great

problems of the modern city. Now let us be faithful, faithful to the virtues of Mr. Lincoln, who pioneered the state through its great crisis of the bygone day, and we shall see the state go through the critical period of the present.

What were his special characteristics, Mr. Lincoln was absolutely honest. He as a boy won the title of Honest Abe, and by his life, to the last bloody hour, he demonstrated his right to be known as Honest Abe. Mr. Lincoln was full of sympathy for everybody. He could stop his horse and get out on the road and lift up birds that had fallen from their nests, or he could lay down his life to lift up a nation that had fallen into slavery. Mr. Lincoln was brave. He dared to be in the right with two or three. He did not adopt conclusions that were passed upon by a majority vote. He could announce his creed before it had become the fashion of the multitude. Mr. Lincoln was patient. The stars set, and set in his hope; the sun rose, but his hope was earlier up. Mr. Lincoln had the certain conviction of the triumph of right. He said, "Douglass don't care whether slavery is voted up or whether it is voted down, but God cares and humanity cares and I care, and I cannot fail in my advocacy of this thing. I may never live to see the thing, but the time will come when this cause will triumph and these men will find that they have not read their Bibles right." Mr. Lincoln was a religious man. Like that father of the faithful in the world's great morning time, our Father Abraham was a friend of God. And honesty and sympathy and bravery and piety, these are not exceptional virtues; these may be the crown jewels of the very poorest that is among us, and when we all possess this diadem of virtues, the value and glory of which are taught us by our martyred President, then we can see the work

which he began go forward with majestic stride toward its sublime consummation. Mr. Lincoln was cut off untimely. Mr. Lincoln did not finish his task. Mr. Lincoln's life was on the mountain top. Mr. Lincoln was the prelude to that which is yet to come. Mr. Lincoln was the first American, but he was not the last. And those who would fain do him honor should read most deeply the purpose of his heart, should grasp the controlling principles of his life, should realize that he came under the schooling of thought and under the schooling of circumstances, to live and die for one great thing, and that was that every man, should have his rights, and that every man should have his liberties. And the movement that Mr. Lincoln inaugurated on this earth of ours shall not reach its consummation until humanity shall become a commonwealth of comradeship, until it shall be organized as a kingdom of brotherhood, until the dream of the poet shall be realized in the parliament of man and the federation of the world.

When we have a celebration like this, he being dead yet speaketh, and his call to us, fellow citizens of the Empire State, comes at this centennial anniversary after this fashion:

“Here's a work the good have done;  
Here's the kingdom of his Son,  
With its triumph just begun.  
Put it through.

“For the birth-right yet unsold,  
For the history yet untold,  
For the future yet unrolled,  
Put it through.

“'Tis to you the trust is given,  
'Tis by you the bolt is driven,  
By the very God of Heaven  
Put it through.” (Applause.)