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## BIRTHDAYS CELEBRATED.

The following papers and poem were read at the celebration of the birthdays of McKinley, Lincoln and Washington, held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. A. A. Boyer on the evening of February 20. This is an annual observation by the Sons of Veterans and allied patriotic societies:

### Life of Washington.

Daniel Webster has said, "It is fit that by public assembly and solemn observance, by anthem and eulogy, we commemorate the services and virtues of national benefactors." And so tonight we meet to celebrate the birth of our three of our foremost Americans, and to me it has been given to recite the services and virtues of our beloved Washington, the founder of our federal republic, and whose name is, and will forever remain, the priceless heritage of all Americans.

Our heroes never die—they survive in our hearts, in the growing knowledge of the children and in the affection of the good throughout the world. The events of his life are so well known that it is only for us to review them briefly. Born in Westmoreland County, Va., Feb. 22, 1732, in a plain wooden farm house which had been the home of the Washingtons from the time of the landing of the first ancestors in 1657.

His father, Augustine Washington, died when George was eleven years old, an event which no doubt largely changed his career. If he had lived, he would undoubtedly have given his son an education at Oxford, England, and with that training it is hardly conceivable that he would have been the same George Washington that we know. Was it not the guiding hand of Providence, providing the man for the hour, that destined that he should have a purely American education. At the age of fourteen he had a great desire to go to sea, and through the efforts of his brother, Lawrence Washington, an educated charming man back from England, it was arranged that he should enter the Royal Navy, but the great sorrow of his mother at the parting changed his purpose, and he declined to go. If he had gone it is possible he might have lived in history as an English Admiral instead of being known as the Father of his Country.

We well know how at the early age of 16 he was appointed surveyor of the lands beyond the Blue Ridge Mountains by Lord Fairfax, and how his success won for him so wide a reputation that he was appointed public surveyor, and only a few years later, bearing a commission as Major Washington, he made the perilous trip to the advance post in the Valley of the Ohio.

Through the French and Indian War, bravest of all the officers, and with the widest knowledge of the Indian tactics and warfare his services were invaluable. Of him, the excellent Samuel Davies from his pulpit in Hanover County, Virginia, in illustration of his patriotic purpose of encouraging new recruits for the service, said these words, which have since that time been often pronounced prophetic: "I may point to that heroic young Colonel Washington, whom I cannot but hope, Providence has hitherto preserved in so signal a manner for some important service to his country."

About the time of his marriage in 1759 he took his seat as a member of the House of Burgesses, and this incident is often narrated. The speaker, by a vote of the house, having been directed to return thanks for his eminent military service, at once performed his duty with warmth and eloquence. Washington rose to express his thanks, but never voluble before the public, became too embarrassed to utter a syllable.

"Sit down Mr. Washington," was the courteous relief of the gentleman who had addressed him, "your modesty equals your valor, and that surpasses the power of any language I possess." He continued as a member of the house for fifteen years before the Revolution called him forth again to long and weary years of war. He was a member of the second Continental Congress meeting in Philadelphia in May, 1775, its members gathering to their deliberations with throbbing hearts and the musketry of Lexington ringing in their ears. A Commander-in-Chief of the provincial army of Boston was to be appointed, and the superior merit of Washington was seconded by the superior patriotism of the Congress who unanimously elected him to that high position.

In this brief sketch we cannot recite the history of the American Revolution, only to know how gloriously the duties of the memorable war were discharged. We might follow him to the high grounds of Boston where to the undisciplined but courageous soldiers, his presence gave the stability of system and infused so much of love of country.

On to Long Island, York Island and New Jersey, undismayed by disaster, he stood the bulwark of our safety. On to the fields of Trenton, where deep gloom reigned triumphant through our thin, worn down and unaided ranks, the winter storm raged, the Delaware rolling furiously with floating ice, forbidding the approach of man. Washington, self-collected, viewed the tremendous scene. His country called and unappalled by surrounding dangers he passed to the hostile shore. He fought, he conquered, and the morning sun cheered the American world.

On to the strong grounds of Morristown, where through an eventful winter he held in check the formidable hostile army, and then Brandywine, the fields of Germantown, and the plains of Monmouth. Everywhere present, himself a host, he upheld the tottering Republic.

Yet great as was our Washington in war, it was not in war alone his pre-eminence stands conspicuous. His talents combined those of a statesman with those of a soldier and he was fitted alike to guide the councils and armies

of our nation. Yet a third great service to his country remained, and while many ministered to the formation of the Constitution, none more anxiously or more perseveringly than Washington. By common consent he was placed at the head of the Convention in 1787 which gave a government to the scattered states, and made America a nation. Once more he was called to listen to the highest demand of his country in his unanimous election to the Presidency. With what emotions, and with what humble resignation to the voice of duty, with how little vain ambition, we discover as we read this entry from his diary written April 16, 1789. "About ten o'clock I bade adieu to Mt. Vernon, to private life and to domestic felicity; and with a mind oppressed with more anxious and painful sensations than I have words to express, set out for New York with the best disposition to render service to my country in obedience to its call, but with less hope of answering its expectations." At the close of his second administration to which he had been unanimously chosen he turned his face to Mt. Vernon with great desire. He would have been welcome to a third term, but refused to listen to the suggestion. During the remaining years of his life, Washington remained quietly at Mt. Vernon, loved and honored of all. He died after a brief illness, Dec. 14, 1799.

One of the few books read in his youth by Lincoln, was the life of Washington by M. L. Weems, known as Parson Weems who was rector of Mt. Vernon parish and often entertained by the Washingtons. As he went from place to place in the neighborhood, the parishoners loved to relate the tales of the childhood of their now famous hero, and so he picked up many a quaint story.

And what was the secret of the power of this truly great man? His career can never be shut up in the history of the past. His personality does not lessen as the years advance. His influence is essentially permanent, a man for the present needs of the nation and its individual citizens. Washington saw through the superficial things of his time into the profound truth of all time. Acknowledgement of God's wisdom, trust in God's providence, obedience to God's laws, formed the foundation upon which Washington began the building of the nation. At this time it is well for us to recall the glory of our great Republic and to solemnly vow allegiance to the principles upon which its foundation was laid. Washington knew that the great achievement of his life was not his own. "If such talents as I possess," he said, "have been called into action, by great events and these events terminated happily for our country, the glory should be ascribed to the manifest interposition of an over-ruling Providence, to whom alone the praise of victory is due."

And briefly in closing, let me urge upon the members of our organizations, their untiring loyalty to our most worthy object. The inspiration of patriotism, the love of country in the hearts of the citizens of our land. How can we honor more the lives of our beloved, who by their courage and bravery and the offering of their lives to their country's need, have made it meet for us to be banded together in so great a cause. What greater object has any society of our day.

Let us renew the fighting faith of our fathers, shake out the old flag, and see its broad stripes and bright stars with all their beauty and fullness of meaning, as it has led its followers into battle these hundred years and more.

### Life of Lincoln.

Of the early life of Abraham Lincoln we are all familiar and it is enough to say that he was a boy of high ideals, great kindness of heart and strength of purpose. His opportunities were very limited, but he made the most of them. He lacked education, but he lived the Golden Rule. He was no orator, but his speeches won for him the hearts of the people. The language he used was simple and plain, for his aim was to always speak in such a manner that a boy of ten could understand him. His inaugural speech was described by a Boston paper as being "clothed in homespun."

Abraham Lincoln never faltered when once he decided a thing was right. When yet a young man he said that if ever the opportunity came to strike a blow at slavery he would give it its death blow and it is as the great emancipator that we think of him first.

While practicing law in Illinois he never took a case unless he could honestly defend or prosecute it. He never asked a fee unless the party could afford to pay it. One time, however, he did ask a fee which was thought exorbitant. The case was one in which he was engaged by the Illinois Central Railroad. When he won the case he put in a claim for \$5000 which was to be divided with his partner and it took a paper signed by all the leading lawyers of the day, stating that the fee was not too great, to collect it. His opponent at this time was an eminent Boston lawyer who said afterwards that he was going back to college to study law.

To fully appreciate a man we must know something of the times in which he lived. The United States were torn in two. A leader was needed,—a man who knew what was right and had the courage of his convictions.

Abraham Lincoln was the man for the place and in 1860 was elected President. When he left Springfield to take up his duties at Washington, he made the following farewell speech which seemed almost prophetic of the trials he was to face:

"My friends, no one, not in my situation, can appreciate my feeling of sadness at this parting. To this place and the kindness of these people I owe everything. Here I have lived a quarter of a century and have passed from a young to an old man. Here my chil-

dren have been born and one is buried. I now leave, not knowing when or whether ever I may return, with a task before me greater than that which rested upon Washington. Without the assistance of that divine being who ever attended him I cannot succeed. With that assistance I cannot fail. Trusting in Him, who can go with me and remain with you and be everywhere for good, let us confidently hope that all will yet be well. To His care commending you, as I hope in your prayers you will commend me, I bid you an affectionate farewell."

Lincoln seems to have known that he would never again return to Illinois.

His task was indeed tremendous. He believed the North was right, but he sympathized with the South as well. As he said in reply to Douglas at Peoria, "They are doing just what we would do in their situation. If slavery did not exist among them they would not introduce it. If it did exist among us we would not instantly give it up." He felt responsible for the lives of both the Northern and Southern men who fell in the Civil War, and his heart ached for those who were left without father, brother and husband. Many times he asked the question: Have I the right to continue the war? to continue the suffering? In his heart he knew he was right, the nation must be held together.

Often Lincoln faced opposition before which another man would have gone down. Among the men he gathered around him to assist in the administration, were those who were constantly criticizing and condemning his every act. They said his policy would bring ruin; McClellan, his general, was a traitor waiting for a chance to sell out to the enemy. But Lincoln never decided upon a question until he had viewed it from all sides and so when he had decided McClellan was the proper man for the place, he never lost faith in him. When he decided that an Emancipation Proclamation was the only thing to bring things to a crisis, he signed it. It is said that when the Proclamation was brought to him for his final signature he had been shaking hands for two hours, and he asked for time to rest, saying, "This signature will be closely examined in the future and if my hand trembles they will say he faltered."

Lincoln's friends urged him to put Stanton and Seward out of office, but Lincoln felt that these men were better capable of handling their departments than anyone else he knew and so laying all personal feeling aside and continuing to bear in silence the heartache their enmity must have caused him, he kept them where they were.

Above all else Lincoln desired to avoid trouble. During his campaign for re-election various stories were published detrimental to him and when asked why he did not reply or deny them he said, "What they want is a squabble and a fuss and they can have it if we do not."

In such books as the Toy Shop and A Perfect Tribute we have beautiful little pictures of Abraham Lincoln the man. In fact all through his life it is the man himself we see, not a politician nor a warrior nor a stern official. All his acts were clothed with the great sympathy of his kind heart.

Lincoln loved the soldiers in both armies and his heart ached to spare them all he could. The Union soldiers knew this and it spurred them on to victory to know their leader would take their places if he could. It won for him the affectionate title "Father Abraham."

He had no blame for the southern men who fought him, he only pitied them. We recall the touching story of a Confederate boy who was taken prisoner and while in the hospital Lincoln visited him. The boy asked that his Bible be sent home to his mother for he thought he would die. Lincoln told him to cheer up; that he would take the Bible home himself. Weeks later the boy became well enough to travel and one day he received a package. It was his Bible and in it was a pardon signed by Abraham Lincoln.

Doubtless there are hundreds more of such stories could we but hear them. No one ever came to Lincoln for help without receiving something. Even the old maimed colored man who stopped Lincoln on the street one day to ask for money received a check for five dollars, which read thus, "Pay to colored man with one leg."

For the men who deserted because of homesickness Lincoln showed great leniency. He knew the terrible heart hunger and longing which filled them. There were hundreds of telegrams found in his files which read like this, "suspend execution until I can investigate." To one old man who came to plead for his deserting son's life, Lincoln said, "I have ordered his execution suspended; do you suppose I shall ever sign an order for his death?" No, he could not do that.

Although his desk was found to be filled with threats which he never made public himself, Lincoln went on his way trusting to the care of God. The path of life which he had caused to bloom with flowers for so many was one of thorns for him, but it too, led to a crown of love and glory.

As citizens of Illinois we can well be proud that through the efforts of our own Senator, the late Shelby M. Cullom, a fitting memorial is to be erected in Washington to the memory of our most illustrious President.

Would it not be still more glorious if this fair state would send some one to Washington who would bring about the abolition of the slavery of today! A man who would declare an Emancipation Proclamation which would free all men from the slavery of Drink.

The last message Lincoln sent to the people was given to Major Merwin on the day of the assassination.

"Merwin, we have cleaned up, with the help of the people, a colossal job.

Slavery is abolished. After reconstruction the next great question will be the overthrow and abolition of the liquor traffic; and you know that my head and my heart, my hand and my purse will go into that work.

In 1842 I predicted, under the influence of God's spirit that the time would come when there would be neither a slave or a drunkard in the land. I have lived to see one of those prophecies fulfilled. I hope to see the other realized."

Like a mountain, big, rugged, strong and full of unexpected beauties and unfathomable depths, Abraham Lincoln towers above all men and it is with awe for what we cannot know of his soul, love for what he has done for humanity and honor for what he did for our country that we meet to do him reverence.

### Life of McKinley.

Wm. McKinley was born in Niles, Ohio, January 29, 1843.

When nine years old his father realized that the schools at Niles were not as good as a boy of such promise should have so they moved to Poland, where he entered the Poland Union Seminary. After completing the course there he entered Allegheny College at Meadville, Pa., at that time one of the leading colleges of the country.

Here his health broke down under the strain of hard study and insufficient outdoor exercise and he returned home and accepted a position as teacher in a district school at \$25.00 per month. The school house was two and one-half miles from his home and the daily walk of five miles in the open air did much to build him up and prepare him for his time of service in the Civil War. He enlisted in the fall of 1861, as a private and was mustered out July 26, 1865, as Brevet Major.

His record in the army was unusual as it shows he was not absent from duty a day on account of sickness, nor does it appear from the records that he ever took a furlough or leave of absence. Many officers in the regular army advised him to accept a commission in the regular army but he chose to go back to his boyhood home and start for himself in some other way.

On his return home he decided to become a lawyer and started to study under Judge Charles E. Glidden. He went at this new study as earnestly and vigorously as he had worked at his books in his boyhood days. He did not deny himself entirely the social pleasures but did not allow them to interfere with his work. After a year's hard work his funds ran low and for a time it was a question whether he would be able to finish his studies. His elder sister, however, advised him to continue and with the little financial aid she gave him he went to Albany and entered the law school there and in 1867 graduated and was admitted to the bar.

His first office was a small room in the rear of an old building. His first case of any importance was one given him by Judge Belden who complained of being ill and unable to try the case the following day. McKinley protested that he was new at the business and did not have ample time to prepare the case. The Judge was obdurate, however, and McKinley reluctantly accepted and worked all night on the papers. When the trial came McKinley was given the decision. He met the Judge shortly afterward and he said, "Well, Mac, you won the case" and handed him \$25.00. McKinley protested, saying it was too much for one day's work. The Judge insisted, saying he was paid \$100.00 as a retainer fee on the case. As a result of the friendship established by this case the Judge asked McKinley to form a partnership with him and he was not slow to accept. He gave up his little back office and moved forward after the manner of his warlike days into better places in the front.

McKinley's reputation as a good lawyer and a shrewd and skillful pleader spread through the district. At this time he met Mark Hanna, an acquaintance that was destined to mean much to both men. Mr. Hanna owned extensive coal mines. Trouble was brewing between the miners and the company which resulted in the destruction of part of the mining property. Finally some of the company property was burned and twenty-three miners were arrested. McKinley was retained by their friends to defend them. McKinley was always mild mannered and good natured but his plea on this occasion was a strong argument of the other side and it gave a description of Hanna with which McKinley would not have agreed in his late days. A good story is told of one of McKinley's cases that has been told in many campaign speeches throughout the country. If any of you have heard it before I can only say by way of excuse that it is a good one and will bear repeating. He was retained to defend a surgeon who was being sued for malpractice by a patient who alleged that the surgeon had set a broken leg in such a bungling way as to make him bow legged. The attorney for the plaintiff put his client on the witness stand and exhibited the broken leg to the jury. It certainly was a crooked leg and the jury seemed to be very much impressed with the bad work of the surgeon. McKinley said nothing but had been looking the plaintiff over carefully and when the witness was turned over to him for cross-examination he demanded that the sound leg be bared and shown to the jury. The attorney for the plaintiff protested vigorously but the court sustained McKinley and the witness had to show the sound leg. To the attorney's great confusion and the merriment of the jury the sound leg was more crooked than the one that had been broken and set by the defendant. It was apparent that the surgeon instead of damaging the patient, had helped him. McKinley smilingly said: "My client seems to have done more for this man than Dame Nature herself, and I move the

case be dismissed with the recommendation that he have his right leg broken and set by my client." It is needless to say McKinley won even though his recommendation was not made official.

In the fall of 1869 McKinley was elected county attorney in a strong democratic district. He was defeated at the end of his first term as the democrats were not to be caught napping the second time.

He was married to Ida Saxton on Jan. 25, 1871. The devotion of McKinley to his wife has been a household word in all American homes for years. He was willing to give up his political ambitions to remain quietly at home and practice law. Mrs. McKinley was very proud of her husband and equally devoted to his interest. She refused to have him make this sacrifice and it is related she even spoke of the time he would be president.

After suffering his first defeat for county attorney by the narrow margin of forty-five votes he had no personal interests in the results of elections for five years except such as belonged to an active republican. In the summer of 1876 he was nominated for congress and elected by more than 3300 plurality. His work in congress especially on the tariff question is green in the memory of all. He was re-elected in 1878, and again in 1880. In 1882 owing to a split in the republican party McKinley was unseated but he served practically all the session. In 1886 he was easily re-elected.

In 1888 the struggle for the nomination of president revealed McKinley in another light which seemed to be new in politics. He was a delegate to the convention and instructed for John Sherman. Nineteen different men received more or less support, Telegrams were received from all republican congressmen urging McKinley to accept the nomination. As ballot after ballot progressed more and more votes turned to McKinley. As the third roll-call was going on he sprang from his place in the Ohio delegation, demanded recognition and in a voice that rang through the hall said: "I am here as one of the chosen representatives of my state to cast my ballot for John Sherman for president." I will not give the full text of his speech but the closing paragraph will give you all an insight to the strength of character shown by this great man. In closing he said: "I would not respect myself if I should find it in my heart to do or permit to be done that which would ever be ground for anyone to suspect that I wavered in my devotion to the chief of her choice or the chief of mine. I do not request, I demand that no delegate who would not cast reflection upon me shall cast a ballot for me."

The record of this man is truly remarkable. For four successive campaigns he was in the convention as a delegate from Ohio and could have been nominated for president at any time. In 1896 it was evident the people would not be denied and he remained quietly at home and was nominated on the first ballot and after a remarkable campaign, elected. His administration was but another example of his quiet and unassuming life. His cabinet was composed of the greatest statesmen our country has ever known. He handled the affairs with Spain with a firm hand. Tariff legislation was enacted that started our country on one of the greatest eras of prosperity it has ever known. So great was his popularity that when the summer of 1900 came there was no talk of any other candidate and he was renominated by acclamation and re-elected by a larger majority.

Soon after his inauguration in 1901 he planned an extended trip through the southern states to the coast and back by way of Northern Pacific. Mrs. McKinley was taken ill while in California and they came directly home.

A second date was arranged for his visit to the Pan American Exposition at Buffalo for September 5th. On that date the President visited the exposition. An enormous crowd gathered to hear his speech which attracted worldwide attention. Friday, September 6th, it had been planned to hold a public reception in the Temple of Music at the exposition grounds. When the doors swung open the people surged forward and the President with the skill of long practice grasped the hand of each who passed. There was in the line a smooth-faced young man who carried his right hand done up in a handkerchief. As the President reached out to take his left hand the man raised his right hand and shot the President twice. Instantly a dozen men sprang upon the assassin.

The President's first thought was for his wife. "Cortelyou, my wife, tell her quietly." His second for the assassin: "Let no one harm him." His third "I am sorry to have caused your exposition so much trouble."

The assassin proved to be Leon Czolgosz, an anarchist and a disciple of Elma Goldman.

The President died September 14. The State funeral was held September 17th and the remains taken to Canton on the same day for final interment.

### Reminiscences of Gettysburg.

As I went over Gettysburg battle ground, the things I did see Reminded me of the days of eighteen hundred and sixty-three. When those men in gray could see no reason why They could not whip those Yanks, if they would only try.

The first day I remembered distinctly and well.

When they dashed in upon us with that long rebel yell Onward they came, until into our ranks they ran.

Then it was sabre against sabre and man to man.

ary tower did stand Gave orders hold your ground as long as you can, You're outnumbered two to one but be of good cheer, Reinforcements are coming and soon will be here.

The rebel infantry, it moved on our front and flank, As they came rushing on to do up the Yank.

Then Reynolds' brave boys they dashed on the field Their commander rode forward and there he was killed.

Those Johnnies came on so numerous and fast We were outflanked and had to retreat at last.

Back, back we went through that historic old town And many comrades on that retreat were captured or shot down.

As I looked over the tents pitched in rows all around It was there we had our most severe battle ground.

At night the battle ceased, then on Cemetery Ridge we did stop Wondering what next day would bring forth and what be our lot.

The round tops loomed up so dismal, silent and alone That General Lee sent Longstreet to give them some tone.

Take no thought of the Yanks. Oh, but where were they Would those mud sills dare to block the way.

On rushed General Longstreet with 20,000 men or more But he ran up against that gallant old Third Corps.

General Sickles was wounded. Sad as were our lot Dying by hundreds, but Longstreet never reached Round Top.

Two days of fighting in that maelstrom of hell What the next would bring forth none could foretell.

As we lay on our blankets looking at the bright stars above And wondered if war was one way of showing our good brotherly love.

The next morning was bright as the sun shone in the east But rebel generals were planning that day to be either famine or feast.

Each office was assigned to lead forward their troops And whip those blue Yanks clean out of their boots.

General Steward was sent with 10,000 troops of file and rank To come behind the 2nd corps and attack both rear and flank.

They marched around our right flank without trouble or noise There they ran into General Gregg with his bad cavalry boys.

Steward never reached where Lee sent him to go Those bad cavalry boys never gave him the least show.

When the sun had crossed the zenith 'twas a little after one Smoke rose from Seminary Ridge, it was the signal gun.

Two hundred field guns with destruction and great noise Then sent their death dealing missiles at the 2nd corps boys.

As they lay there close to those low stone walls Mangled and torn by those death dealing balls.

General Warren from Round Top signaled all along the line The enemy are forming to charge and will start in short time.

An order to cease firing to our artillery was sent And not knowing, wondered what it all meant.

But they swabbed out their guns, filled their caissons with shell Took their positions in front, we knew then all was well.

Our guns were silent. Why? General Lee he not knowing Gave the order to charge and keep those Yanks agoing.

That 2nd corps it never moved from position it first took As the vibrations from those heavy shell the ground around them shook.

That long gray line came marching on, so silently and swift, Picketts daring Virginia boys with guns at right shoulder shift.

Two brigades on each flank was sent as a support But our artillery decimated them so their numbers were short.

Our guns from front and flank and guns from Little Round Top Poured death and destruction in their ranks at every flashing shot.

Armsteads brigade rushed on, it got into a tangle The 2nd corps then rose and fired, that spot was called Bloody Angle.

Armstead with others leaped over that low stone wall Give them cold steel he said; but that was his last call.

The rest looked around, saw those grim boys in blue, Surrendered, threw down their guns, what else could they then do.

The victory was ours which we most certainly did know As that grey line vanished, back into Virginia it did go.

Those days of hardships and strife we never can forget, Seems we can hear those cannons booming yet.

But our friendships for each other now should never cease As a united country we stand for one eternal peace.