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The 'Emancipator' Legend

THE fame of Abraham Lincoln, whose memory Americans will honor Saturday on the occasion of his 140th birthday, has suffered a fate that is common to most great men. For it is the rule rather than the exception that we insist upon casting our heroes in roles utterly foreign to them, and which they, alive, would never have considered assuming.

In the case of Lincoln, we have created the legend of the "Great Emancipator". The term suggests — and those who use it assume — that the Emancipation Proclamation declared all the slaves in the United States free; that Lincoln and Lincoln alone, with a single stroke of the pen, outlawed slavery in America; and that the consuming ambition of his life was to free the Negroes.

Nothing could be farther from the truth. As to the first two assumptions, the facts are available in any encyclopedia; and as to Lincoln's great ambition, both his words and his actions are clear—the abolition of slavery was purely incidental with him.

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The Emancipation Proclamation did not even purport to free all the Negroes; it specifically exempted from its provisions, in fact, nearly a million slaves. It did not apply to slaves held in border and border states outside the Confederacy, and it exempted even the slaves in those sections in the Confederate South occupied by federal troops. Thus it actually had no immediate practical effect as an emancipation measure; for it declared free only those slaves in territory over which the government at Washington had no control.

Nor was it the Emancipation Proclamation that outlawed slavery in America. It was the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution that banished slavery, and that amendment was not declared in force until December 18, 1865, nearly three years after the proclamation was issued—and eight months after Lincoln's death.

Lincoln's celebrated proclamation freed no slaves, and he probably didn't intend that it should; or at least the freeing of slaves was not its chief purpose. It was issued not as a great humanitarian charter, but as a political and war measure of expediency.

While the proclamation itself was dated January 1, 1863, Lincoln had announced on September 2, 1862, that it would be issued. In that announcement he declared that he would proclaim the slaves within the Confederate South free, if, the following January, their masters were still in rebellion against the government at Washington. Lincoln must have hoped that the threat would bring some, or possibly all, of the Southern states back into the Union; hence the threat carried the hint that slavery would be abolished if the "erring sisters" returned by time. In this connection, it is interesting to the timing of the announcement; it immediately followed federal victory at Antietam.

More immediately practical considerations, however, probably prompted the announcement. It was about six weeks before the congressional elections; and Lincoln was too shrewd a politician not to recognize the vital importance of retaining Republican control of congress in the November elections. The proclamation was a bid for the vote of the Abolitionists, who long had been restive under Lincoln's moderate policy.

Furthermore, there appeared to be grave danger that England would recognize the Confederacy. Lincoln undoubtedly knew that there was a large body of anti-slavery public opinion in England, and his Emancipation Proclamation was a brilliant diplomatic stroke; for it dramatized the slavery issue—tended to suggest to the middle class Englishman that the whole issue of the war was slavery vs freedom—and thus brought public pressure on the English government to withhold recognition of the Confederacy. The fact that England did not

extend recognition quite possibly determined the result of the war.

Lincoln, in at least two respects, was much like Franklin D. Roosevelt. He was a smart politician, and he was willing to play politics, and to compromise on minor and secondary issues—or even on matters of principal, if necessary—to gain his major objectives.

The way West Virginia became a state is an interesting illustration of that trait. In Lincoln's political philosophy, there was no such thing as secession; he held that the people of the Southern states simply were in rebellion against their government. Yet, holding that conviction, his administration encouraged the counties in the western end of Virginia to secede from the State of Virginia; and the new state of West Virginia came into being by secession!

But, like Roosevelt, Lincoln never for a moment lost sight of his goal; never let anything interfere—no matter how much he might have to compromise on other things, no matter how far around he had to go—with his steady progress toward that goal.

In Lincoln's case, the goal was the preservation of the Union.

In August, 1862, he said:

"If I could save the Union without freeing any slaves, I would do it; if I could save it by freeing all the slaves, I would do it; and if I could do it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that."

And on another occasion he declared:

"My paramount object is to save the Union, and not either to save or destroy slavery."

Lincoln looked upon slavery as a great evil (as, indeed, did many slaveholders). He hated slavery, and he was determined to prevent its spread. But, unlike the extremists on both sides, he never would have plunged the country into civil war over that issue. He was too great a man to let fanaticism run away with him, or to indulge in revolution when—as must have been obvious even then—evolutionary forces were at work.

It is not as the "Great Emancipator" that Lincoln deserves fame. He was too honest to have wanted the title—and probably would have considered it a huge joke, had he known he was to be so labeled.

His greatness as a statesman lay in the fact that he preserved the Union, and thereby proved that a representative government can be made to work.

But he was more than a politician and a statesman—he was a great human being.

And his fame as a man rests upon traits utterly incompatible with the role of a flaming zealot, for he had his feet quite firmly on the ground. He was great as a man because of his common sense, his patience, his saving sense of humor, his tolerance and kindness, and his strength of character that held him steadfastly to the one goal he had set himself—to save the Union of the States.

Scaly Shows The Way

Scaly is a very small community. The 1940 census gave the entire Flats township, in which Scaly lies, a population of only 349.

And, like most small communities, Scaly lacks the facilities for community events and money-raising projects that towns and cities enjoy. But if Scaly is short on population and facilities, it is long on community spirit.

The people of Scaly recently decided they wanted to do their share for the March of Dimes, and they hit upon the idea of a box supper. The only place to hold a box supper was the school, and the best time to hold it was at night; but the school building had no lights.

Did the people of Scaly say it couldn't be done? Hardly! They went to work and put lights in the school; they held their box supper; and they contributed \$175 to the polio fund.

The people of Scaly have done more than their share in this community undertaking, but they have done something far more important: They have shown the way for the rest of us. For they have proved that a community, like an individual, can do almost anything it wants to do. All that is necessary is to want to badly enough, and to mix with the desire a little determination, a little imagination, a little ingenuity, and, most necessary of all, a little unified community effort.

A Teen Age Club

Most young people want, more than anything else, the approval of those about them, their elders and those of their own age. And most youngsters are smart enough to know that the way to win and keep that approval is by being decent, useful young citizens.

But youth is full of ideas and enthusiasm and energy. It's energy demands to be used, and if there isn't something wholesome to do, the young people

are likely to occupy their leisure with something not so wholesome.

In short, most young people will do as well as their talents and environment will permit. The Lord gave them their talents, but it is up to the community in which they live to provide the right environment.

And a part of that environment, a very necessary part—as Mrs. Johnson so well says in a letter that appears on this page—is a place and the facilities for wholesome fun. A Teen Age Club, properly organized and operated, can fill a very real need here.

Congratulations Due

Highway Patrolman Pritchard Smith, Jr., has "rung the bell" again. For the second time within a few months, he has placed behind bars men who had been living by robbery.

In his latest achievement, Mr. Smith picked up two men who, so far as is known, had committed no crime in Macon County. But they were wanted in several states for a long series of robberies, and had managed to elude officers elsewhere. Driving through Macon County, they ran into trouble.

Given a little more time, Mr. Smith—with the support of other officers and of the community—will create for Macon County an enviable reputation—the reputation of being an unhealthy place for thugs. He deserves the community's congratulations and appreciation.

POETRY CORNER

Conducted by  
EDITH DEADERICK ERSKINE  
Weaverville, N. C.

Sponsored by Asheville Branch, National League of American Pen Women

EVENING PRAYER

As gentle twilight softly fades away  
I now must say my evening prayer to Thee  
In thankfulness for blessings of this day  
And for the future blessings promised me.  
  
I miss the sun yet stars are in the sky  
And though at times the clouds obscure their light  
Give me the touch of faith to feel Thee nigh,  
A soul made fearless by celestial might.

HOMER CASTO

Weaverville, N. C.

Letters

WHOLESALE FUN FOR YOUTH

Dear Mr. Jones:

We read much in our magazines and newspapers about "juvenile delinquency" and recently had a case in our own court concerning a young man who got a long sentence for crimes resulting from this very thing. And yet we in Franklin sit back and do nothing. Perhaps we feel that we have no such problem, that all our boys and girls are growing up into fine men and women. Wouldn't it be a good idea if we did something to prevent any such problem from arising? And there is a way of helping right now.

A group of high school pupils have organized to try to start a "Youth Canteen"—a place where our young people can go and have something to do. They have found a few adults who have agreed to help supervise their activities and have raised about half the money they need to try their idea for a month.

They need the interest, the cooperation and the financial assistance of everyone in the community if they are to make a success of their venture.

Our young people like sports, reading, team games, dancing, movies, hobbies and quiet games. How much opportunity do all children in our community have to spend their leisure time doing these things that they like to do in a manner that will make them better citizens? When a boy or girl comes in from the country for some fun Saturday afternoon or evening, what is there for him to do? Should he go to see a shoot-em up movie, hang around the corner or shoot pool? What else is there for him to do?

I believe that if we will give active support to these young people who are hoping so high and working so hard to start this youth canteen, we will be doing a very real service not only to them but to the entire community.

Sincerely,

OLIVIA C. JOHNSON

Franklin, N. C.

Others' Opinions

MORE GRADE A MILK

County agent M. L. Snipes and the farmers of Jackson County interested in putting in Grade A Dairies deserve all the moral support and financial assistance they can get in helping to put over such a program in the county. Jackson County farmers are sadly in need of more cash income. With a few good cows, producing Grade A milk, is one way many of our farmers can increase their income. These milk checks come in regularly every month and they will help the farmer and his family greatly in the cost of living budget.

The milk check is not the only profit derived from keeping cows. The barnyard fertilizer as a by-product reduces the commercial fertilizer bill and helps to continually build up the land. Then there is the cash income from sale of heifer calves, or beef animals as the case may be.

Backing a program for more Grade A dairies in Jackson County would be a splendid program for our civic clubs and local bank. Jackson County is far behind our sister counties in this respect. —Byrna Herald.

LEGAL ADVERTISING

National Forest Timber  
For Sale

Sealed bids will be received by the Forest Supervisor, Franklin, North Carolina, up to and not later than 2:00 P. M., February 21, 1949, and opened immediately thereafter for all the merchantable live and dead timber designated for cutting on an area embracing about 565 acres within the Camp Branch unit of Wayah Creek of Cartoogechaye Creek, Little Tennessee River watershed, Macon County, Nantahala National Forest, North Carolina, estimated to be 1500 cords (128 cubic feet) of chestnut extractwood, more or less. No bid of less than 50 cents per cord will be considered. In addition to price bid for stumpage, a deposit of 10c per cord for all wood cut will be required for sale area betterment work. \$200 must be deposited with each bid, to be applied on the purchase price, refunded, or retained in part as liquidated damages, according to conditions of sale. The right to reject any and all bids is reserved. Before bids are submitted, full information concerning the timber, the conditions of sale and the submission of bids should be obtained from the Forest Supervisor, Franklin, North Carolina. J20-F10.

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT  
BEFORE THE CLERK  
NORTH CAROLINA  
MACON COUNTY

M. P. KEENER and wife  
DIXIE KEENER, et al

vs.  
E. D. CHASTAIN, et al  
NOTICE OF SUMMONS  
The defendant, Tom Chastain, will take notice that an action entitled as above has been commenced in the Superior Court of Macon County, North Carolina, for the purpose of selling for partition lands in which the defendant has an interest and is a proper party thereto.

The defendant, Tom Chastain, will further take notice that he is required to appear at the office of the Clerk of the Superior Court of Macon County, North Carolina, in Franklin, on the 14th day of March, 1949, and answer or demure to the petition of the petitioners, or the relief demanded in said petition will be granted.

This 4th day of February, 1949.

J. CLINTON BROOKSHIRE,  
Clerk Superior Court,  
Macon County, N. C.  
F10-4tc-JJ-M3

EARN AND LEARN!

Young man, here's a chance to learn a valuable trade—and the training won't cost you a penny! Plus opportunity to further your education in a number of other ways. The new U. S. Army and U. S. Air Force need men with ambition; men who seek to advance themselves through the kind of training so necessary for success these days. Investigate at once the educational benefits offered. See your recruiter at the U. S. Army and U. S. Air Force Recruiting Station, located next door to the Press. The trained man gets ahead, so be among that up-and-coming company. Army trade schools are the best in the world. Air Force technical schools rate high, too. Yes, earn and learn by enlisting for training that really pays off in dollars and cents. Remember, this education costs you nothing.

To Relieve  
Misery of  
**COLDS**  
take **666**  
LIQUID OR TABLETS - SAME FAST RELIEF

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Bryant Mutual  
Burial Association

Oldest and Strongest  
in the County

**Macon**  
Dry Cleaners  
Prompt Efficient Work  
FOR PICK UP SERVICE  
Phone 270