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PLASTERING, BRICK AND CONCRETE WORK

1809-The Lincoln Centenary-1909
Lincoln as President"Now He Belongs to the Ages"—Child of Democracy and its Preserver.
Freeing the Slaves

By James A. Edgerton.

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NOW he belongs to the ages," said Secretary Stanton immediately after President Lincoln breathed his last.

Of one or two souls a century such a thing can truthfully be said. The ages are so merciless—or is it merciful?—in forgetting that it takes a very large man, a human mountain peak, to be seen by all countries and all times. Was Lincoln such a mountain peak? We are too close to him even yet to say, but everything would point him a place among earth's immortals. Men love liberators because they love liberty. They love mercy and truth, even though they do not practice the one nor follow the other. Most men believe in democracy, and all men will do so before the end of another century. All human beings admire usefulness—at least in other people. Lincoln was a liberator, just as he was an embodiment of mercy and truth, democracy and usefulness. He had that kindly simplicity which makes universal appeal. He rang true at every point. Even his faults were so far from the petty and the mean and were so human that they make us love him. Above all, he rendered his service to the race. He died for man. All of these things are of the quality that endures. From my own viewpoint there is no American who has more that will endure him to the heart of the world in all lands and times than Abraham Lincoln. Love outlives all else, and his love for humanity was so large it is not to be wondered at that humanity's love is large for him. We get what we give. As we do to others, so are we done by.

Abraham Lincoln truly "belongs to the ages." His growing fame through the forty and more years that have passed since Secretary Stanton uttered the sentence confirms its truth. The

which he conducted the canvass for a second term. Such are the Gettysburg speech and the second inaugural. In all these things the man's mind worked true, and its processes, for the most part, are perfectly clear. There is one other illuminative and characteristic thing—many more, in fact, but one standing out distinctly—the manner of making up his cabinet. All these things he did in his own way. They are Lincolnian.

The act he has been most lauded for, of course, and doubtless will be most lauded for in future is the emancipation proclamation. I am not at all sure that this is a just estimate. I am not certain but that Lincoln was right in regarding the saving of the Union as the paramount thing, compared with which the liberation of the negro was subsidiary and only to be considered in so far as it contributed to the other. That this was President Lincoln's own attitude and belief he made plain over and over again.

The freeing of the chattel slaves was a great act. The freeing of wage slaves would be greater. But was not and is not the preservation of the republic, which is the vessel of all kinds of liberty for this land and for the whole race greater than either? America has given and is giving to the world a new idea in government. Her mission is to bring liberty and democracy to all nations and to all slaves. This she will do, not by force, but by example and precedent. It is not her mission for this work and for other great work in the future more important than the freeing of a few million black slaves?

It is impossible, however, to separate the two things. The destruction of slavery was necessary to the preservation of the republic. Lincoln himself pointed this out when he said, "the



He prepared the proclamation long before it was given out.

universal celebration of the centenary of Lincoln's birth is but an earnest of like celebrations that are to come. His whole life was a confirmation of the success of democracy. He was its child and its preserver. Democracy is to be the greatest force in this world, and one so intimately linked with it must share its immortality.

Just as Lincoln belongs to the ages, so do his acts as president belong to history. With history we will leave them. This series of articles is not an attempt at history, not even an effort at biography. After all the histories of that time that have been written and all the biographies of its chief figure either attempt would be presumptuous. The only hope of the writer is to find Lincoln's soul and picture it to the world. I am seeking to get at the essentials of the man, the fundamentals, the things that differentiate him from all other characters in history. A mere recital of his acts or his public papers would not serve this purpose even if the public did not already know them by heart. Here and there, however, is a vital and salient thing which gives a clue to his character. Such is the struggle he went through in arriving at the determination to issue the emancipation proclamation. Such is his high statesmanship in the Mason and Seward affair. Such is the mercy he showed to confederate soldiers. Such is the serene manner in

which he conducted the canvass for a second term. Such are the Gettysburg speech and the second inaugural. In all these things the man's mind worked true, and its processes, for the most part, are perfectly clear. There is one other illuminative and characteristic thing—many more, in fact, but one standing out distinctly—the manner of making up his cabinet. All these things he did in his own way. They are Lincolnian.

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was done to the "divine institution." Lincoln was humane and full of cautious counselors. Even as it was, he prepared the proclamation long before it was given out, being held back at the advice of Seward. Above all else, Lincoln was on the ground and knew what was needed. It is hardly fair to judge him at this distance.

Here is sober truth, however. Up to the time the emancipation proclamation went into effect the Union victory had been few and slight. Within eight months thereafter occurred the twin successes at Vicksburg and Gettysburg, which decided the fate of the war. After all, the invisible moral forces rule the world.

The long and agonizing struggles through which President Lincoln passed in the early days of the war, in the death of his little son, in the misunderstandings and abuse from the abolitionists and others on his own side of the struggle, and his own mental conflict in arriving at a determination to liberate the slaves, made the first years of the war a veritable Gethsemane. That he long contemplated emancipation as soon as the proper hour arrived was shown by interviews with various friends. It is suggested that the defeat and his private grief had much to do with forcing him to take this supreme step. Through the wilderness of sorrow God leads us to many promised lands.

When emancipation came the fears of the timid concerning its disastrous effects on the northern cause were seen to be groundless. Events went on as before. But on the 4th of July following came the events which wrote this latest decree of freedom into the permanent law forever. The war dragged on after Gettysburg, but it was only a shell. Its spirit, which was breathing fresher, we ourselves never knew at the time. Apparently abandoning the pursuit, he retired as if going back to the fort, and in two or three days, as he surmised, the Indians were nowhere to be seen.

At last we got on their trail and had almost daily skirmishes, and General Carr decided to use some stratagem to see if we could not get them in a tight place. He consulted with me, and after a day of continual skirmishing and a night attack he ordered a retrograde movement, which created a great deal of confusion between the officers and men at the time. Apparently abandoning the pursuit, he retired as if going back to the fort, and in two or three days, as he surmised, the Indians were nowhere to be seen.

As I had surmised, they were heading for Summit Springs, a few miles south of the Platte river and among the sand hills, which formed a beautiful little oasis as it were, for a camp ground. Striking their trail by judging from their daily campfires, we made in one day the same distance that they made in three, but when near the Springs, as we saw the trail getting fresher, we covered four of their day's journey, with all their impediments and village outfit, in one day and landed at the opportune moment ready for business, while the enemy had been thrown off their guard and gave us an opening that resulted so gloriously that this battle is recognized as having been one of the most effective in the early breaking of the power of the red man on the plains.

In "Carr's Campaigns" General Carr writes: "On Sunday, July 11, 1869, I was thinking of going to the river to water my horses when 'Buffalo Bill' came back and said: 'I have seen the village. It is over a ridge, away from the river valley.' We had not seen the trail for some time. They had followed an old custom of trailing along the ridge where we had dismounted to cross it and going over the high ground, so that any one following them would be visible from camp. Cody's idea was to get around, beyond and between them and the river. He changed horses quickly and went on, and I took to the gallop for several miles through the deep sand and got to the top of a sand hill or mound. Some Pawnees

avowed off to the left on the bluff back of me, and I went. The Pawnees pointed over the ridge and said, 'Hoss, hoss.' I saw what looked like a band of ponies, but said, 'No, buffalo.' They said, 'No, no; hoss, hoss.' They took my glasses and looked and said, 'Yes, hoss, I looked, and, sure enough, they were ponies grazing, and the camp no doubt was below. I permitted the Pawnees, as

RESCUING A CAPTIVE AND SAVING A HERD BY BUFFALO BILL

FROM TRUE TALES OF THE PLAINS

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JUNE 18, 1869, under General Eugene A. Carr, we saw an hunting for a band of Indian "dog soldiers," who were, like the Irishman's flea, here, there and at times everywhere.

Nebraska, Colorado and Kansas were all riddled over the depredations of these rascals. They had murdered right and left, had captured several hundred mules and horses and destroyed wagon trains, as we could tell by the trail of some dead animals. When I saw our desire to punish or capture them was the fact that they had some white captives. Mrs. Aldridge, whose husband and children they had killed, was a widow, whose husband and family had also been murdered, and these two women were known to be still alive and with them.

At last we got on their trail and had almost daily skirmishes, and General Carr decided to use some stratagem to see if we could not get them in a tight place. He consulted with me, and after a day of continual skirmishing and a night attack he ordered a retrograde movement, which created a great deal of confusion between the officers and men at the time. Apparently abandoning the pursuit, he retired as if going back to the fort, and in two or three days, as he surmised, the Indians were nowhere to be seen.

As I had surmised, they were heading for Summit Springs, a few miles south of the Platte river and among the sand hills, which formed a beautiful little oasis as it were, for a camp ground. Striking their trail by judging from their daily campfires, we made in one day the same distance that they made in three, but when near the Springs, as we saw the trail getting fresher, we covered four of their day's journey, with all their impediments and village outfit, in one day and landed at the opportune moment ready for business, while the enemy had been thrown off their guard and gave us an opening that resulted so gloriously that this battle is recognized as having been one of the most effective in the early breaking of the power of the red man on the plains.

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was their custom, to stir and take off their saddles and all their belongings, but to keep on their drawers, so as to be recognized as friendly. I had sent word to Colonel Royal, and he sent Major Walker's company and Captain Price's and two companies of the Fifth cavalry in the center and one of Captain Price's on the right. I told Major Eugene Crittenden to take command of the center and I would take the reserve and send up reinforcements as required.

"When we all got started I told the bugler behind me to sound 'this charge' and we were among the enemy before they had any idea that we were so near. In a thousand miles. Then I heard the rattling of rifles on the right and left plainly distinguishing the heavy sound of 'Buffalo Bill's' trusty rifle, old 'Tall Bull'.

"Buffalo Bill got pretty well around the village when he went in on Captain Price's right. As he advanced he saw a chief on a horse charge at him and hurrying his men. He turned the party back for him, and as he came nearer 'Buffalo Bill' shot him off his horse and got the animal. This was the celebrated race horse 'Tall Bull' which he had ridden for a long time and with it won many exciting races. When he came into camp, Mrs. Aldridge said that it was her husband's horse, leaving no doubt about the fact that 'Buffalo Bill' had killed the chief.

"On this occasion the Indians had two white captives. Mrs. Aldridge and Mrs. Weir of Kansas, who had been shot in the back with a pistol bullet, which broke a rib, but was deflected and passed around and below her left breast. Fifteen hundred dollars in gold, silver and greenbacks, which was gathered in the camps, was given her, and she went back, regarried and 'proved up' her claim. Next morning we dug a grave on a hill above the village and buried Mrs. Aldridge, the surgeon reading the service.

"I detailed a board of officers to count the dead Indians, and notwithstanding that it is their duty to count the wounded and to hide or bury the dead we found sixty-eight dead bodies on the field."

As chief of scouts under General Phil Sheridan, I and the men were resting at Fort McPherson after a hard day's expedition and a long and successful chase. It was a quiet evening, and we were enjoying refreshing breezes. A detail had left the fort to water the government herd of horses and mules in the nearby Platte river when shots were heard. Every one was on his feet in a moment, for it was learned that a party of Sioux Indians had dashed from the cottonwood trees, shooting and killing a herd of about 400 animals. The Indians had killed two of the herders and wounded another. Some of the herd ran for the corral, where they were accustomed to go for their night, but the Indians got away with about 200 and started for the bluffs south of the fort. All was excitement, but, as was my custom, I had my war horse, 'Old Buckskin Joe,' near at hand and was mounted in time to make a reconnaissance and note the direction in which the Indians had disappeared with the government stock.

General William B. Smith had his bugler sound the "charge" and we were off by the time I returned for instructions five troops of cavalry were busy saddling up, getting their arms, ammunition and some supplies. One company—1, Fifth United States cavalry—were the first to start, and a young lieutenant by the name of Earl D. Thomas, now Brigadier General Thomas and in command of the department of Colorado, was just about delighted to be in command in the absence of his superiors. General Emory and myself acted on the necessity of quick action, and to the delight of young Thomas he was ordered with his troop to follow me, while the other troops as soon as ready would follow.

"Fours right! Ready! Gallop!" And we dashed off. We followed at a gallop until dark, but did not get a sight of the Indians, and the tracks showed that they were whooping it up on the run. A halt was called to give the puffing horses a rest, and Thomas consulted me. His orders were to follow and recapture the stolen stock, and I told him I could follow the trail at night if necessary and awaited his answer. "I will follow you, Mr. Cody," I was told to do so, and I will go wherever you propose." After a short rest, on and forward we went, and the chase was continued. During the night the Indians repeatedly doubled on their trail. We did not reach Medicine Creek, where we got water for men and horses, until 11 o'clock the next day.

The trail showed that the Indians were headed southwest, in the direction of Red Willow Springs. Knowing that there was no water between Medicine Creek and the Red Willow, I was sure that the Indians would make a

stop there, as it was many miles from there to the next water. We decided it was best to keep continuously on the job and as the Indians must make some stop to rest and eat we could overtake them. When the horses were rested and we had nothing on hand to eat to delay us and had had nothing since dinner the day before, our best possibility for a meal was to overtake the Indians, surprise them, whip them and capture what dried meat they had.

After leaving the creek the Indians began their old tricks in trying to hide their trail by devices well known to me, but I paid no attention to this. Knowing what must be the next stopping place, and I was as familiar with that part of the country as they were. Straight on we kept to the Springs, except that occasionally we went out of the direct line to keep in low places. However, the sand hills so as not to be seen. At 3 o'clock that night we halted four miles from the Springs. Advancing Thomas to allow the men to unsaddle and unbuckle, letting each second man hold two horses by their halteres, and we let them out on the grass, changing the men every two hours so they could get some sleep. I disguised myself as an Indian and started off to locate the horses and be back in time so as to attack them at daylight. No fires were to be lighted, and all were



The one I shot went through his chest, to be about until my return. Before I left, half of the tired men of the little band were snoring. One hour later I had seen the camp, just as I expected, in fanciful security, believing that we could not be within a day's march of them.

Crawling back till I could hear it on the run, I found the boys as I had left them. Quietly they were called to saddle up. Instructions were given, and we were detailed to pay particular attention to recapturing and rounding up the herd, and others were instructed as to the attack on the camp. I estimated the Indians to number about thirty, and there were only two of us. They were to creep up to the sleeping Indians on foot and be ready to work in open order. Twenty besides the lieutenant and myself, were to charge on horseback. The rest were to bring up the remaining horses, attack the herders and round up the entire herd. We attacked at break of day, and the whole scheme worked well. The tired men were surprised when awakened to meet their foe. Nine of them were sent to sleep forever. Many had kept their war horses near them, and hastily mounting they escaped with several picked horses from our band. Among them was one of our war horses, Powder Face, which one of them, who probably knew him well, had appropriated for his own use.

As soon as the fight was over and I saw that we had captured some of those horses as well as our own, I saw that Powder Face was not with them, but I recognized him half a mile away, his rider heading for the hills. This made me hot, and knowing that the Indians would think others were following me, I dashed after them. Old Buckskin Joe soon began to gain, and I got near enough for a shot. My first shot killed the horse that an Indian was riding alongside of Powder Face, and his rider was soon up behind in the usual manner they try to save a warrior, riding backward, shooting at me with his revolver. Powder Face was as swift as Joe. Being in the rough sand hills and having a double weight to carry, Joe in a few minutes was near enough for a good shot. I kept closing on him, as I did not want to hit my old friend Powder Face. When I thought it sure as they were riding up over a mound of sand, I dashed after them. They found a lot of dried buffalo and deer meat and some fresh antelope and deer, with accompanying pepper and salt and copious drafts of spring water, so a few minutes' reloading was had. A detail was quickly made up to bury the dead, and as we had but two horses slightly wounded and five horses knocked out the enthusiasm can hardly be described.

