November 2008

Presidential Speeches

Welcome to the 19th issue of the Central Illinois Teaching with Primary Sources Newsletter, a collaborative project of Teaching with Primary Sources Programs at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville and Eastern Illinois University. With this issue and continuing through February 2009 the theme each month will reflect primary sources of the Abraham Lincoln Calendar. You can download and print a copy of the calendar at http://www.eiu.edu/~eiutps.

Abraham Lincoln had very little formal schooling, yet his speeches contradict this fact. They are elegant and influential. They can stir emotion and rally those for his cause. Lincoln lived in a time before the speech writers that we know today. A president or official actually had to sit down, pen to paper and write their own comments.

As Lincoln was leaving Springfield in February 1861, he gave an unplanned speech from the back of the train taking him to Washington D.C. to become the President of the United States. The speech to friends and neighbors, was short and heartfelt with Lincoln saying "To this place, and the kindness of these people, I owe everything". After he delivered his speech Lincoln was asked to put it into writing.

The jostling train ride and a hand sore from many, many handshakes led to illegible handwriting, so Lincoln asked his secretary John Nicolay to transcribe his words after the first two sentences. Library of Congress Exhibits American Treasures of the Library of Congress Memory accessed 10.24.08

With war looming and in anticipation of the southern states succeeding from the Union, President Lincoln’s first Inaugural Address had to be carefully designed. He wanted to support the north and yet not alienate the south. Early drafts closed his address with a question to the south: "Shall it be peace or the sword?" Following suggestions by William Seward, Lincoln ended up rewriting the last paragraph with a more gentle ending, "I am loth to close. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, string[t]ching from every battlefield, and patriot grave, to every living heart and hearthstone, all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature.” Library of Congress, American Treasures of the Library of Congress Top Collections accessed 10.27.08

During President Lincoln’s second inauguration the Civil War was near an end and it was a time for healing the nation. Delivering his address from the east portico of the Capitol, Lincoln concluded his address "With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan -- to do all which may achieve and cherish a just, and lasting peace, among ourselves, and with all nations.” Library of Congress Exhibits American Treasures of the Library of Congress Top Treasures accessed 10.27.08

Several months after the battle of Gettysburg, President Lincoln was invited to make a “few appropriate remarks” at the dedication of a cemetery for Union soldiers. Edward Everett, the speaker before Lincoln addressed the crowd with a speech that lasted two hours. When it was Lincoln’s turn, his speech lasted just over two minutes. In spite of Lincoln’s disclaimer that "the world will little note, nor long remember what we say here," his brief speech continues to be one of the most quoted speeches in our time. Library of Congress America’s Library accessed 11.11.08
Beyond Lincoln

Today you would probably be hard pressed to find a public figure who writes their own speeches. In this era, speech writers have become a necessity to those in office. But whether they wrote the speech themselves or had the help of a speech writer in polishing and organizing their thoughts, there have been powerful and moving speeches given by presidents. With the growth of technology, presidents were able to reach a wider audience. President Calvin Coolidge used radio to give his presidential address. Franklin D. Roosevelt was the first president to appear on television and President Clinton was the first to use the internet to relay his speeches.

Library of Congress American Memory accessed 10.24.08

As Lewis and Clark explored regions beyond the Mississippi, Native Americans were a threat to their safety. President Thomas Jefferson delivered a speech to a delegation of Indian Chiefs in 1806. Unlike President Lincoln, who used a gentle tone and inviting words to assure the south, Jefferson sought to intimidate the Native Americans. He welcomes them to the U.S. Government with empty promises of a shared country, he refers to himself and the government as the Native Americans father and seems to threaten them into submission by saying “My children, we are strong, we are numerous as the stars in the heavens, and we are all gun-men.” Library of Congress Exhibitions Lewis and Clark accessed 10.24.08

President Woodrow Wilson delivered his “14 Points” speech to Congress on January 8, 1918. This speech outlined Wilson’s terms for ending World War I. Wilson directed his speech not only towards the American people but also to the enemy. He gave specific goals which appealed to American idealism while also gearing his speech toward “Central Powers” to bring an end to the war. Library of Congress American Memory accessed 10.27.08

While presidents give speeches throughout their tenure, perhaps some of the most memorable statements have been from inaugural speeches. This is the time for the incoming president to rally the people behind him in his plans for the future. With the depression firmly gripping America by 1933, President Franklin D. Roosevelt sought to put the country at ease in his first inaugural address by saying “So, first of all, let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself.”

In President John F. Kennedy’s inaugural address he urged Americans to serve their country “And so, my fellow Americans: ask not what your country can do for you--ask what you can do for your country.” Calling for a “dramatic change” in our country, President Clinton stated in his first inaugural address with these words “There is nothing wrong with America that cannot be cured by what is right with America.” Library of Congress American Memory accessed 10.27.08

In 1987 President Ronald Reagan traveled to Berlin, West Germany seeking the fall of communism and an end to the cold war. His words echoed past the wall and into East Germany to great applause he requested of General Secretary Gorbachev, “if you seek peace, if you seek prosperity for the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, if you seek liberalization: Come here to this gate! Mr. Gorbachev, open this gate! Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!” Ronald Regan Library accessed 10.24.08
The Abraham Lincoln Papers at the Library of Congress  
http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/alhtml/malhome.html

This collection is abundant in Lincoln speeches. There are rough drafts in Lincoln's hand and you can follow changes to the final draft. His farewell to Springfield, his inaugural addresses, the Gettysburg address can all be found here. Included are speeches Lincoln gave before his presidency such as his views regarding the Mexican War. There are also letters in which Lincoln sent speeches to advisors and friends asking for their opinions. You can see if Lincoln took their advice or kept true to his drafts.

An American Time Capsule: Three Centuries of Broadsides and other Printed Ephemera  
http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/rbpehtml/

In a time before radio and television, Americans relied on newspapers and broadsides to relay the presidents' message. You can read a broadside from a speech that President Washington gave to both houses of Congress on a very delicate subject. Taxation was part of the reason for the Revolutionary War, so when Washington had to address the subject of taxes it was met with much resistance. http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/rbpebib:@field(NUMBER+@band(rbpe+22100300))

With the ending Civil War and the start of his second term in office, President Lincoln's second inaugural speech became quite popular. So popular, in fact, that it was produced into a beautiful broadside people could have as a keepsake. http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/rbpebib:@field(NUMBER+@band(rbpe+15900100))

Prosperity and Thrift: The Coolidge Era and the Consumer Economy, 1921-1929  
http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/coolhtml/coolhome.html

To many Americans, Calvin Coolidge embodied the frugality they sought in their lives. The image he presented in numerous photographs and films was that of a simple man who endorsed plain living. Pictures of him as a rural Vermonter working in the fields of his family's Plymouth Notch farm emphasized traditional values and thriftiness and claimed anxieties about excess and indulgence. It was an image that served him well and he actively promoted in his electoral and public-relations campaigns.

During his time as president he concerned himself with such measures as paying off the national debt, eliminating waste, and cutting taxes to stimulate capital investment. Everett Sanders, one of President Coolidge's private secretaries, preserved a bound set of fifty-nine formal addresses given by the president and subsequently printed by the Government Printing Office. The speeches were during Coolidge's second term of office. The fifty-nine addresses are available in this digital collection as separate items. There are also five short films and seven audio selections of Coolidge speeches. Library of Congress American Memory accessed 10.28.08
Lesson Plans, Activities and Resources

**Wise Guide:**
We Must Not Be Enemies  http://www.loc.gov/wiseguide/mar04/enemies.html
I Do Solemnly Swear  http://www.loc.gov/wiseguide/feb05/swear.html
An Incredibly Long Winded President Who Wasn’t President For Very Long  http://www.loc.gov/wiseguide/aug05/harrison.html

**Today in History:**
November 19: Gettysburg Address  http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/today/nov19.html
April 30: Washington’s Inauguration  http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/today/apr30.html
January 5: Harry S. Truman  http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/today/jan05.html

**Web Guides:**
George Washington’s First Inaugural Address  http://www.loc.gov/rr/program/bib/ourdocs/inaugural.html
Gettysburg Address  http://www.loc.gov/rr/program/bib/ourdocs/Gettysburg.html

**Exhibitions:**

**Learning Page:**
Collection Connections:
Abraham Lincoln Papers At The Library Of Congress  http://memory.loc.gov/learn/collections/papers/langarts5.html

**America’s Story:**
Jump Back in Time:
Abraham Lincoln’s Inauguration  http://www.americaslibrary.gov/cgi-bin/page.cgi/jb/civil/lincoln2_1
President Lincoln Delivered The Gettysburg Address  http://www.americaslibrary.gov/cgi-bin/page.cgi/jb/civil/gettysbg_1
President Harding Installed A Radio In The White House  http://www.americaslibrary.gov/cgi-bin/page.cgi/jb/jazz/radio_3

Meet Amazing Americans:
Monroe’s Popular Presidency  http://www.americaslibrary.gov/cgi-bin/page.cgi/aa/presidents/monroe/era_2
Abraham Lincoln  http://www.americaslibrary.gov/cgi-bin/page.cgi/aa/lincoln

Explore the States:
The Civil War In Pennsylvania (Gettysburg Address)  http://www.americaslibrary.gov/cgi-bin/page.cgi/es/pa/civilwar_1
The Library of Congress Veterans History Project (VHP), a program of the American Folklife Center, commemorates Veterans Day on Nov. 11 and National Veterans Awareness Week, Nov. 9-15, with a special Web presentation at www.loc.gov/vets featuring the first hand recollections of soldiers from the 92nd Infantry Division of World War II.

The 92nd Division, an all-African-American unit in World War II nicknamed the "Buffalo Soldiers," distinguished itself on the battlefields of Italy and earned an honored chapter in our nation’s history. Two years after the war ended, President Harry Truman signed an order to desegregate the U.S. Armed Forces.

Showcasing original photographs, video and firsthand narratives, the VHP presentation provides an up-close look at the experiences of nine division soldiers who contributed their recollections to the Library of Congress. The special feature is the latest installment in more than 20 online presentations comprising the "Experiencing War" series.

Narratives include that of A. William Perry, who had been in the Army for only 10 days when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. He was shipped from his hometown in Cleveland to Alabama for the first of many postings in the racially divided South. Perry recalls that Italy was the first place in his service career where he actually felt welcomed by certain senior officers and by grateful Italian citizens. He describes the challenge of fighting the Germans while they hid out in landmark buildings like the Tower of Pisa, off-limits to Allied firepower.

Elvin Davidson enlisted with a plan to become a cavalry officer, just as his father had during the Spanish-American War. As the cavalry became obsolete, Davidson wound up a noncommissioned officer in the infantry with the 92nd Division. Davidson describes the hardships of serving in Italy, his leniency with his men, the importance of camaraderie to morale and the conditions in postwar Japan, where he served during the Occupation.

Robert Madison’s profile is rich in personal perspective. "We really believed sincerely that we were going to make our mark in this war and become able to claim our rights when we returned to the States." An architecture student at Howard University on December 7, 1941, Madison was also a member of ROTC, which allowed him to serve in the Army as an officer, albeit in a segregated environment.

"Because these extraordinary individuals shared their recollections with the Veterans History Project," said VHP Director Bob Patrick, "future generations will have more than a textbook account of what it was like to serve in the 92nd Division. They will learn history directly from those who lived it."

The Veterans History Project was created in 2000 by Congress to record the firsthand remembrances of American service personnel in major conflicts beginning with World War I. During Veterans Day and National Veterans Awareness Week, the Library of Congress and VHP issue a challenge to Americans to interview a veteran in their family or community. Guidelines are online at www.loc.gov/vets.
Test Your Knowledge...

Presidential Speeches Word Search.
All answers are found in within the text of this newsletter.

L J I Y G J H X R E A G A N R Q X
A Z I N T Q D J C L W K M L F B C
R K N H U O A L I Z T P O O X X S
U E S R O O S E V E L T U X R N C
G N M W D V N V F X P R F Q G R V
U N K F M A P R M H T Y L C W C Q
A E D G T C W E S E E E O E Q H D V
N D L E B S Z C E G N V S J B A B
I Y K X A H H N D O U Y T C W G Y
M Z P H U O P I T C U O I M X P T
Y L U R O O L N D R U X R C A F I
Q X L L I O I G H Q Z F A U B D R
Z R I N O L E Z I R S C E G Z R A
Z N T C C P D Z M A F A F X A O H
G S S P E E C H W R I T E R S W C
A F G J J E F F E R S O N Q N S M
L X S L L E W E R A F M M F M A D
Test Your Knowledge...

1. One of the presidents most important and first public speeches.
2. Lincoln’s speeches are elegantly written for someone with very little formal _____.
3. Today speeches are often written by ____ _____.
4. In Lincoln’s second inaugural address he was careful not to ____ the south.
5. The draft for Lincoln’s first inaugural ended with a question to the south, “Shall it be peace or the ____?”
6. He used radio to deliver his presidential addresses.
7. He was the first president to appear on television.
8. He used the internet to relay his speeches to America.
9. President Woodrow Wilson delivered this speech to Congress on January 8, 1819
10. This president delivered a speech to a delegation of Indian Chiefs.
11. Which president gave the “tear down this wall” speech in West Germany?
12. Franklin D. Roosevelt’s inaugural address contained the phrase “we have nothing to fear but ____ _____.
13. This president urged his fellow citizens to “ask now what your country can do for you but what you can do for your country.”
14. As Lincoln left for Washington D.C. he gave an impromptu speech later know as his ____ to Springfield.
15. Lincoln concluded his second inaugural address “With malice towards non with ____ for all.
Image Sources

Library of Congress
Abraham Lincoln raising flag and speaking to crowd from platform
Touring Turn of the Century America: Photographs from the Detroit Publishing Company

Library of Congress
Lincoln's address at the dedication of the Gettysburg National Cemetery, November 19, 1863
Prints and Photographs

Library of Congress
Lincoln's second inaugural
Prints and Photographs

Library of Congress
Ronald Reagan, half-length portrait, standing, facing left, making speech
Prints and Photographs

Library of Congress
Woodrow Wilson speaking at his first inauguration on the east portico of the U.S. Capitol, March 4, 1913, with the Great Seal of the United States hanging below him
Prints and Photographs

Library of Congress
Thomas Jefferson
Touring Turn of the Century America: Photographs from the Detroit Publishing Company

Library of Congress
President John F. Kennedy, head-and-shoulders portrait, facing right, behind podium with microphones, addressing the American people with news that the U.S. is setting up a naval blockade against Cuba
Prints and Photographs

Library of Congress
Bill Clinton, half-length portrait, facing front, at podium
Prints and Photographs

Library of Congress
Abraham Lincoln: Sixteenth President of the United States
Prints and Photographs

Library of Congress
George Washington's first inaugural address, 30 April 1789.
Words and Deeds in American History
Inaugural address of Abraham Lincoln March 4th, 1865 ... Philadelphia. Jas. B. Rodgers, printer, 52 & 54 North Sixth St. [1865].

President Coolidge signing appropriation bills for the Veterans Bureau on the south lawn during the garden party for wounded veterans.

The new President delivering his inaugural address [March 4, 1897]

President Franklin Delano Roosevelt speaking at podium, facing left

President Coolidge three-quarter length portrait, standing at podium, facing slightly left, at Decoration Day ceremonies, Arlington

Harry S. Truman makes first address as U.S. President

President Jimmy Carter working on a speech for television in the Oval Office of the White House, Washington, D.C.

President Jimmy Carter addresses a Joint Session of Congress, announcing the results of the Camp David Accords, with Vice President Walter Mondale and Speaker of the House Tip O'Neill seated behind him

President [Theodore] Roosevelt’s western tour: A speech at New Castle, Wyoming

Taft speaking at Springfield, Mass.