The Hoosier Youth
Fort Wayne, Indiana
September 16, 1932

I count it a privilege and an honor to have the opportunity to congratulate Paul Manship and the Lincoln Foundation on the statue we are dedicating here today. For it is the truest, as it is the most beautiful concept of Abraham Lincoln as a youth yet given the country.

Until now that youth has been the victim of a pitiless and ~~indefatigable~~ unremitting realism. Mr. Manship has stripped away the accumulation of sordid and ugly details under which the boy was all but buried and by a simple, noble and truthful art has given us a Hoosier Youth fit to be the man we know.

Here you have a son of the Republic, one who early dreamed its dream. Freedom for all men to be secured by the union of all men was the substance of the faith of Abraham Lincoln's life. He put it into simple terms - the right of all men to eat the bread they earn-coupled with that right was the responsibility to earn the bread you eat. As he saw the Republic there was place in it for neither slave or parasite. His faith was part of him - no heroics - no show of superiority about it, but simply, naturally held a steady place in the man.

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And what a man he was. A worker; his hand always on his axe. "A good worker is so rare," Ralph Waldo Emerson commented watching Lincoln with keen eye. Chiefly he labored to get at the core of his thought and finding it to preserve it in words as clear as light - no mistake in their meaning.

Work never clouded the kindess of his nature. The man was friendly, easy to go to for counsel and help. The child, the youth, the man sought him instinctively for companionship. Even in his life time this friendliness became a legend. A man helped out of trouble - a child comforted - a youth set straight - the doer unknown - it was Lincoln who did it. It was like him.

His humor took on early this legendary quality - wise and witty comment - good stories - sources unknown were his and before his death were gathered into books and his name put to them. He was the Universal friend - the Universal Humorist.

This friendliness, this humor, were so much a part of him that no burden, no sorrow, could check this natural flow. They were indeed strong allies in the Dreadful Days of the Civil War.

He knew his mind at the start - one purpose to save the Union that freedom might save the dream to which she

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was committed. But this task must be done with men - all sorts of men. He saw early that he must not ask of them what was not in them to give. He must find what each could do.

Men might fool him for a time, but never long. His insight into motives was uncanny. He sensed the contempt in which many a man held him on first sight - sensed jealousy - intrigue - treachery - and again and again outwitted - established himself and kept his victory to himself. These men were necessary to the country, great men though they might not believe in his fitness, his judgment. He must spike their guns - save their forces.

Incredible his patience. It was the wisdom of the Hoosier Youth who had lived under the laws of God and nature, had learned ~~that~~ that victory is a harvest which takes time. that haste, violence, delay, may destroy it.

So he could be patient, and as the years, with their torturing sorrows, went by he learned what was not easy for him - natural satirist and lampooner that he was - to speak no harsh or bitter word of any man, which meant he must think no harsh or bitter thoughts. He came to that supreme self conquest before the end.

"The things with which I deal are too great for malice," he told Horace Greeley.

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There you have the best of him - the supreme thing he had learned in his long years of travail. When with victory in sight he asked the country to face it, "with malice towards none, with charity to all." He was but putting into words what he had come to believe to be the final, highest wisdom in man's relation with his fellows.

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