

# The Bryan Birthday Banquet

The Bryan birthday banquet was held at Lincoln, March 19, 1913, under the auspices of the Lincoln Bryan club. Following is an extract from the report of the Lincoln (Neb.) Journal:

William J. Bryan, secretary of state, was welcomed to his home city last night by 2,000 democrats and friends who had gathered in honor of the fifty-third anniversary of his birth. The crowd filled the floor, the stage and the galleries of the city auditorium where the Lincoln Bryan club held its annual dinner in Mr. Bryan's honor.

It was an orderly crowd that greeted the new secretary of state. The various speakers were cordially received and some of their remarks concerning Mr. Bryan were received with vigorous applause but Mr. Bryan alone could bring out anything like an ovation. When he first came on to the platform he was greeted with cheers and again when he arose to speak the diners rose to their feet and cheered. His statements were applauded lustily and when he concluded his speech there was a rush for the stage by those who wanted to shake hands with him.

Speakers from Nebraska and other states lauded the work of the guest of honor, praised his character as a man and as a representative of the people and extended their best wishes for his future career. In reply Mr. Bryan pledged himself to continue the work for which he was praised and especially to back the efforts of the new president. When he was praised for his part in the Baltimore convention which the speakers said had resulted in the election of Woodrow Wilson, Mr. Bryan deprecated the laudation.

"I did not produce the conditions," he said, "The conditions produced me."

The auditorium was packed with men who waited for a half hour to gain advantageous places at the long tables. Several hundred were unable to take dinner in the hall and after eating at the hotel they took places in the gallery. The gallery had been filled previously by men and women who sat in their places for four hours.

The big room had been decorated with large flags and colored lights and pictures of Wilson, Marshall and Bryan were strewn over the walls. Tables were placed lengthwise down the hall, packed as tightly as possible and a thousand men rubbed elbows at the meal. On the stage eight tables accommodated about 200 men. Across the front of the stage was the speakers' table at which sat only those who had an active part on the program.

An orchestra at one end of the gallery played during the meal. As Mr. Bryan entered the building the musicians played "The Star Spangled Banner," bringing the crowd to its feet. Later it played Mr. Bryan's favorite air, "La Paloma" and drew cheers from the crowd.

The doors of the auditorium were thrown open at 6:30 and the seats were filled almost immediately. At the hotel the speakers and those who were to have seats on the stage, were lined up and at 7 o'clock they entered the stage door. A few moments after the rear tables had been filled Mr. Bryan and the other speakers appeared. As Governor Morehead appeared at the head of the line cheers broke from the audience. The applause was increased to a roar of cheers as Mr. Bryan appeared from the wings and made his way to the table.

Mr. Bryan remained standing while the audience cheered, bowing to different parts of the hall. The finale to the demonstration came when those on the lower floor and the men and women in the gallery rose and with their handkerchiefs waved the chautauqua salute.

After the first demonstration the diners devoted themselves exclusively to the meal with the exception of when "Dixie" and "La Paloma" were played by the orchestra. Knowing Mr. Bryan's liking for those airs the crowd showed its approval of the musicians. The meal had been served before the diners took their places and with the exceptions of coffee and ice there was no serving. For this reason the delay in changing courses was obviated and the banqueters hastened through the meal within an hour.

O. W. Meier, president of the Lincoln Bryan club made the opening remarks and introduced the chaplain of the evening, Rev. H. R. Chapman. Mr. Meier drew applause from the audience when he referred to Mr. Bryan as the

## THE PROGRAM

President Lincoln Bryan Club.....  
 .....Mr. O. W. Meier.  
 Invocation.....Rev. H. R. Chapman.  
 Toastmaster.....Hon. Edgar Howard.  
 "Star of West".....Becker Quartette, Lincoln.  
 "Mr. Bryan as a World Citizen".....  
 .....Charles Reign Scoville, Chicago.  
 "Nebraska Hospitality".....  
 .....Governor John H. Morehead, Nebraska.  
 "The Party".....Hon. Jerry B. Sullivan, Iowa.  
 "Reclaiming Kansas".....  
 .....Governor George H. Hodges, Kansas.  
 "There Stands Illinois".....  
 .....Governor Edward F. Dunne, Illinois.  
 Mr. Bryan.

"prime minister of the United States." He introduced Edgar Howard as toastmaster.

The "solemn wit" of Mr. Howard, which had been promised by Mr. Meier met with the liking of the crowd and his every announcement was met with cheers. The toastmaster read the long list of congratulatory telegrams which had been received during the day. He introduced the various speakers with but little delay.

Speakers for the evening who lauded the achievements of Mr. Bryan were Governor John H. Morehead of Nebraska, Governor George H. Hodges of Kansas, Governor E. F. Dunne of Illinois, Dr. Charles R. Scoville of Chicago, and Jerry B. Sullivan of Iowa. Edgar Howard of Columbus presided as toastmaster, being introduced by O. W. Meier, president of the Lincoln Bryan club.

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Telegrams were read as follows:  
 The White House, Washington, D. C.,  
 March 19, 1913.

Hon. Edgar Howard, Toastmaster,  
 Lincoln, Neb.

Please accept my sincere good wishes on the occasion of the celebration of Mr. Bryan's birthday by the Lincoln Bryan club. I can not tell you what a comfort it is to me to know that I am to have the aid and counsel of your distinguished fellow townsman. It is a source of genuine pleasure as well as great advantage to me to be associated with him.

WOODROW WILSON.

Washington, D. C., March 17, 1913.  
 Hon. Edgar Howard, Toastmaster,  
 Lincoln Bryan Club, Lincoln, Neb.

I genuinely regret that extraordinary pressure of public business renders it impossible for me to be present on the occasion of the celebration of Mr. Bryan's birthday, March 19th, but I take this opportunity to extend to the members of your club my sincere congratulations upon the conspicuous and well deserved honors so recently conferred upon your distinguished guest. Please accept my earnest regards and best wishes for a happy birthday for Mr. Bryan, with many returns,

W. G. McADOO,  
 Secretary of Treasury.

Washington, D. C., March 18, 1913.  
 Hon. Edgar Howard, Toastmaster,  
 Lincoln, Neb.

Thank you sincerely for your cordial invitation to the celebration in honor of Mr. Bryan's birthday. He has accomplished wonderful things and it would give me a great deal of pleasure to join you in expressing appreciation of them, but unfortunately circumstances will not permit.

JAMES C. McREYNOLDS,  
 Attorney General.

Washington, D. C., March 17, 1913.  
 Hon. Edgar Howard, Toastmaster,  
 Lincoln, Neb.

Convey to your distinguished guest of honor the warmest greetings of a colleague and tell him that I adopt, ratify and confirm all the nice things you who are fortunate enough to be present say to him.

LINDLEY M. GARRISON,  
 Secretary of War.

Washington, D. C., March 17, 1913.  
 Hon. Edgar Howard, Toastmaster,  
 Lincoln, Neb.

The appreciation of Mr. Bryan by the people of his home city attests the truth that we have come to a day when it can no longer be said

that a prophet is not without honor save in his own country. Intimate personal and political association with your distinguished townsman since 1894 has ripened into a friendship between us as lasting as life itself. As the pioneer progressive and patriotic seer of his generation his place in history needs no official position. Every hamlet and home in America will be with you in giving honor to Mr. Bryan because in honoring him his neighbors honor the principles which he incarnates.

JOSEPHUS DANIELS,  
 Secretary of Navy.

Washington, D. C., March 19, 1913.  
 Hon. Edgar Howard, Toastmaster,  
 Lincoln, Neb.

Regret that I can not be with you to do honor to Nebraska's great statesman who for sixteen years as the leader of his party discharged every responsibility imposed upon him as such with superb courage and unswerving fidelity in the new sphere of activity to which he has been called. I have abiding confidence that he will meet his great responsibility with distinguished credit to himself and to the great service of his country.

A. S. BURLESON,  
 Postmaster General.

Washington, D. C., March 18, 1913.  
 Hon. Edgar Howard, Toastmaster,  
 Lincoln, Neb.

Thank you for kind invitation as per telegram. I regret important engagements make it impossible for me to leave Washington now.

WILLIAM M. C. REDFIELD,  
 Secretary of Commerce.

Washington, D. C., March 18, 1913.  
 Hon. Edgar Howard, Toastmaster,  
 Lincoln, Neb.

Greatly regret inability to be with you at banquet to be tendered Secretary Bryan tomorrow, but join with you in wishing him many more years of usefulness.

W. B. WILSON,  
 Secretary of Labor.

Indianapolis, Ind., March 18, 1913.  
 Hon. Edgar Howard, Toastmaster,  
 Lincoln, Neb.

Regret I can not attend the celebration of Mr. Bryan's birthday tomorrow. I congratulate the democracy of Nebraska upon the dedication of his life to the service of the nation. America's Gladstone hailed from Nebraska.

SAMUEL M. RALSTON,  
 Governor of Indiana.

Columbus, Ohio, March 17, 1913.  
 Hon. Edgar Howard, Toastmaster of Bryan Banquet,  
 Lincoln, Neb.

My Dear Sir:

I want to express the keen regret I feel in not being able to attend the annual function in honor of Mr. Bryan. It would be a privilege to join with his friends from all over the country and his home folks at Lincoln in doing honor to the man who has made possible the return of democratic prestige and glory. The progressive program which we are carrying out in this state is in exact harmony with the principles he has been proclaiming for years. Ohio is with you in spirit and in no degree yields to Nebraska in the measure of affection held for Mr. Bryan.

JAMES M. COX,  
 Governor of Ohio.

Albany, N. Y., March 19, 1912.  
 Hon. Edgar Howard, Toastmaster Bryan Banquet, Lincoln, Neb.

Regret exceedingly my inability to be present at Mr. Bryan's birthday banquet. I send greetings and congratulations to the distinguished secretary of state on the anniversary of his birthday and wish him many happy returns. He will make one of the greatest secretaries of state in the history of our country and his administration will be for peace. Regards and best wishes to all assembled. I am with you in spirit.

WILLIAM SULZER,  
 Governor of New York.

## FROM SENATOR THOMAS

Hon. Edgar Howard, Toastmaster,  
 Lincoln, Neb.

Dear Sir:

Nothing short of an arbitrary court engagement would keep me from the Bryan banquet