

# *The* *American* CITIZENS HANDBOOK

Arranged by JOY ELMER MORGAN  
Editor, Journal of the National Education  
Association, and published under the Hugh  
Birch-Horace Mann Fund, for the Committee  
on Induction into Citizenship

FIRST EDITION

THE NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION  
OF THE UNITED STATES      WASHINGTON, D. C.

# The American Citizens Handbook

*EACH YEAR more than two and a half million young men and women in the United States reach voting age. Others acquire voting privileges thru naturalization. In order that there may be an impressive public occasion for the induction of these new voters into the responsibilities which go with their new status in our selfgoverning Republic, the third Sunday in May each year has been set aside by state and national legislation as Citizenship Recognition Day to be observed by appropriate public ceremonies.*

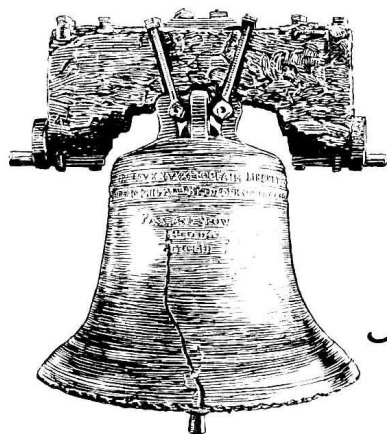
TO THESE NEW VOTERS  
THIS HANDBOOK IS DEDICATED

## YOU, AT THIS MOMENT

*have the honor to belong to a generation whose lips are touched by fire . . . The human race now passes thru one of its great crises. New ideas, new issues—a new call for men to carry on the work of righteousness, of charity, of courage, of patience, and of loyalty—all these things have come and are daily coming to you.*

*When you are old . . . however memory brings back this moment to your minds, let it be able to say to you: That was a great moment. It was the beginning of a new era . . . This world in its crisis called for volunteers, for men of faith in life, of patience in service, of charity, and of insight. I responded to the call however I could. I volunteered to give myself to my master—the cause of humane and brave living. I studied, I loved, I labored, unsparingly and hopefully, to be worthy of my generation.*

—JOSIAH ROYCE.



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## Foreword

To be a good father, mother, brother, sister, or friend;  
To be a dependable, faithful, and skilled worker in home,  
school, field, factory, or office;  
To be an intelligent, honest, useful, and loyal citizen,  
with faith in God and love of fellowman;  
To recognize the brotherhood of man and to live by the  
Golden Rule—

These are the aspirations that have brought happiness and achievement to the America we all love. These are the aspirations that must help us find our way to new glory and grace in the midst of worldwide change. A great civilization must have its roots in the soil of the past and its branches reaching to the stars of the future. Otherwise it lacks the experience and motive necessary for noble achievement in the present. Has the nation lost its way? Let it return again to the faith of its youth. This faith is found at its best in the lives and writings of great leaders who have quickened and purified the national spirit.

This book belongs to you as an American citizen. In it you will find the ideals that have inspired generations of the best men and women to work out on this continent a democracy of liberty, equal opportunity, and personal growth. Read this book carefully; study the documents on which your rights as a citizen are based; memorize its songs and poetry; enjoy the inspiring statements which have given purpose, hope, and courage to millions of Americans.

—JOY ELMER MORGAN.

*AMERICA is great because of the ideals which the pioneers established for its homes, for its schools, and for its democratic community life. It has chosen to take the higher path—to reach up and out and forward. The future of America depends simply on our being ourselves; on our standing by the ideals that have made us great; on magnifying the home; on building up our schools; and on keeping alive among our citizens the spirit of reform and social advance.*

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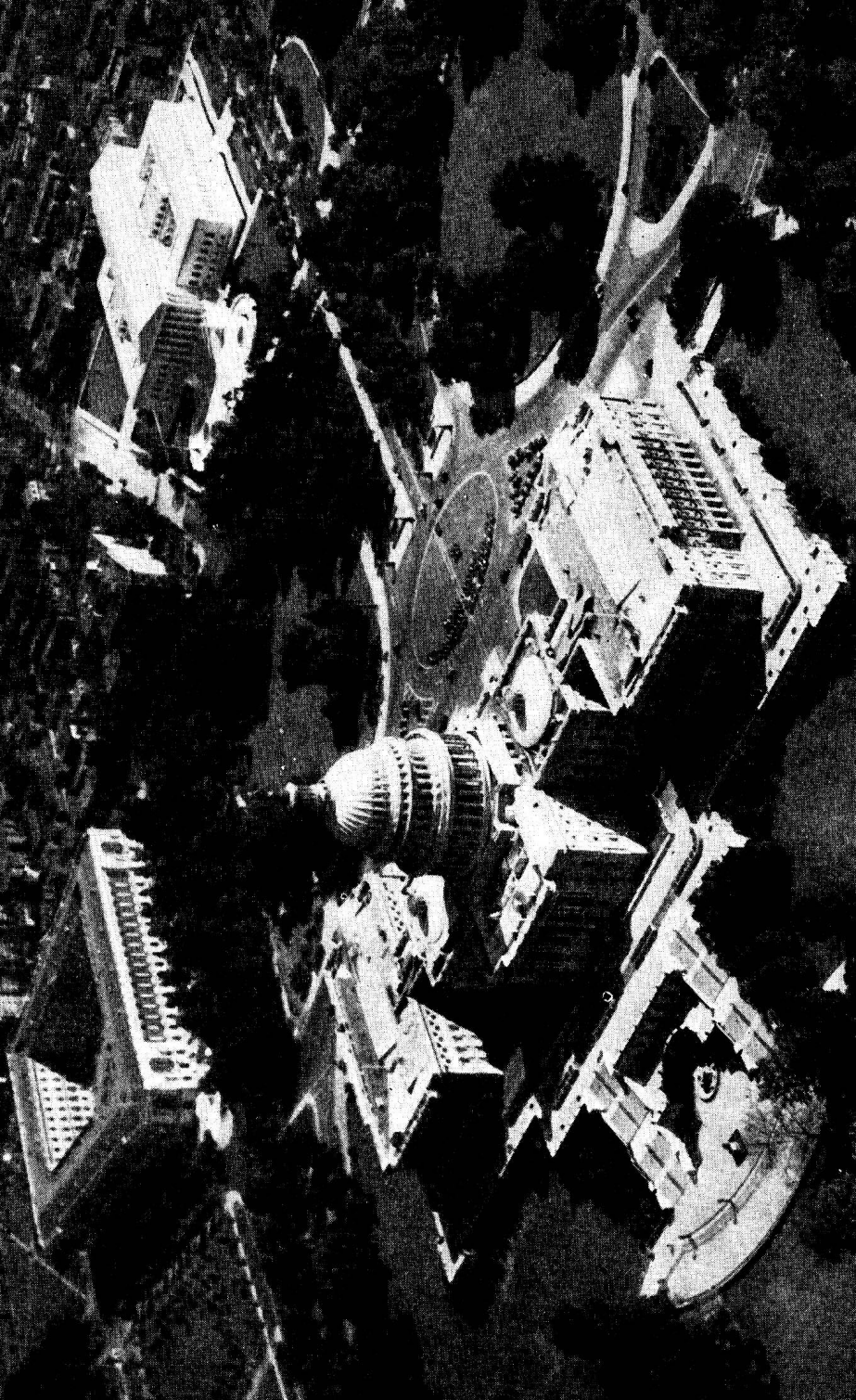
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## PART I

# Your Citizenship in the Making

THE UNITED STATES CAPITOL *shown on the following page* is situated on the brow of a hill overlooking the capital city. This building—its north wing [upper center] housing the Senate, and its south [lower center], the House of Representatives—is one of the world's finest structures. George Washington was present when its cornerstone was laid in 1793 and the Civil War was raging when its massive cast-iron dome was completed, but the splendid old building still dominates the city. To the left in this picture may be seen the Senate Office Building and directly behind the Capitol the recently completed Supreme Court Building. It is on the steps of the eastern front of the Capitol [facing the Supreme Court Building] that Presidential Inaugurations are held. On a special platform over the central outdoor stairway, the Chief Justice of the United States administers the oath of office in the presence of thousands of officials and spectators. The taking of the oath is followed by delivery of the inaugural address and the procession to the White House. The Capitol grounds cover 58 acres and are landscaped with over 800 trees and many shrubs besides fountains, terraces, and balustrades.

*Photo, Greater National Capital Committee*



# Your Citizenship in the Making

JOY ELMER MORGAN

*Editor, Journal of the National Education Association*

THE United States Capitol shown on the opposite page is one of the greatest shrines in all the world. Here, with but one brief interruption since 1800 has been the seat of the Congress of the United States, which is the oldest republican legislature in the world. Here are enacted laws which determine your future and that of your fellow citizens in a great nation of more than 130 million people. Your future as an individual is bound up with the future of your country. The quality of its life is as much a part of your existence as the air you breathe and the food you eat. We have been conscious during recent years of our national shortcomings. It is well that we should attempt to improve the conditions which surround our lives, but *let us never forget our great and noble inheritance*, for upon that inheritance we must build our future.

## *Our National Heritage*

*There is first the country itself.* What a rich and beautiful continent we are privileged to inhabit! As one rides its farflung railroads or motors over its thousands of miles of paved highway, or follows its streams, or penetrates its forests, or takes the airplane and skimming thru

the clouds looks down upon the panorama beneath, it is an inspiring picture of a mighty gift such as the people of no other continent enjoy, God-given and eternal; truly "America the Beautiful" as described in Katharine Lee Bates' inspiring poem:

*O beautiful for spacious skies,  
For amber waves of grain,  
For purple mountain majesties  
Above the fruited plain!  
America! America!  
God shed His grace on thee  
And crown thy good with brotherhood  
From sea to shining sea!*

We have not always been appreciative of this gift. We have been wasteful of our forests and minerals, careless of our water power, ruthless in the wastage of our soil. We have come now to the day of reckoning when by flood and dust storm we are forced to face our national destiny and our relation as a people to the soil from which we draw our life. But with all the wastage, with all the lack of planning and of vision, we still have the greatest heritage of natural resources and climate to be found upon the face of the earth.

### *Our Heritage of Leadership*

*There is too the mighty heritage that has come to us in the memory of great deeds performed by the pioneer men and women who have established this mighty nation in so brief a span of years. Some of their names are recorded in the account of the Hall of Fame in this book. Every American should be encouraged to read biography because it gives an inspiring sense of the nobility of mankind. It lifts one above the petty and*

trivial to go again with George Washington, with Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson, with Horace Mann or with Abraham Lincoln, thru the struggles that have created our national being, that have given us our freedom, and that have kept us going forward upon the path of democracy. Every American is entitled to know these creators and guardians of our liberty, and we may be sure that a knowledge of their great deeds will reinforce and inspire our own purposes. We have attached great importance in this country to literacy, to the ability to read and write. We have not attached enough importance to reading itself as a lifelong enterprise in the life of the citizen. The mere fact of being able to read does not of itself guarantee intelligent citizenship. There must be wisdom in the choice of reading. The school course is too short, even if pursued thruout the college years, to enable any citizen to read all the things which he should know about the founding and growth of our Republic.

### *Charters of American Liberty*

Beyond the heritage which is found in the lives of the men and women who have made America, *stands the Republic itself*, the greatest example of constitutional government among free men. The full text of our American Constitution is given in this book. Every American should know its content. It is the greatest single document in the entire struggle of mankind for orderly selfgovernment. We need not review here the story of the Constitution. You are familiar with the history of the colonies and their difficulties, with the Declaration of Independence, with the Revolutionary



War, and the difficult years under the Articles of Confederation. You are familiar with the struggles of the Constitutional Convention itself. You know the patience and nobility of Washington as he presided over the convention; the difficulty of reaching agreement; the willingness of the men who took part to subordinate personal and sectional interests to the general good; and the narrow margin by which the Constitution was adopted and put into force when it was submitted to the states.

### *Religious Ideals the Foundation*

It is difficult to read this history without seeing in it the hand of Providence, for the struggle which was then taking place in America was in a sense the climax of untold centuries of human struggle upward, a struggle against despotism, against the destructive forces within the nature of man himself. The birth of our democracy goes back nineteen hundred years to the birth of Christ. It was His teachings, gradually permeating the minds and hearts of the people of the western world, building up their self-respect, that led to a demand for larger liberty and justice. *Let us never forget that our democratic institutions have their foundation in the principles of life that were set forth by the great Teacher.*

No one would contend that the Constitution is a perfect document. The very men who framed it were conscious of its shortcomings. And the fact of the Civil War proves that it could not meet all the needs of the young republic—a war to test, in the words of Lincoln, whether any nation conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal can long endure. We have our difficulties in these days