

CARL SANDBURG, poet, folklorist, biographer, was born in Illinois but has long been a citizen of North Carolina. Once a self-help student at Lombard College, he now holds honorary degrees from more than a dozen colleges and universities and has served as visiting lecturer at several. A volunteer in the Spanish-American War, he saw active service in Puerto Rico; and again in World War II he devoted his talents to the war effort through the medium of the spoken and written word. Out of a life of varied experience as porter, truck-driver, potter, harvest-hand, dishwasher, politician, business executive and journalist, he fashioned a new poetry. Independent of tradition, self-reliant, admiring the common man of America, he has seen beauty in the smoke of factories and in the drab prairies, in brickyards and stockyards, in the fast express and the slow caboose.

Prize-winner and gold medalist in both poetry and history; folk song recitalist, entertaining thousands with his spirited rendition of American ballads; inimitable reader of his own vigorous poems; singer of the American scene, whose powerful free verse rhythms and unconventional subject-matter rescued our poetry from the doldrums of the early twentieth century with such virile works as Chicago Poems and Smoke and Steel; novelist, historian, and biographer of Abraham Lincoln, whose monumental series of seven volumes is an enduring tribute to the memory of our great president, Carl Sandburg is today one of the great literary figures of our time.

To this laureate of industrial America and biographer of an immortal American, who has honored North Carolina by living amongst us and sharing with us the rich stores of his talent and personality, the University is proud to present the degree of Doctor of Letters.

Commencement, 1955.