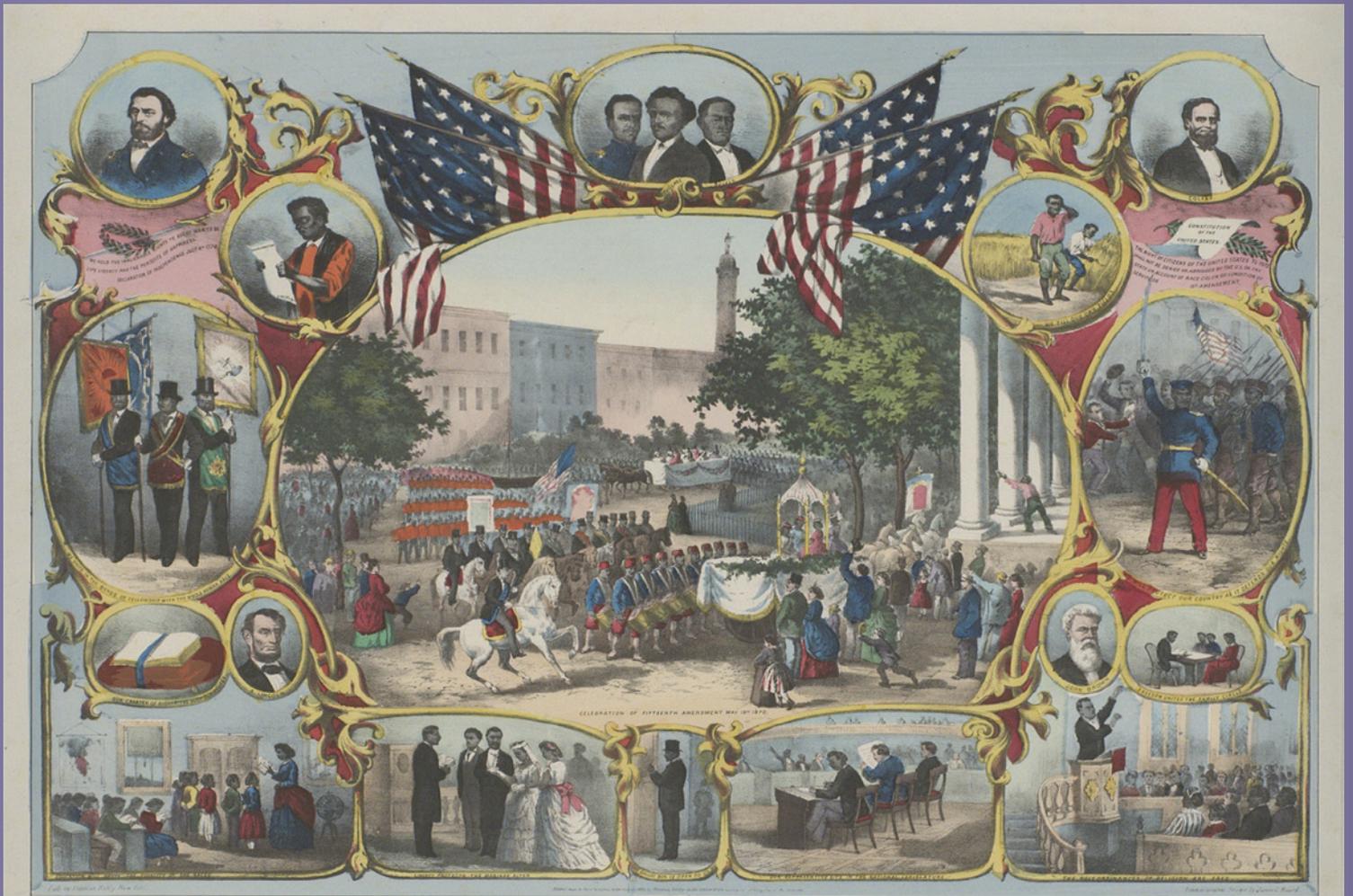


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CONTRIBUTORS

WILLIAM E. BARTELT
NICOLE ETCHESON
ALLEN C. GUELZO
HAROLD HOLZER
FRANK WILLIAMS
DOUGLAS C. WILSON

ACPL

JANE GASTINEAU
EMILY RAPOZA
LINCOLN@ACPL.INFO

FRIENDS OF THE LINCOLN COLLECTION

SARA GABBARD, EDITOR
POST OFFICE ADDRESS
BOX 11083
FORT WAYNE, INDIANA 46855
SGABBARD@ACPL.INFO
WWW.ACPL.INFO
WWW.LINCOLNCOLLECTION.ORG
WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/LINCOLNCOLLECTION

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Upcoming Events



6th Annual Rolland Lecture

Presented by Mitch Daniels, President of Purdue University and former Governor of Indiana

October 17, 2017, 7:00 p.m.

Theater of the Allen County Public Library, Main Library Theater
Fort Wayne, Indiana

Sponsored by the Lupke Foundation
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THE SEARCH FOR NANCY HANKS: A HISTORICAL WILD GOOSE CHASE, MITOCHONDRIAL DNA, & THE MATERNAL ANCESTRY OF NANCY HANKS LINCOLN

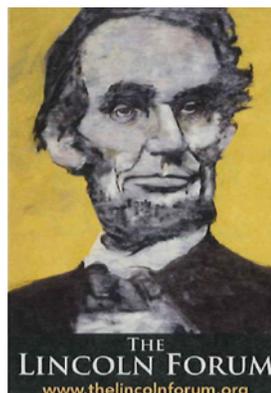
Presented by Richard Hileman

Sunday, October 22, 2017, 2:00 p.m.

Main Library, Meeting Room A
Allen County Public Library,
Fort Wayne, Indiana

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Presentations and discussions by 19
experts on Lincoln and His Times

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Wyndham Gettysburg Hotel
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A Tribute to Ian Rolland

Ian Rolland and the Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection

Ian Rolland, the long-time Fort Wayne business leader who died July 1, had a long-standing respect for Abraham Lincoln. He spent a lifetime preserving the legacy of our 16th President.

As Lincoln National's CEO, Ian was responsible for moving the company's world-famous Lincoln collection out of the "basement" of the corporate headquarters to create The Lincoln Museum, which opened to the public in 1995. When the museum closed in 2008, a nationwide search was conducted to find a location for the Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection.

Under Ian's leadership, the State of Indiana submitted the winning proposal and the \$20 million collection was donated to the State of Indiana. The three-dimensional artifacts are now preserved at the Indiana State Museum, and the letters, photographs and over 16,000 books are housed at the Allen County Public Library in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

The initial success having been achieved, Ian chaired a statewide capital campaign which raised \$9.5 million to provide immediate "moving expenses," capital for the first four years of operation, and an endowment which would provide long-term financial stability for the preservation of this significant collection.

Ian then served as vice president of the Friends of the Lincoln Collection of Indiana, the collection's support group, until his death on July 1, 2017.

Abraham Lincoln's words in his message to Congress on December 1, 1862, clearly apply to Ian MacKenzie Rolland: "Honorable alike in what we give and in what we preserve."

by Sara Gabbard, Executive Director of the Friends of the Lincoln Collection of Indiana

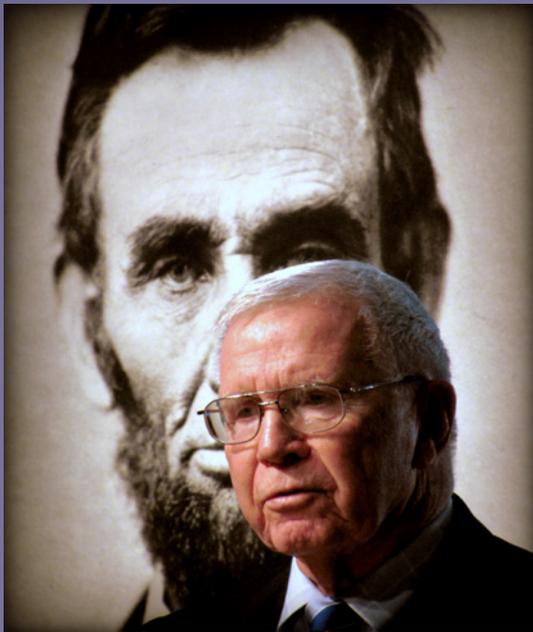


Photo by Ed Breen, Vice President, Friends of the Lincoln Collection of Indiana

Ian Rolland's generous support for research, acquisitions, and public programs in Fort Wayne did so much to carry Lincoln scholarship into the new century. His commitment to Lincoln studies helped secure Indiana's enduring position as a center for Lincoln and Lincolniana. He was a stellar example of a sadly vanishing breed: a corporate executive with a deep passion for community and history. The Lincoln field was fortunate indeed to have held his interest so strongly and for so long. Thank you, Mr. Rolland.

by Harold Holzer, Jonathan F. Fanton Director of the Roosevelt House Public Policy Institute at Hunter College.



On the Cover



This hand-colored lithograph, based on the artwork of James Carter Beard, is a commemorative print marking the March 30, 1870, enactment of the Fifteenth Amendment, the last of the three Reconstruction Amendments. The central image is the grand May 19th celebratory parade in Baltimore. It is surrounded by vignettes showing black and white antislavery and Reconstruction leaders and scenes of African American liberation and life as freed people. For a complete description of the lithograph, search for item 71.2009.081.0588 on www.LincolnCollection.org.

Allen C. Guelzo on Reconstruction

An Interview with Sara Gabbard



RECONSTRUCTION

John Giles Lawrence, "Reconstruction," 1867. Library of Congress.

Sara Gabbard: As a nation, do we tend to ignore the history of Reconstruction? If so, why?

Allen Guelzo: Oh, my, yes, and probably more than any other chunk of our history. Just think: there are no Reconstruction reenactors, no reconstructed Reconstruction villages on the order of Colonial Williamsburg or Old Sturbridge, no Reconstruction observances and ceremonies. There are several historic sites in the National Park Service system associated more or less with Reconstruction, but the first national monument to Reconstruction, in Beaufort, South Carolina, was only dedicated in January of 2017.

There are, I think, three reasons for this. One is that, compared to the Civil War years, Reconstruction offers little in the way of historical drama—by which I mean, there are no climactic battles (no Bull Runs or Gettysburgs), few easily recognizable historical players (and none of them in uniform), and dreary doses of long political process, mottled by heavy latherings of governmental corruption. There's plenty of violence, but it is violence of the sort we usually deplore: race riots, lynchings, the Ku Klux Klan.

A second reason has to do with the sense of failure that hangs over Reconstruction, and if there's one thing Americans don't like to talk about, it's failure. At the end of the Civil War, the "Slave Power" had been destroyed, free-labor Republicanism was triumphant, and the freed slave was poised on the verge of assuming an equal place in American society with every other citizen. Fifteen years later, the one-time slaveholders were back in control of the South, free-labor Republicanism was coping with the first stresses of mass industrialization in its own Northern backyard, and the freedmen were consigned to an economic peonage that offered little practical improvement on enslave-

ment. It began to seem that a great opportunity had been bobbled away.

The irony of that conclusion—and this is the third reason—is that the Civil War's victors ended up blaming themselves, or at least allowing the defeated South to foist the blame on them. Postwar Southerners never accepted the results of military defeat in the war, and they resisted Reconstruction (and much more effectively than they had resisted the Union armies) by denouncing Reconstruction as a vicious, vengeful military occupation, aided and abetted by unscrupulous Northern speculators ("carpetbaggers") and Southern quislings ("scalawags"). This hit Northerners in two sensitive areas. One was the instinctive American distaste for military control over civilian affairs; the other was guilt, for the destruction inflicted on the South and for the waves of political scandal which swept through the postwar North.

SG: In an article for the *Claremont Review of Books*, you addressed the difficulty in assigning a definite time period for Reconstruction. Please explain the options.

AG: The usual chronology for Reconstruction begins with the surrender of the Confederate armies in 1865, and ends with the withdrawal of the last Union occupation forces in the spring of 1877 as part of the deal that secured the presidency for Rutherford B. Hayes. This is much too easy. The first reconstructions really date to 1862, with Lincoln's appointment of interim Unionist regimes in Louisiana, Arkansas, Tennessee, and North Carolina. Some of these were flat-out mistakes (Lincoln's appointment of Edward Stanly as a provisional Unionist governor in North Carolina was a particular embarrassment) but others—especially Tennessee and Louisiana—proved surprisingly durable. Tennessee, in fact, was never subject to most of the policies we usually think of as Reconstruction between the years 1865 and 1877.

In between, we can divvy up Reconstruction into three periods: the first is "Presidential Reconstruction," from 1862 (or 1865) until 1867, in which the rules for reconstructing the Confederate states were handed down by the president (Lincoln or Andrew Johnson).



Joseph E. Baker, "The 'Rail Splitter' at Work Repairing the Union," 1865. Library of Congress. Lincoln and Johnson—presidential reconstruction

The second period is “Congressional Reconstruction,” when Congress seized control of the process with the Reconstruction Acts of 1867 and reset the whole process. The third period, from 1870 to 1877, is really the most agonizing, since it encompasses the slow-motion of the Reconstruction regimes created under the 1867 Acts and the return of the South to home rule by the people who, for all practical purposes, had been its rulers before the war.

Technically, Reconstruction was “over” when the last of the Confederate states had written new state constitutions and elected representatives and senators in conformity with the Reconstruction Acts. This happened fairly quickly, between June 1868 and July 1870, and it put in place state governments that were largely dominated by Republicans and that made heroic efforts to make a reality of voting rights for the freed slaves. But one by one, the wheels came off these reconstructed state governments and the old Southern Democratic power machines regained control. But “regained” is too anodyne; “overthrew” is the real word, since the recapture of these state governments was accomplished by violence and black voter intimidation.

However, the clock had not gone entirely backward. The freed slaves had made important economic and political beachheads in the Reconstruction years, and Republican administrations in the 1880s and 1890s used federal patronage authority to support them. Legal disenfranchisement and mandatory racial segregation did not become widespread until the 1890s, when the U.S. Supreme Court curtailed much of what remained of the federal government’s authority to intervene in the South. So, in a very attenuated sense, Reconstruction sputters on until *Plessy v. Ferguson* in 1896 and the Wilmington, North Carolina, race war of 1898.

SG: In the same article, you stated, “But Reconstruction became a symbol of how quickly political fatigue afflicts liberal democracies.” Please elaborate.

AG: There are really two things at work here. The first is that in a liberal democracy, sovereignty lies in the people at large; and our governing structures exist to implement that will. This is why Lincoln believed that “Public sentiment is everything.... Whoever can change public opinion can change the government.” The second is that the attention span for political affairs in a democracy is a limited one. The fundamental genius of a liberal democracy lies in how it restrains government and permits its citizens to pursue their own interests without unnecessary molestation. So when we must address political or national issues—whether it’s “On to Richmond” or “54-40 or Fight”—we want problems addressed swiftly, so that we can turn back to our private concerns. When that doesn’t happen, we turn back to the private concerns anyway, and the problems and their solutions are left to fester or find their own solutions.

Postwar Southerners carried out an asymmetrical kind of political warfare that the rest of the country eventually ran out of patience in confronting. We had the West to win, the Pacific Rim to open, a new economy to create, a catastrophic financial panic to overcome, and in the end, dealing with the political insurgencies of disaffected ex-Confederates simply couldn’t compete. When Mississippi’s Republican governor, Adelbert Ames, demanded federal troops to put down election-day violence in 1876, he was told by the Attorney General that “the whole public was tired of these annual autumnal outbreaks in the South.” We have seen the same process play out more recently, both in Vietnam in the 1960s and in Iraq after 2003. In 1968, we won a substantial military victory, as we did in 2003; we then

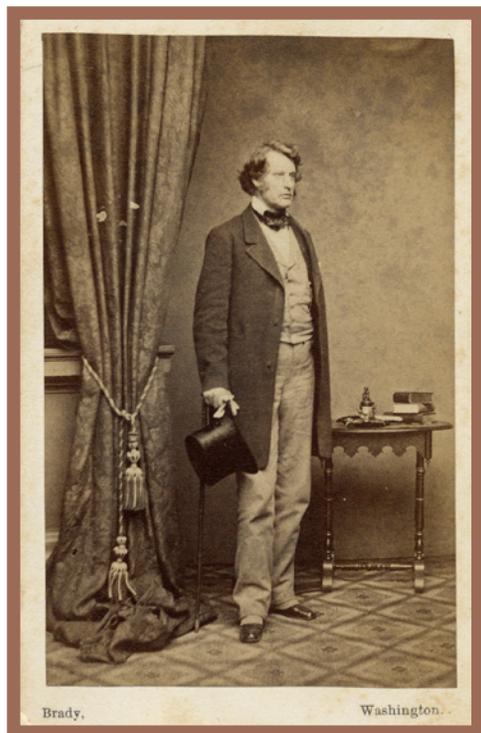
fumbled them away because of our inability to keep a long-term focus on the political aftermath, and we live with the results to this day. This is, so to speak, the advantage tyrants and dictators have over democracies: they can force their people to pay attention to the problems they choose to address, and for as long as they wish (or until their people overthrow them, which is not all that common).

I want to add, though, that this should not be considered the whole story of Reconstruction. Remember, I said that Reconstruction was *overthrown*, not that it ground to an exhausted halt. Indifference and inattention helped to divert resources from Reconstruction, but the real dagger was planted in Reconstruction’s back by political insurgency. That’s a more important point, to which I want to come back.

SG: When was the term “Reconstruction” first used? Was it used in a positive or negative sense? Or was the meaning determined “in the eye of the beholder?”

AG: The term reconstruction actually surfaced even before the Civil War began in 1861, although in its first form it was a way of describing how the Constitution would have to be amended in order to accommodate the demands of the Southern states and head off their secession. The term resurfaced in 1862, this time to describe the pacification policies the federal government might deploy once the Union armies had suppressed the Confederate rebellion. It quickly became associated with Charles Sumner’s call for the reduction of the Confederate states to territorial status, which was why Lincoln was never at ease in using the word.

When he did, he qualified it with additions like “what is called reconstruction” or “a plan of reconstruction (as the



Charles Sumner LFA-0333

phrase goes).” He preferred to speak of the “re-inauguration of the national authority” or the need to “re-inaugurate loyal state governments.” But by 1865, it had clearly become the term to describe whatever federal policies would be used to reintegrate the Confederate states with the Union.

SG: Did Lincoln and/or his Cabinet discuss postwar plans with any frequency? Were definite policies suggested?

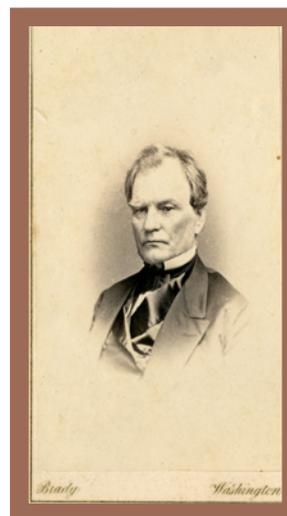
AG: They discussed various options quite frequently. But bear in mind that these were explorations. There was no handbook on how to conduct reconstructions, especially after conflicts as disastrous as civil wars, and the historical examples were all at sixes-and-sevens. This is why so much of the history of Reconstruction has the feeling of improvisation—because it really was improvisation. One step would be taken—say, the 13th Amendment, abolishing slavery—only to have people in Congress realize that this did nothing about citizenship; hence a 14th Amendment is required.

But the 14th Amendment failed to link citizenship and voting rights, and so a 15th Amendment has to be confected. This, of course, takes time, and has the potential for mistakes—both of which, unhappily, are fatal in a democratic process. In his last public speech, Lincoln hinted at having in hand “some new announcement to the people of the South,” but we have no real outline of what that implied.

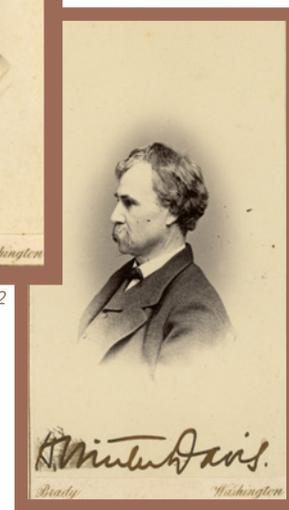
What seemed more important to Lincoln during the war was establishing, not a specific Reconstruction strategy, but which of the branches of the federal government—executive, legislative, judicial—actually had authority over Reconstruction. Sumner and the Republicans in Congress believed that it was the prerogative of Congress, not the president, to create the policies that controlled Reconstruction. When Lincoln laid out his first detailed strategy for “Amnesty and Reconstruction” in December 1863, he proposed to use his executive authority to grant full pardons “with restoration of all rights of property, except as to slaves” to any inhabitants of Southern states reoccupied by federal military forces upon taking an oath of future loyalty (and keeping “said oath inviolate”). This would allow Lincoln to “re-establish a State government” as soon as the oath takers numbered just 10 percent of the 1860 voting population in each state—and provided that the “reinaugurated” state governments abolished slavery.

Unsatisfied with this (and with the idea that Lincoln had the authority to make Reconstruction an executive act), Ohio Senator Benjamin Wade and Maryland Congressman Henry Winter Davis designed a Congressional reconstruction plan, raising the number of oath takers from 10 to 50 percent; then, a civilian provisional governor would be appointed, and the eligible voters would elect a state convention to write a new state constitution banning slavery and forbidding reb-

el officers from serving in the legislature or as governor. Lincoln scoffed at the Wade-Davis plan. Reconstruction, he asserted, was an executive responsibility, just as managing the war had been; the legislative branch of the government had nothing to do with it, any more than it had the authority to trespass on his military authority as commander in chief. So, he pocket-vetted the Wade-Davis plan on July 8, 1864.



Benjamin Wade LN-1342



Henry Winter Davis LN-2213

This contention over jurisdiction would flame out again as soon as Congress reassembled under Andrew Johnson in December 1865, and in that contest, the executive branch sustained a major defeat, culminating in Johnson’s impeachment in 1868. The surprising thing, however, is that it was neither the executive branch nor the legislative branch that had the last word on Reconstruction. That came from the federal judiciary, in the form of the judicial decisions that undid much of Congress’ Reconstruction legislation.

SG: What happened to cotton production after the war? How were free blacks affected?

AG: Given the heavy blows struck at Southern infrastructure by the Civil War, we often imagine that cotton, the mainstay of the Southern economy, must somehow have fallen out of the picture. It's true that the major textile-manufacturing economies—Britain and France in particular—managed to locate alternative sources for raw cotton during the war. Nevertheless, cotton agriculture remained the producer of the single most valuable American export commodity (some 32 percent of all exports as late as 1889). Great Britain still bought 58 percent of the cotton it imported for textile manufacturing from the United States, and that would continue to rise through 1876.

Given the free hand with which Andrew Johnson distributed pardons and amnesties to the ex-Confederates, the survivors of the war remained by-and-large in control of the postwar cotton lands, and therefore of the postwar Southern economy. For instance: in prewar western Alabama, just 236 landowners sat at the top of the economic pyramid (which is to say, they owned at least \$10,000 in real estate in 1860, with the median landholding amounting to 1,600 acres). By 1870, 101 of those landowners were still in possession—which was about the same rate of persistence over time that had prevailed before the war.

In other words, for all the economic destruction levied on the South by the war, the people who ran the economic show before the war were still running it afterwards. Former slaveholders were thus free to use cotton profits to maintain a version of the plantation system and force the freedpeople into peonage; peonage, in turn, gave white Democrats the power to control black voting and, as a Vermont journalist put it, “keep the

negro in his condition of ignorance, that they may retain him as nearly as possible in his old state of slavery.”

SG: Please trace the development of Jim Crow.

AG: Jim Crow is not, strictly speaking, a product of Reconstruction, although it could not have developed in the South without Reconstruction (or rather, its failure). First of all, “Jim Crow,” as a name, is rooted in a folk character in African American culture, a little like Brer Rabbit; “Jim Crow” was then absorbed into blackface minstrelsy and turned into a stock “Sambo” character. It emerged as a shorthand name for public policies of racial segregation later in the nineteenth century, since “Jim Crow”—as a stand-in for any African American—was the target of segregationist state laws.

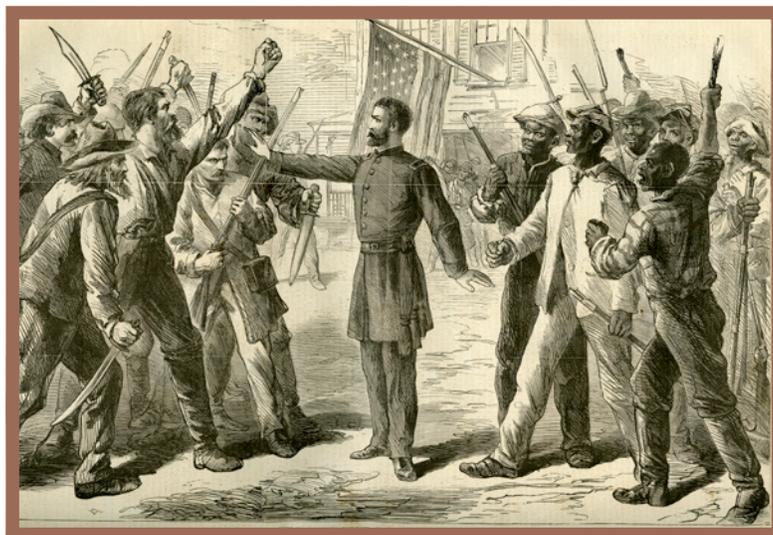
C. Vann Woodward's classic, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*, underscored the irony of Jim Crow's development, since slavery forced blacks and whites into close, but unwelcome, contact as masters and slaves. Segregation only became a viable policy after slavery ended, when whites could no longer exercise personal mastery over African Americans. Not that slavery didn't mandate racial apartheid in other ways, or that Southern state attempts to reconstruct themselves

under Andrew Johnson's presidency didn't reach for segregation as a solution in the few months in 1865 and 1866 when they were active.

Congressional Reconstruction, however, was not necessarily dedicated to reversing social segregation; it took some determined striving on the part of Lyman Trumbull (in the 1866 Civil Rights Act) and Charles Sumner (in his posthumous Civil Rights bill of 1875) to attack social segregation in the South, since it was clear that social segregation would afford truculent Southerners an opportunity to isolate and besiege political rights for the freed slaves. It was only after the restraints imposed by Reconstruction, and by the Civil Rights legislation, had been removed that “Jim Crow” legislation was allowed to enter into almost every aspect of public life in the South.

SG: Freedmen's Bureau: Success? Failure? Some of each?

AG: In the sense that the Freedmen's Bureau was established to function as a transition agency, helping and advising freed slaves as a sort of half-way house between slavery and freedom, it was remarkably successful. It benefitted from strong, idealistic leadership from its head, Oliver Otis Howard, and often provided freed slaves with the only legal and finan-



A.R. Ward, *The Freedmen's Bureau*, *Harper's Weekly*, July 25, 1868
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cial assistance they could call upon. The difficulty for the Bureau, however, was that it was never adequately funded and quickly became a political football that Andrew Johnson loved to kick; and it represented an intrusion of federal authority into the states of a nature that had never existed before. Once Congressional Reconstruction had restored the former Confederate states to practical membership in the Union, it was difficult to justify the Bureau's continued existence, and by 1871, it had been effectively shut down.

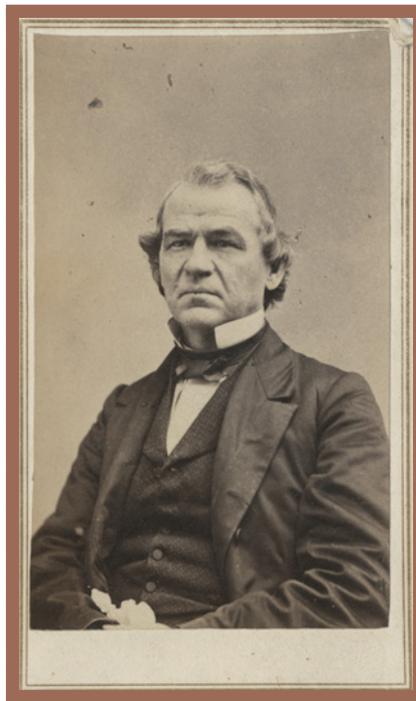
SG: What was happening in the "Northern States" during the period we call Reconstruction? Was there much coverage in newspapers of the situation in the South?

AG: We almost always speak of Reconstruction as something which happened "down South." Actually, many of the templates for federal action developed for the South were also applied to the West. (Mormon Utah underwent almost exactly the same sort of scrutiny and restructuring as the former Confederacy before being admitted as a state. Remember that Lincoln's Republicans had attacked slavery and polygamy as the "twin relics of barbarism," and they saw no reason why they should not reconstruct the one as effectively as the other.) Curiously, federal Reconstruction policy in the West was actually more successful than in the South; the wars with the Plains tribes between 1866 and 1890 were waged on approximately the same lines as the attempted counter-insurgency against anti-black domestic rioting in 1865-66 and the Ku Klux Klan in 1870-71, and by many of the same professional soldiers—Sherman, Sheridan, Custer, Howard.

The work of Heather Cox Richardson, Gregory Downs, and Steven Hahn has directed much more attention to the

West as a theatre of Reconstruction than ever before. What has gone mad-deningly a-begging is what happened in the North during Reconstruction. There is a curious sense, imparted by much of the literature about Reconstruction, that Northerners undertook Reconstruction in 1865 as though they were all of one mind, and one Republican mind at that. This, of course, was not true. Even though Lincoln won a resounding victory at the polls in his re-election campaign in November 1864, the Democratic opposition did not, by any means, disappear, and much of it remained militantly hostile to black enfranchisement and black equality, North as well as South.

Andrew Johnson hoped to capitalize on wedding Northern Democrats and moderate Republicans (who were often ex-Democrats), and he blundered only because of his own personal political ineptness and the embarrassment afforded by race riots in New Orleans and Memphis just before the key 1866 Congressional elections.



Andrew Johnson OC-0743

Even so, it did not take long for Northern Democrats to re-assert themselves: Radical Ohio Senator Benjamin Wade lost his Senate seat in 1868 when the state legislature changed hands; Radical Representatives James Ashley (the floor leader for the 13th Amendment) and John A. Bingham (the architect of the 14th Amendment) were deposed in the years 1868 and 1872.

Even though a Republican, Ulysses Grant, won the presidency with 58 percent of the popular vote in 1868, this was not as resounding a Republican triumph as it seems. Grant lost New York by 10,000 votes and New York City by 60,000. Five states had given him victory margins of less than 5 percent, and Democrats gained twenty-two seats in the House of Representatives. Four governorships fell into Democratic hands; in Maryland, every state legislative district and all five U.S. Representatives went Democratic, while in New Jersey, three of the five Congressional districts elected Democrats, and Democrats held the state legislature.

So, as early as 1868, Northern Democrats were staging a long march back to dominance, and when that happened, they would find useful allies in their old Southern Democratic counterparts. As John Mercer Langston warned, "the unrighteous alliance of the Democratic party of the North with the rebel spirit at the South... still lingers with the hope that this combination will again put the southerners in the political ascendance."

The Panic of 1873 was what finally tipped the balances. Voters went to the polls in 1874 with economic desperation in their hearts and put the Democrats back into the majority of the House of Representatives, after which it was clear that no more funding to protect Southern Republican state governments from overthrow would be forthcoming. Reconstruction, at

that moment, was as good as dead; it would simply take another two years before life support was removed.

What this undermines is the long-held notion that the failure of Reconstruction lies primarily with white Northern Republicans who talked-the-talk on a new, racially egalitarian America, but who quickly tired of walking-the-walk and somehow abandoned Reconstruction, and African Americans, to their fate. No doubt, "Reconstruction fatigue" dampened many a well-intentioned Northern Republican's political ardor. But the real story in the North is the back-from-the-dead resumption of a Democratic political ascendancy between 1865 and 1874, and how that resumption once again clasped hands with its historic Southern Democratic allies. That, together with the white supremacist insurgency (conducted by the Klan, the Knights of the White Camellia, the League of Pale Faces) is what tells the tale of Reconstruction's demise.

SG: What was the Dunning School? Who were the "anti-Dunningites?"

AG: American history writing until the 1880s was mostly an affair of genteel amateurs—Francis Parkman, William Hinkling Prescott, John Lothrop Motley. But the reign of the genteel amateur in American life was brought to a close by the rise of Progressivism, which advocated professionalism and efficiency as the answers to the problems of American politics and culture. Especially in politics: the decades of corruption symbolized by Boss Tweed, the Credit Mobilier Scandal, and the "robber barons" were blamed by the Progressives on an ignorant and easily excitable electorate which kept returning the bosses to power even after the stench of their graft could be smelled by all. The problem, in fact, was democracy itself, which constantly elbowed aside the intelligent and well informed in favor of

voting for the clever and the popular.

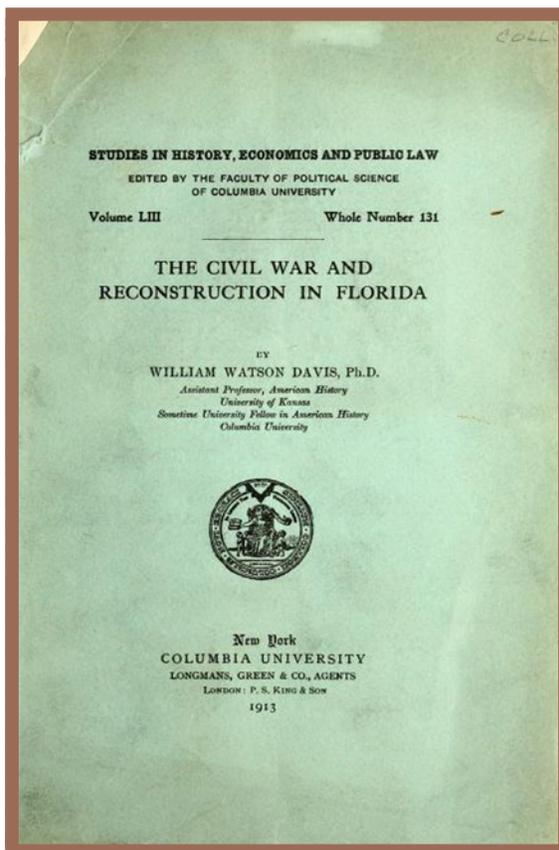
The obvious source for a new generation of professional experts lay with the American colleges and universities, which until the Civil War had often been little more than finishing schools for polite literary classicism. The model of the German universities, which supplied credentialed expertise to the Prussian state bureaucracy, became the most favored model for Progressive reformers, and by the 1890s, what had once been the preserve of well-bred poetasters now became the arena of scientific professionalism in the German style.

William Archibald Dunning (1857-1922) is a virtual textbook example of this development, earning one of the first American PhDs in history at Columbia and staying there to teach for the rest of his career. Although Reconstruction was not his primary historical interest, it nevertheless offered Dunning a prime example of how disastrously awry democracy could go when unguided by supe-

rior wisdom. The Republican state governments under Reconstruction had been built on newly enfranchised black voters, fresh from the cotton fields and barely able to read or write; they in turn, elected black state legislatures with scarcely a shred of competence or experience. No wonder, on Progressive terms, Reconstruction had been a nightmare.

Dunning's influence came partly through his essays on Reconstruction, but mostly from the cadre of graduate students whom he trained at Columbia and who wrote a series of PhD dissertations on Reconstruction in Southern state after Southern state: James Wilford Garner, *Reconstruction in Mississippi* (1901), John S. Reynolds, *Reconstruction in South Carolina, 1865-1877* (1905), Walter L. Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama* (1905), Charles W. Ramsdell, *Reconstruction in Texas* (1910), William Watson Davis, *The Civil War and Reconstruction in Florida* (1913), J.G. de Roulhac Hamilton, *Reconstruction in North Carolina* (1914), Clara Mildred Thompson, *Reconstruction in Georgia* (1915). Their research was deep, painstaking, and massive. But they all sang the same Progressive song: Reconstruction brought to the South, not democracy, but mob rule, and to Washington, nothing but vindictiveness and plunder. And the fault lay with enfranchising a black race whom the Progressives believed were, *ipso facto*, inferior and unequipped for the job of self-government.

I know it seems



William W. Davis, *The Civil War and Reconstruction in Florida* 71200908406393

strange to say that Progressivism wore a white supremacist face. But the most thorough going Progressive president, Woodrow Wilson, was an unabashed white supremacist. So, it should not be surprising that criticism of the Dunning School made its first appearance in the 1930s from the premier African American intellectual, William Edward Burghardt Du Bois, in *Black Reconstruction* (1935), and by James S. Allen in *Reconstruction: The Battle for Democracy* (1937).

Still, it would not be until the 1960s, after the emergence of the civil rights movement as a “second Reconstruction,” that the Dunning School began to crumble, with John Hope Franklin’s *Reconstruction After the Civil War* (1961) and Kenneth Stampp’s *The Era of Reconstruction, 1865-77* (1965) beginning the process.

Of course, the anti-Dunningites had their foibles, too. Du Bois and Allen were both writing from self-consciously Marxist frameworks that forbade any other understanding of Reconstruction but through class and revolution, with race sometimes deployed as a surrogate for class. And it has become conventional for historians like Eric Foner, in *Reconstruction: America’s Unfinished Revolution* (1988) to treat Reconstruction as a kind of missed opportunity for blacks and whites to join together in class solidarity against the rise of industrial capitalism in post-Civil War America.

The obstacle in the path of such a Marxist narrative is that neither the Civil War nor Reconstruction fit neatly into traditional Marxist frameworks. Both the Civil War and Reconstruction belong to a chapter in American history in which the United States was still an overwhelmingly agricultural economy, and the contest that was waged between 1861 and 1865 was largely an argument (in economic terms) between the free-labor family farm and the slave-labor cotton plantation.

SG: What is your general opinion of the positive/negative situation (economic, political, cultural, etc.) in the United States during the years that we designate as “Reconstruction”?

AG: I think we need to shove aside the notions of the Progressives and Lost-Causers, that Reconstruction was some sort of Vichy occupation of a poor, pitiable South, as well as of the Marxists, that Reconstruction could have been the beginning of a socialist America had not the monied interests suppressed it. Neither of these approaches has much sense of the texture of Reconstruction’s reality.

We also need to focus more than we have on what Reconstruction succeeded in doing: it helped us avoid a renewed outbreak of civil war (which, considering the history of civil conflicts, is no small achievement); it laid the legal and constitutional foundations for a more egalitarian America, foundations that it took only sixty-five years to revitalize into the Civil Rights Movement; it restored the original balance of constitutional federalism, putting aside the states’ rights absolutism of the pre-war Southern aristocracy. But I do not say this to encourage any historical Pollyannaism about Reconstruction. That restored federal balance permitted the emergence of the first women’s voting rights legislation, the curtailing of municipal corruption, and the introduction of widespread public schooling; it also permitted the emergence of Jim Crow. But as Lincoln said, “this is a world of compensation.” The historical good and the evil, even in Reconstruction, do not come unmixed.

SG: I look forward to reading your new book, *Reconstruction: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press, 2017). Please explain what led you to this topic and what will be the book’s focus.

AG: Two things: back in 2012, when I published *Fateful Lightning: A New History of the Civil War and Reconstruction* (also Oxford University Press), I devoted the closing chapter to a survey of Reconstruction. A particularly silly reviewer complained that this was unacceptably inadequate. So, I suppose I wanted to write this to show what lurked behind my “inadequacy.” And then there was a lunch one day with Jim Oakes (author of *Freedom National: The Destruction of Slavery in the United States, 1861-1865* and *The Radical and the Republican: Frederick Douglass, Abraham Lincoln, and the Triumph of Antislavery Politics*), when we both fell to talking about Reconstruction, and both blurted out almost simultaneously the idea that Reconstruction should be considered as a “bourgeois revolution.” Everything in this interview, and the articles I have written subsequently, and the book itself, flow downstream from that moment.

Allen Guelzo is the Henry R. Luce III Professor of the Civil War Era at Gettysburg College.



William Herndon LN-0718

Douglas L. Wilson Discusses *Herndon on Lincoln: Letters*

An Interview with
Sara Gabbard

Sara Gabbard: Please explain the purpose of this excellent and thought-provoking book and how it relates to your other publications about William H. Herndon.

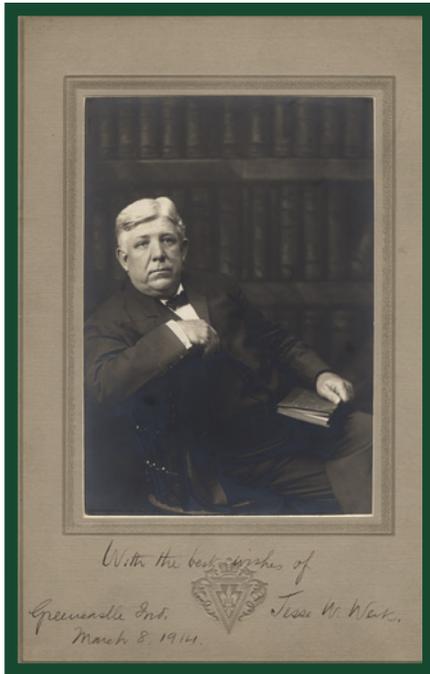
Douglas L. Wilson: There are several reasons why a collection of William H. Herndon's letters on Lincoln is needed. To begin with, as Lincoln's law partner, Herndon was known to have worked more closely with Lincoln than any other person except his wife. Ostensibly, this afforded Herndon an

almost unique intimacy with Lincoln, whom his friends knew to be markedly secretive and unconfiding. Herndon himself thought he knew Lincoln very well, but he also confessed on many occasions that he was often unable to penetrate Lincoln's inveterate privacy. The student of Lincoln soon learns that Herndon is often quoted on the first side of this equation, but rarely on the second. The reader of his letters soon learns that it is the latter that is the most frequently expressed and seems, in general, to have been the

prevailing sentiment. Nonetheless, Herndon did know Lincoln extremely well by almost any measure, and this is the principal reason that his letters about Lincoln are noteworthy.

Another reason that Herndon's letters about Lincoln are important is that they provide a very significant corrective to the views expressed in *Herndon's Lincoln*, which Don E. Fehrenbacher in 1996 called "the most influential biography of Lincoln ever published." Herndon famously

gathered information for this book most of his life, but while it is written in the first person as though told by Herndon himself, it was actually composed almost entirely by a collaborator, Jesse W. Weik.



Jesse Weik LN-1363

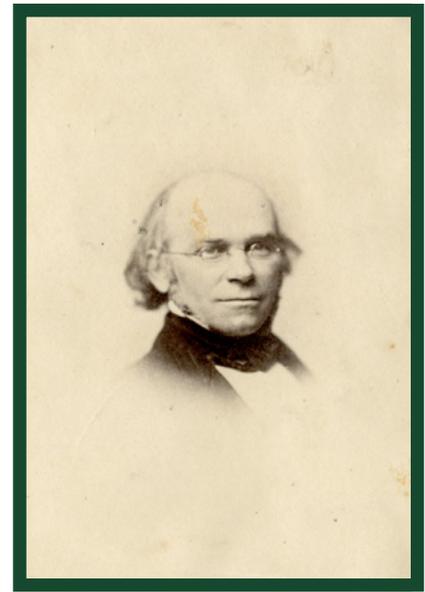
This would be one thing if the views of Lincoln were in all cases closely based on Herndon's own, but such is not the case. For reasons too complicated to describe here, Herndon lost control of both the design and the content of the work, with the result that many things that Herndon originally intended to emphasize were muted or left out altogether. A conspicuous example of the differences between Herndon and his collaborator, Weik, appears in the treatment of Lincoln's fatalism. Herndon believed it was the most important aspect of Lincoln's intellectual makeup that the public knew nothing about, and he wrote about it repeatedly and extensively in his letters. This idea, however, did not comport with Weik's more smiling picture of Lincoln, so that in the narrative he composed for the biography, fatalism is included in a listing of Lincoln's "absurd superstitions." It must be said,

however, that some of the omissions were actually authorized by Herndon himself, who, at the time the book was being completed, was desperately poor and ill and admitted he sought to avoid including details that would offend or alienate readers and hurt the sales of the book. Considerations like these suggest the wisdom of David Donald's longstanding verdict that "To understand Herndon's rather peculiar approach to Lincoln biography, one must go back to his letters."

SG: You report on several 1858 letters from William Herndon to Theodore Parker. Please comment on Parker's participation in the transcendentalist movement and on Herndon's relationship with him.

DLW: Theodore Parker was a highly regarded Boston minister whose enlightened sermons and other writings made him one of the bright lights of the American transcendental movement. Herndon, from an early day, corresponded with many of the writers whose works were featured in the books and magazines of his time—Ralph Waldo Emerson, William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips, to name a few—and as this list suggests, he was especially eager to have personal contact with the most noted abolitionists. Theodore Parker was one of these, and Herndon's exchange of letters with Parker was quite substantial. Most of this correspondence was characterized by Herndon's seeking enlightenment from these notables, but when Herndon's law partner became a nationally recognized politician, these correspondents sought information about Lincoln from Herndon. These are the sorts of letters that appear in our book, *Herndon on Lincoln: Letters*. Parker was a talented thinker and graceful writer and, but for his early death just prior to Lincoln's election as president,

would have been more prominent in the political ferment precipitated by slavery. Herndon is credited with loaning Lincoln the printed text of one of Parker's lectures, which contained a sentence that may have served as the inspiration for the famous ending of the Gettysburg Address: "Democracy is direct self-government, over all the people, for all the people, by all the people."

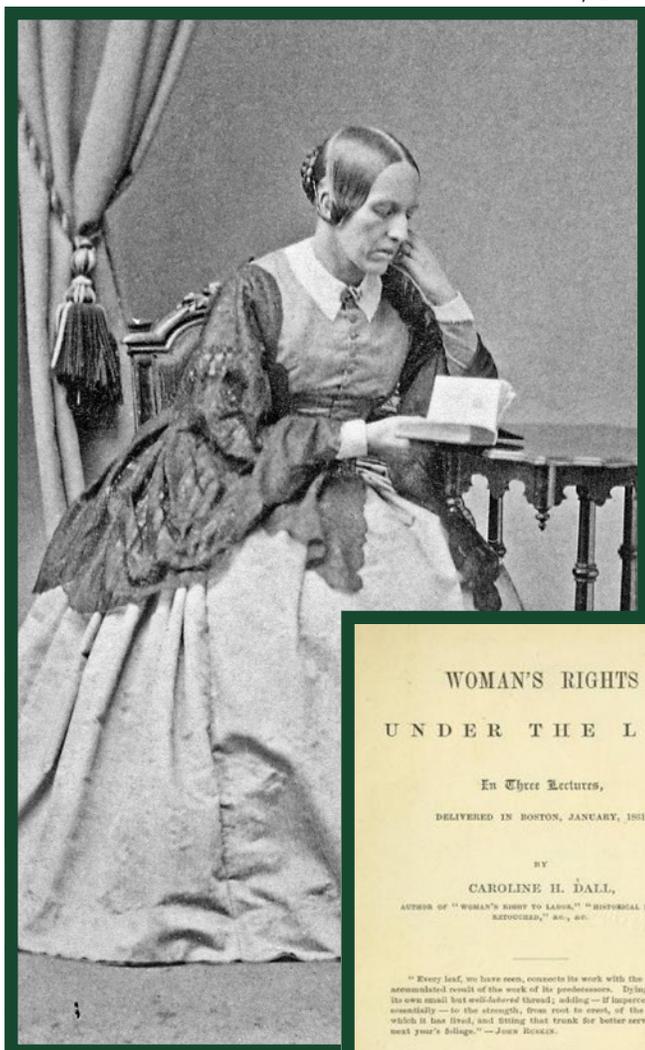


Theodore Parker LN-0920

SG: An interesting letter to Caroline Healy Dall on November 10, 1861, seems to articulate the belief that President Lincoln was not acting swiftly enough in efforts to rid the country of slavery. A letter to the same woman on January 28, 1862, provides evidence of Herndon's disapproval of Mary Todd Lincoln, calling her "curious, Eccentric, and wicked." Who was Caroline Healey Dall and why was Herndon so outspoken in letters to her which appear throughout your book?

DLW: Caroline Healy Dall was a Boston feminist and reformer who sought help from Herndon in 1860 when working on a book, *Woman's Rights Under the Law* (1862). They continued to correspond about Lincoln after he became president. Dall was notoriously cranky and hard to

please, but she eventually came to admire Lincoln's work as president and supported him when her better known feminist friends, such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, worked to keep him from getting a second term. Herndon and Dall were certainly birds of a feather on the subject of Lincoln's apparent lack of movement as president against slavery.



Caroline Wells Healey Dall, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Image # 2005-17691

Caroline H. Dall, *Woman's Rights Under the Law*, 1862

Dall became interested in writing about Lincoln, and while staying in Herndon's home on a visit to Springfield in 1866, read through the

extensive Lincoln archive Herndon had collected, including two memorandum books in which he kept notes of some of the most sensational information he was given by his informants. Dall was shocked by what she read and formed some false impressions that Herndon could never persuade her to change. At the time when Herndon's lecture about Lincoln and Ann Rutledge came under heavy fire in 1866, Dall wrote a much-reprinted

newspaper letter defending him, and she also published a positive article about his Lincoln researches in the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1867.

Herndon's letter to Dall expressing strong disapproval of Mary Todd Lincoln was written soon after he returned from his only trip to Washington during his law partner's presidency, where the

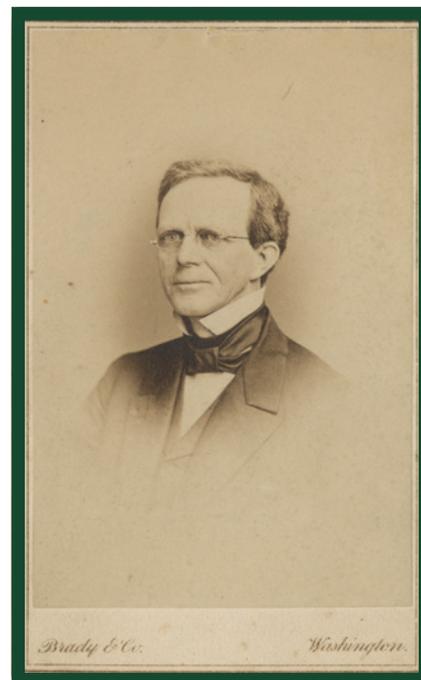
devious behavior of the president's wife was currently the talk of the town. Mary Todd Lincoln's biographers have tended to play down her White House misadventures, but Michael Burlingame has laid them out in detail in an appendix

to his book *At Lincoln's Side: John Hay's Civil War Correspondence and Selected Writings*. They have recently been candidly put on display in James B.

Conroy's Lincoln Prize winning book, *Lincoln's White House: The People's House in Wartime*.

SG: On the same point as above, the letter to Lyman Trumbull on November 20, 1861, gives an even stronger (and perhaps angrier) criticism of the President's reluctance to use more than "pop guns filled with rose water" to attack slavery. Would you put Herndon in the ranks of the radical abolitionists?

DLW: Herndon considered himself every inch an abolitionist, but living at a time and place where advocating abolition was very unpopular and bound to alienate a good many of his friends and clients, he was a relatively well-behaved one. So while he himself and others may have considered him a radical, he didn't indulge in the kind of insistent and in-your-face advocacy that the term "radical abolitionists" brings to mind. By contrast, Lincoln was always anti-slavery but never an abolitionist, although his chief antagonist, Stephen A. Douglas, tried very hard to convince their audiences that he was. Lincoln argued that slavery



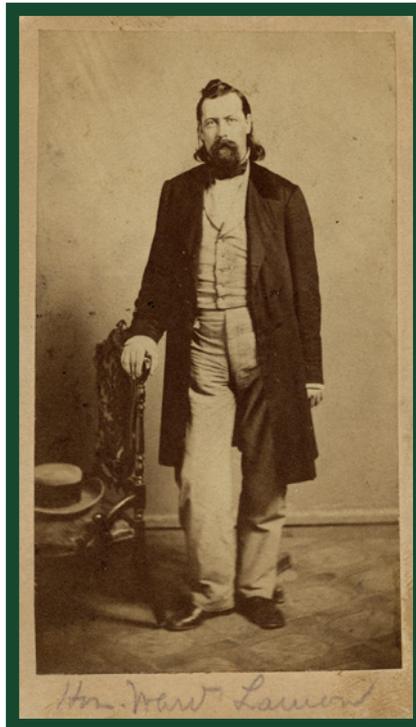
Lyman Trumbull OC-1022

was inconsistent with democracy and would eventually have to go, but he was inherently a gradualist, cautious about getting ahead of the electorate. In this light, it was to be expected that Herndon could complain to Senator Trumbull about Lincoln's reluctance to move decisively against slavery because Trumbull, like many other Republican senators, agreed with him.

SG: A letter to Ward Hill Lamon on June 12, 1865, states that Herndon is "writing the life of Lincoln." Please comment on the type of information he requests.

DLW: Herndon begins that letter by asking Lamon to send him "the wall paper life of Lincoln that O. M. Hatch loaned you," but we were unable to discover what this referred to. The rest of the letter, which was written soon after Herndon had decided to write a biography of his former law partner, constitutes a very useful list of the kind of information he was most anxious to acquire. He focuses attention on Lincoln's behavior in the White House, where he had no opportunity to observe him. Lamon was a lawyer on Lincoln's circuit who was given a presidential appointment in Washington and was closely associated with Lincoln as president. Herndon's letter shows that he was hoping Lamon would prove a likely source for the unorthodox kinds of details he was in search of: "Please sit down & tell me what Mr Lincoln loved to Eat — what 3 or 4 things he loved best — How he acted about the White House — his habits, customs — Modes — Manners & times of doing what he did — privately — socially & politically &c. &c." These are things that Herndon delighted to write about in his letters and lectures from his own observations, and it is clear from this letter that he wanted to learn if Lincoln behaved differently in the White House. It is also clear in this

letter (and elsewhere) that he scorns reports that Lincoln took a different view of religion in Washington from what he professed in Springfield. No reply to this letter is known, but notes on an interview with Lamon taken later contains responses to some of the queries in this letter. (See *Herndon's Informants*, pp. 466-67.)



Ward Hill Lamon LFA-0288

SG: What is the genesis of Herndon's apparent antipathy toward Mary Lincoln? Was there a change in his willingness to voice his opinions after the assassination?

DLW: For those who are interested, I have written a documented narrative of the history of this relationship entitled "William H. Herndon and Mary Todd Lincoln" that was first published in the *Journal of the Abraham Lincoln Association* in 2001 and reprinted in 2012 in *The Mary Lincoln Enigma*, edited by Frank Williams and Mike Burkheimer. The short version of the story is that in 1948 David Donald called attention to an anecdote in *Herndon's Lincoln* about Herndon's

having danced with Mary Todd soon after she arrived in Springfield and having unintentionally offended her with an expression he awkwardly offered as a compliment. Donald concluded that "Neither ever forgot that episode" and that it marked the beginning of a lifelong antagonism between them. This idea was duly adopted by writers about Lincoln as an established fact and ultimately served as the basis of the widespread belief that Herndon actually hated his partner's wife from their earliest acquaintance. Although these charges are based on Donald's conclusions, Donald himself was clear that he was merely speculating, for he admitted that there was no evidence for a long-standing antagonism. "So far as can be judged from existing evidence," Donald wrote, "during Lincoln's Springfield years Herndon and Mary maintained restrained, if distant, relations."

This has proved an important point in Lincoln studies for the reason that Herndon has been so deeply involved in the presentation of so much of what we know about his law partner. The idea that Herndon hated Mary Lincoln has suggested to many commentators the likelihood that Herndon, out of malice, deliberately set out to present a biased and unfair picture of her, and thus of his law partner's married life.

In December 1865 Herndon began a series of public lectures on the subject of Abraham Lincoln, in the first of which he was reported as saying, "I do not think he knew what real joy was for more than twenty-three years." Even if the reference escaped most newspaper readers across the country, his Springfield audience knew at once that "twenty-three years" referred to the period of the Lincoln marriage. It is doubtful that Mary noticed this reference, for in August of the following year she wrote to Herndon to flatter him that he was "cherished with the sincerest regard by my sons & myself,"

and to invite him to meet with her when she traveled the following week to Springfield. At this meeting, which seems to have been entirely amicable, she gave Herndon one of the most valuable interviews he got about her husband's behavior in Washington.

But then came what Donald called the "open rupture" of their relationship. A few months later Herndon delivered

that this was a truth that was necessary to an understanding of Lincoln's experience and his subsequent melancholy character, but it earned him a degree of acrimony that was unremitting and has lasted in some measure down to the present.

But strangely enough, we learn from his letters that he continued to insist that Mary Lincoln was not the only

any conclusive evidence that Herndon ever harbored or professed hatred for Mary Lincoln.

SG: What efforts did Herndon make to solicit information about Lincoln's youth in Indiana? What is your impression of the effect of those years on the future president?



Mary Todd Lincoln LFA-0567

a sensational public lecture that featured his prize discovery, the young Lincoln's love affair with Ann Rutledge. He startled his audience by saying at the beginning of the lecture, "Lincoln loved Ann Rutledge better than his own life," but he effectively sealed his fate by saying later on: "[Lincoln] never addressed another woman, in my opinion, 'yours affectionately;' and generally and characteristically abstained from the use of the word 'love.'" From that time on, Mary Lincoln made it abundantly clear that she hated him. Herndon's only defense of heedlessly humiliating the grieving widow of a martyred President was

party at fault for the difficulties in the Lincoln marriage, that she had much to contend with, and that she lacked the temperament to bear her burdens with a becoming restraint. Herndon certainly believed that Lincoln was forced into a loveless marriage and that his domestic life was very trying, and he wrote about these things because he thought they mattered in understanding him. After his Ann Rutledge lecture in November 1866, Mary Lincoln definitely exhibited something that could be called hatred for Herndon, on grounds that most observers find very understandable. But I confess that I have never found

DLW: In September of 1865, a few months after he began his investigation of Lincoln's early life, Herndon visited the neighborhood in southwest Indiana where Lincoln grew up and interviewed many of his surviving neighbors. In these interviews and in succeeding correspondence, he solicited and assembled the most revealing body of information we have on Lincoln's boyhood and young manhood, covering everything from his early reading and writing to his flatboat trip to New Orleans. There are other sources of information about Lincoln's Indiana years, but it is the accounts collected by Herndon

that underlie our understanding of how Lincoln was recognized by those who knew him from boyhood as an exceptional person with talent and ambition.

The effect of Lincoln's Indiana years, from the age of seven to twenty-one, on the person who would become the nation's greatest president is, of course, a speculative matter. In studying the materials Herndon collected, I felt immediately that his experiences growing up resonated with the man he became. The most incisive pieces of testimony for me have been those that bear witness to Lincoln's early and extraordinary interest in both reading, which is part of the legend, and writing, which is not. His former friends and neighbors in Indiana laid the basis in their letters and interviews with Herndon for Lincoln as an eager reader of books, but his stepmother told Herndon about his practice of writing out notes on his reading in a kind of literary notebook. She also described to Herndon the pains the young Lincoln took with words, especially words he came across in his reading that were unfamiliar, about which he compulsively sought clarity as to their meaning and their use. If he came across a word that he couldn't understand, he wasn't satisfied until he had learned its meaning and how to use it properly in a sentence. We can be reasonably sure that this experience stayed with him and contributed to

his gift for clarity of expression, for he described this very phenomenon in 1860 to someone who complimented him on the clarity of a speech he had given.

SG: Was there a difference in subject matter and approach between Herndon's written comments on Lincoln's life and those points which he chose to articulate in lectures?

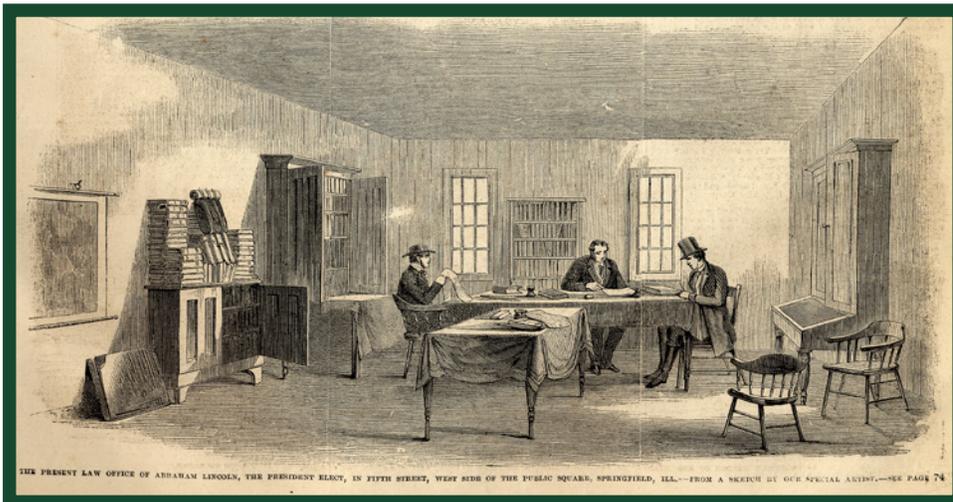
DLW: This question is of particular interest to me at this time, as my partner, Rodney O. Davis, and I are currently preparing an edition of Herndon's other writings about Lincoln that will include all existing texts of his lectures on Lincoln, including one that was never finished on his early development in Kentucky and Indiana. These surviving lectures on Lincoln are rife with descriptions of Lincoln's person, his attitudes, quirks, behavior, temperament, habits, likes, and dislikes. He has much to say about Lincoln as a practicing lawyer, specifying where he excelled and where he was weak. Herndon also emphasizes that, much as Lincoln's social demeanor was regarded as warm and open-handed, he was actually an unusually private and even secretive person, who rarely yielded a glimpse of his innermost views or concerns.

Herndon's first lecture on Lincoln is especially notable for its concentration

on Lincoln's distinctive mindset—his basic attitudes and ways of thinking, his particular intellectual interests, as well as what didn't much interest him, his penchant for getting at the very essence of a question or issue. Here Herndon is free to indulge his own theories about the supposed relationship between physiology and mental makeup, which his collaborator Weik tried to keep out of *Herndon's Lincoln*. Sometimes Herndon can sound like a crank or a quack, but at other times he can sound like a prophet. For example, in trying to explain what he called Lincoln's "double consciousness"—his ability to shift rapidly from a state of melancholy absorption to one of animated good humor. Herndon's suggestion was that this phenomenon "may spring out of the double brain . . . one life in one hemisphere of the brain and the other life in the other." (338) This, too, may have sounded far-fetched to Herndon's contemporaries, but it becomes more plausible in an age that is transfixed by the concept of differing functions being assigned to the right and left brain.

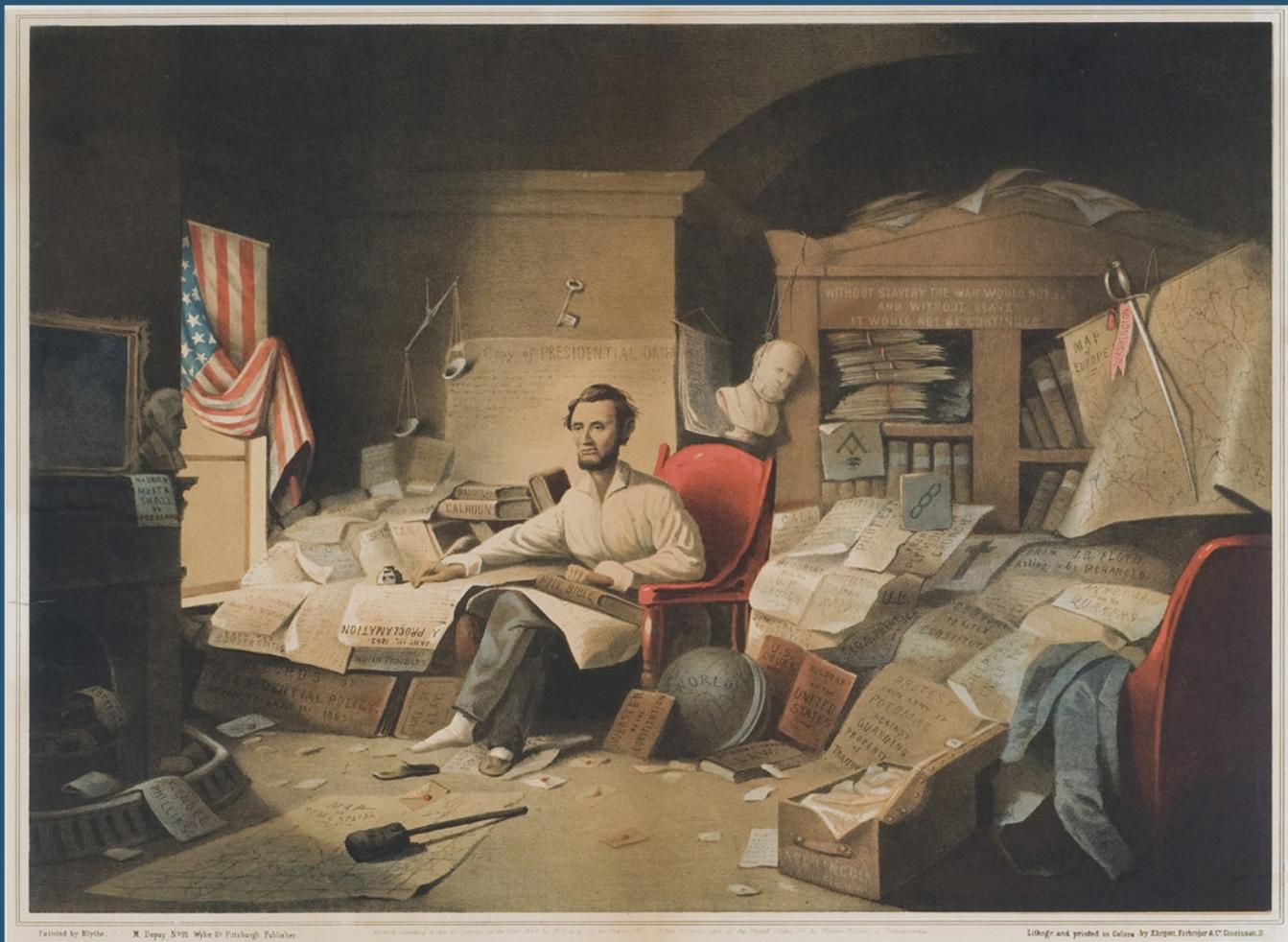
One of the attractions of these lectures, which are not widely consulted or even well known, is that Herndon is speaking in his own voice, as opposed to what one gets from the biography, *Herndon's Lincoln*, where the first-person narration attributed to Herndon was actually the work of Jesse Weik. And I have always thought that there is an added interest in these lectures inasmuch as they were written, not for general publication, but to be delivered to live audiences comprised of people who were not strangers to Abraham Lincoln but rather his Springfield friends and neighbors, who knew him well.

Douglas L. Wilson is the George A. Lawrence Distinguished Professor Emeritus of English and co-director of the Lincoln Studies Center at Knox College.



Lincoln & Herndon Law Office 1860 published in Leslie's Illustrated, Dec. 22, 1860

A Seldom Seen “Emancipator”



PRESIDENT LINCOLN, WRITING THE PROCLAMATION OF FREEDOM
January 1st 1863.

Adolphus Forbriger & Co. chromolithograph after David Gilmore Blythe, President Lincoln Writing the Proclamation of Freedom, January 1, 1863 71.2009.081.0206

As Perplexing as Ever, a Century and a Half Later

By HAROLD HOLZER

Few artists did more to cement the reigning nineteenth-century image of Abraham Lincoln as “Great Emancipator” than Francis B. Carpenter, whose monumental canvas, *The First Reading of the Emancipation Proclamation Before the Cabinet*, won critical acclaim on national tour beginning in 1864 and inspired an 1866 engraving that remained a best seller for decades. The print proved so ubiquitous and compelling that it stimulated rival printmakers to issue blatantly pirated variants, prints that similarly showed Lincoln reading his decree to his Cabinet ministers. Judging from the number of copies that survive in both institutional and private collections, such shamelessly plagiarized adaptations, by the likes of Edward Herline and Thomas Kelly, achieved significant popularity of their own.

The same cannot be said of a print based on a painting that was much more ambitious and considerably more original and that interpreted the “emancipation moment” from a far different perspective—focusing on its inspiration and composition rather than its mere announcement. The rarity of surviving copies, however, indicates that audiences of the day found something about this unique work of art unappealing—or perhaps unfathomable. Among the precious few surviving copies is a pristine chromolithograph in the Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection at the Indiana State Museum in Indianapolis, Indiana.¹

Believing his work “need borrow no inspiration from imaginary curtain or column,” Carpenter employed a “realistic” approach to his portrayal.² He kept his composition simple and uncluttered, providing lifelike portraiture, a realistic setting (Lincoln’s of-

fice), and minimal and easy-to-parse symbolism (Carpenter chose respective left-and-right grouping of Cabinet liberals and conservatives). American audiences seldom understood, much less embraced, more complex “messages.”

That apparently did not discourage the Irish-Scottish painter David Gilmour Blythe (1815-1865). While still a teenaged immigrant in Pittsburgh, Blythe had begun studying art as an apprentice interior designer. In subsequent travels, he was exposed to the work of Boston artist David Claypoole Johnston (whose own son painted Abraham Lincoln from life in 1860), and seems to have embraced the elder Johnston’s humorous, complex, often grotesquely exaggerated style—part portraiture, part caricature. Through the 1840s and 1850s, Blythe himself evolved into a busy portrait and history painter, ever restless to experiment with new styles.³

Like many artists of his time, Blythe was gripped by the drama of the Civil War, although he seemed unable to develop a consistent way of depicting it. He produced a straightforward, panoramic landscape of *General Doubleday Crossing the Potomac* en route to Gettysburg, and also a hellish scene of human suffering in *Libby Prison*.⁴ Rejecting realism, he portrayed the president for the first time in *Lincoln Crushing the Dragon of Rebellion*, painted in 1862. In a symbol-laden, cartoon-like composition, Blythe portrayed a casually dressed president literally beating back a Copperhead monster with a club shaped like a Lincolnian log rail.⁵

Blythe reached the apogee of his new, expressionistic style with the canvas *Lincoln Writing the Proclamation of Freedom January 1, 1863*. Here was

³ Dorothy Miller, *The Life and Work of David G. Blythe* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1950), 1, 2, 5, 9, 14.

⁴ For the latter, see *American Paintings in the Museum of Fine Arts*, Boston, 2 vols. (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1969) 1:39.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 57-58, 88-89.

the polar opposite of Carpenter’s subsequent, formally clad Great Emancipator. Blythe’s Lincoln, his face dark and downcast, his hair rumpled, was shown sitting in a cluttered office wearing an open white shirt and bedroom slippers, one of which has fallen off his foot. He balances the proclamation-in-progress on his lap atop a pile of books and documents, including the Bible and the Constitution. Everything strewn about the disordered room seems to suggest either the chaotic state of national war or the pressures facing the beleaguered Union leader—not to mention the unrestrained inventiveness of the painter.

Blythe made sure the details and decorations symbolized either Lincoln’s determination or challenges: a map of the Rebel states covered by a rail-splitter’s maul; another map, of South Carolina, provocatively kept in place by a cannonball; and a map of Europe (representing the dangerous potential for foreign intervention); a bust of Lincoln’s ineffective predecessor, President James Buchanan, hanging from a bookcase by its neck; and scales of justice to remind Lincoln that, in striking against slavery, he must balance his quest to restore the Union with a determination to respect the Constitution. A masonic symbol can be glimpsed as well—in this case attesting to the fact that the artist, not his subject, was a Mason.

American flags serve as patriotic decoration in the Blythe canvas: a copy of the presidential oath reminds Lincoln of his pledge to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution; and various religious and military tracts scattered about the floor suggest both inspiration and authority. Visible in the foreground is a battered old trunk bearing Lincoln’s name and Springfield hometown, perhaps to not only represent Lincoln’s humble origins, but to suggest the very real political danger of his imminent return to private life in

¹ See *Lincoln Lore* No. 1494 (August 1962), 2.

² Francis B. Carpenter, *Six Months at the White House with President Lincoln: The Story of a Picture* (New York: Hurd & Houghton, 1866), 25.

Illinois should the emancipation policy backfire. This Emancipator is already packed to head home!

If Blythe's painting was ever displayed anywhere, no record of its exhibition has ever been discovered. In fact, the canvas might have been entirely lost to history had it not been adapted a year after its creation by a Cincinnati lithographer, Ehr Gott, Forbriger & Co., and published by M. Dupuy in Blythe's Pittsburgh hometown. Yet this attempt to broaden its appeal failed—judging alone from the exceptional rarity of surviving copies. Its scarcity (compared to the abundance of surviving Carpenter prints) suggests that Blythe's design, and the lithographer's adaptation (he changed some details), elicited little notice or approval from picture-buying audiences of the Civil War era. This proved the case even though the lithographers made Lincoln a bit more recognizable by discarding Blythe's rudely sketched likeness and substituting a slavishly copied Mathew Brady photograph—one that ironically had been posed by Carpenter himself as a model for his painting.

What do we make of Blythe's failure? Was his canvas a miscalculation of interpretation and stylistic sensibility? Or was its failure attributable to market forces? For one thing, its obscurity certainly suggests that to secure popularity for an original image, it helped to have it copied expertly and mass-produced by a major publisher in a large Eastern city. Carpenter's canvas was handsomely engraved in mezzotint by Alexander H. Ritchie and issued by Derby & Miller, a thriving New York publishing house that promoted it in all its other publications, including

Carpenter's own memoirs.

Blythe's canvas, on the other hand, was reproduced in chromolithography—a hastier, more inexpensive, less prestigious medium than engraving. And while this meant that it was made available to purchasers more cheaply than the Carpenter adaptation (signed proof copies of which sold for \$50), the firm of M. Dupuy of Pittsburgh could hardly match its rival's distribution and promotion capabilities, even though the Blythe print did boast the added appeal of colorful tinting.

That said, some of the "blame" for the Blythe picture's obscurity must rest squarely with the painter's daring conception and frenzied style. Americans who supported the Proclamation in all likelihood preferred to celebrate it by displaying straightforward, easily



A.H. Ritchie, *The First Reading of the Emancipation Proclamation Before the Cabinet* 71.2009.081.0078

comprehensible pictorial tributes that touted emancipation and honored the Emancipator as a statesman. Blythe's canvas, its originality notwithstanding, made Lincoln's efforts seem almost madcap. A print buyer contemplating its purchase might have been thoroughly confused by the cacophony of discordant symbolic devices crowding the scene, perhaps even somewhat offended by the sight of an unshod chief executive sitting in what appears to be his nightshirt amidst perplex-

ing disarray that reminded viewers of his uncertainty when admirers may have preferred representations of his determination and authority. By attempting to reflect Lincoln's anguish, perhaps accurately, David Gilmour Blythe sacrificed commercial success to his artistic and historical vision—and in the process relegated one of the most interesting of all emancipation images to obscurity.

It might be added that in print publishing, as in so many other fields of commercial endeavor, timing is invariably everything. The print adaptation of Francis Carpenter's painting took years to produce, perhaps fortuitously. When it finally appeared, Lincoln had been dead (and sanctified) for a year, the amendment to the Constitution abolishing slavery was law, and the late president's most hotly controversial acts—like the

Proclamation—had been reinterpreted in the forgiving afterglow of martyrdom. By contrast, Ehr Gott, Forbriger published its Blythe print in the din of the 1864 presidential campaign, when emancipation remained a hotly debated and divisive issue and its author a highly controversial figure—to some, a tyrant. Whether an informally clad Lincoln ever experienced such uncertainty in pondering each word of what he later called "the great event of the nineteenth

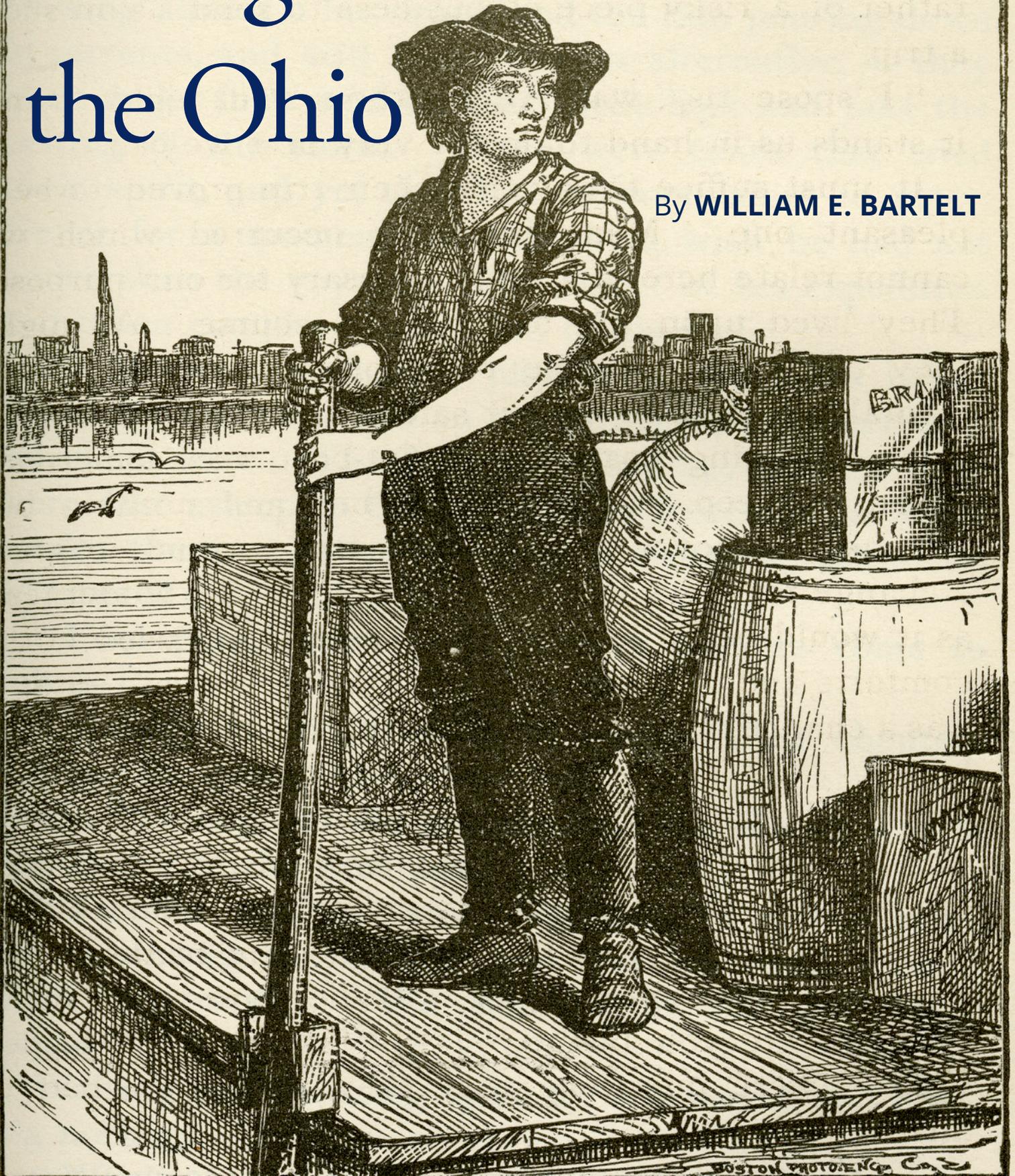
century,"⁶ Americans evidently preferred to remember him confidently reading the resulting text to his Cabinet members—and chose to celebrate the proclamation later, rather than sooner.

Harold Holzer is the Jonathan F. Fanton Director of the Roosevelt House Public Policy Institute at Hunter College.

⁶ Frank Carpenter, "Anecdotes and Reminiscences," in Henry J. Raymond, *The Life and Public Services of Abraham Lincoln* (New York: Derby & Miller, 1865), 764.

Young Lincoln and the Ohio

By **WILLIAM E. BARTELT**



A FLAT-BOATMAN.

C.M. Biggers, Anderson Creek Ferry 71.2009.081.1710

While in the White House, Abraham Lincoln described for Secretary of State William Seward one key experience connected with the Ohio River near Troy, Indiana. Lincoln recalled that he was asked by two travelers to scull them out to a passing river steamer. After they and their trunks were on board the steamer, each man threw a silver half dollar on the bottom of Lincoln's little boat. Lincoln told Seward,

I could scarcely believe my eyes. . . . You may think it was a very little thing, but it was a most important incident in my life. I could scarcely believe that I, a poor boy, had earned a dollar in less than a day. The world seemed wider and fairer before me. I was a more hopeful and confident being from that time.¹

Although this incident is only one during Lincoln's Indiana years, the Ohio River clearly made his "world seem wider and fairer."

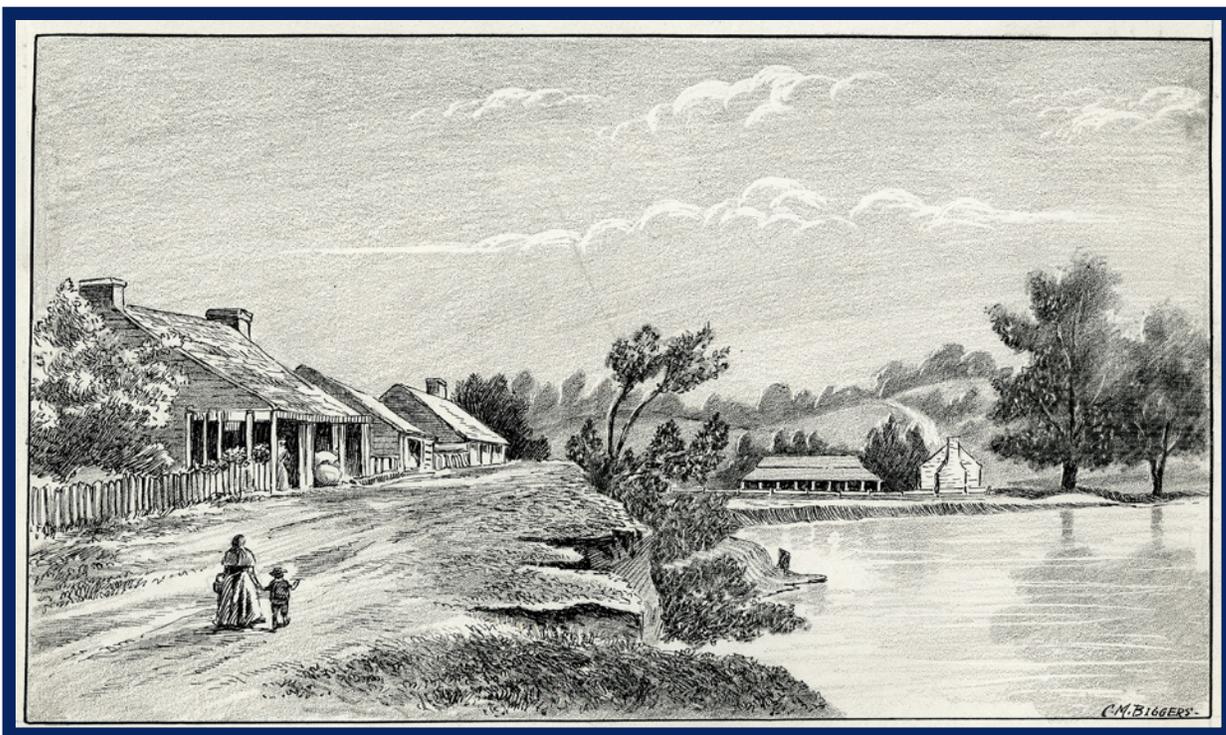
No doubt the boy Lincoln heard his father recall stories of his 1806 flat-boat trip to New Orleans. Likely with great anticipation did seven-year-old Abraham first see the Ohio in December 1816 less than two miles from Troy, Indiana. More than simply a geographic feature, the Ohio demarked an old America from a new America.

Describing the Lincolns' 1816 move to Indiana, President Lincoln said, "This removal was partly on account of slavery; but chiefly on account of the difficulty in land titles in [Kentucky]."² North of the river, law prohibited slavery. A farmer and craftsman like Thomas Lincoln, therefore, need not compete with skilled slaves for work or be controlled by a slaveholding class. Here he also was free from antiquated land survey and recording procedures that denied security in land holdings. North of the Ohio all land was owned and surveyed by the United States government, thus assuring a clear title to a farm. Thomas Lincoln obtained such a land patent to

eighty acres in Indiana.

Although for their homestead the Lincolns chose land some seventeen miles from the river, frequently they traveled to river towns like Troy and Rockport, Indiana, to tend to legal affairs, visit the post office, and conduct other business. By the late 1820s, the river offered young Abraham opportunities for work. For a while, Dennis Hanks, Squire Hall, and Lincoln all worked to cut firewood for fuel-hungry steamboats on the Ohio. Later, James Taylor at Troy hired Abraham to do farm work, help butcher hogs, and operate a ferry over the Anderson River where it flowed into the Ohio.³

For Lincoln, though, the chance to learn about the world proved perhaps a greater reward than money he earned. Here he met travelers from all over the country, indeed all over the world. The Ohio constituted the interstate highway of the day, connecting the Indiana wilderness to a wider world. Doubtless young Lincoln interrogated travelers about politics, current events, and the state of the country. Along with learning directly from travelers, he read newspapers carried by those passengers traveling up and down the river—both familiar newspapers from New Orleans to Pittsburgh and those less familiar ones printed in New York and other eastern cities.



1 J. G. Holland, *The Life of Abraham Lincoln* (Springfield, Mass.: Gurdon Bill, 1866), pp. 33-34.

2 Abraham Lincoln, "Autobiography Written for John L. Scripps," in *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, Vol. 4 (New Brunswick, N. J.: Rutgers UP, 1953-55), pp. 61-62.

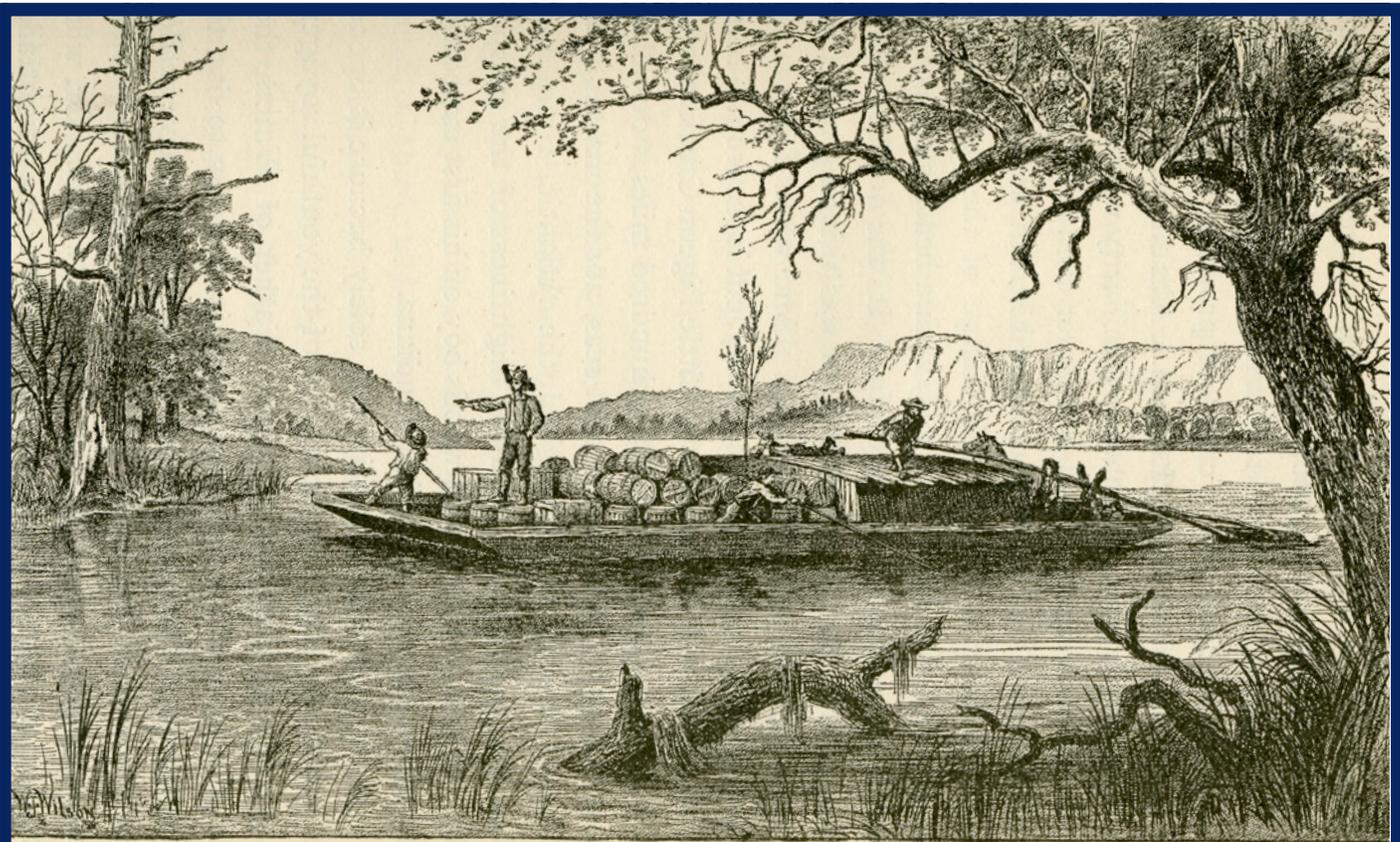
3 Louis Warren, *Lincoln's Youth: Indiana Years Seven to Twenty-one, 1816-1830* (New York: Appleton, Century, Crofts, 1959), pp.144-145.

Furthermore, the Ohio River acquainted Lincoln with the nation's emerging market economy. By the late 1820s, local farmers began moving from subsistence farming to surplus production, meaning they could sell or barter for items they could not provide for themselves. Merchants who acquired these surplus items—in the Lincoln community that was James Gentry—transported them to a larger market.

more compelling element to the trip.

For the first time, Lincoln assumed significant responsibility, and he performed well. He was only nineteen; Allen Gentry was twenty-one. These two young men guided the flatboat around sandbars, tree snags, eddies, and a river crowded with steamboats; and they guarded against ruthless river pirates along the way. Along the

es foreign to him spoken by persons of diverse nationalities, he saw architecture unknown in Spencer County—in short, Lincoln experienced a whole new culture.⁴ Truly, Lincoln “. . . was a more hopeful and confident being” because of his Ohio River experiences.



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LINCOLN IN CHARGE OF THE FLAT-BOAT.

The river, then, provided both transport and markets.

Abraham Lincoln's best-known connection with the Ohio River was his 1828 flatboat trip. James Gentry hired his son Allen and Lincoln to take a flatboat-load of produce—probably grain, pork, lard, and fowl—to markets down the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. Though most authors contend this trip's main value lay in Lincoln's first observing plantation slavery and seeing a slave auction, I perceive a

lower Mississippi, they negotiated to sell produce at various plantations. Finally, in New Orleans they sold their remaining cargo and the boat itself. These tasks were hardly easy, even for more experienced men.

This flatboat adventure proved one of the most significant experiences of Lincoln's life between 1816 and 1830. He saw sights and situations vastly different from those familiar in Kentucky and Indiana. He witnessed large-scale plantation farming, he heard languag-

Lincoln in Charge of the Flat-Boat in Noah Brooks, *Abraham Lincoln* 71200908401347

Bill Bartelt is author of There I Grew Up: Remembering Abraham Lincoln's Indiana Youth (2008) and a Director of Friends of the Lincoln Collection of Indiana. This material was presented at the Lincoln Symposium at the Allen County Public Library, Fort Wayne, Indiana, in November 2016.

⁴Jason Silverman, *Lincoln and the Immigrant* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2015), p. 13.

Politics and Lincoln's Relationship with Indiana

By NICOLE ETCHESON

RALLY! RALLY!! OUR FLAG IS THERE!

The Republicans of old Franklin will erect a Liberty-Pole in Bloomingrove,

SATURDAY, SEPT. 8th, 1860,

From which will be flung to the breeze, a NATIONAL FLAG, emblazoned with the names of the working-men's friends,

LINCOLN AND HAMLIN!

"Forever float that standard sheet!
Where is the foe but falls before us,
With Freedom's soil beneath our feet,
And Freedom's banner streaming o'er us!"

SPEAKING

By Hon. NELSON TRUSLER, Elector for the 5th Congressional District; JEREMIAH M. WILSON, Esq., Candidate for Common Pleas Judge; JOHN C. WHITRIDGE, Esq., Candidate for Common Pleas Prosecutor, and others. A Grand Procession by the

WIDE AWAKES AND LINCOLN RANGERS!

Music by the Brookville Military Band, the best Band in the State.
Come with music and banners; come in wagons, on horse back and a foot; come and bring your wives, your sons and your daughters with you, and let us make the welkin ring with shouts for

Honest Abe and Victory!

Pole raising at 12 o'clock, M. Speaking to commence at 1 o'clock P. M.
Blooming Grove, Ind., August 28, 1860.

American Print, Brookville Ind.

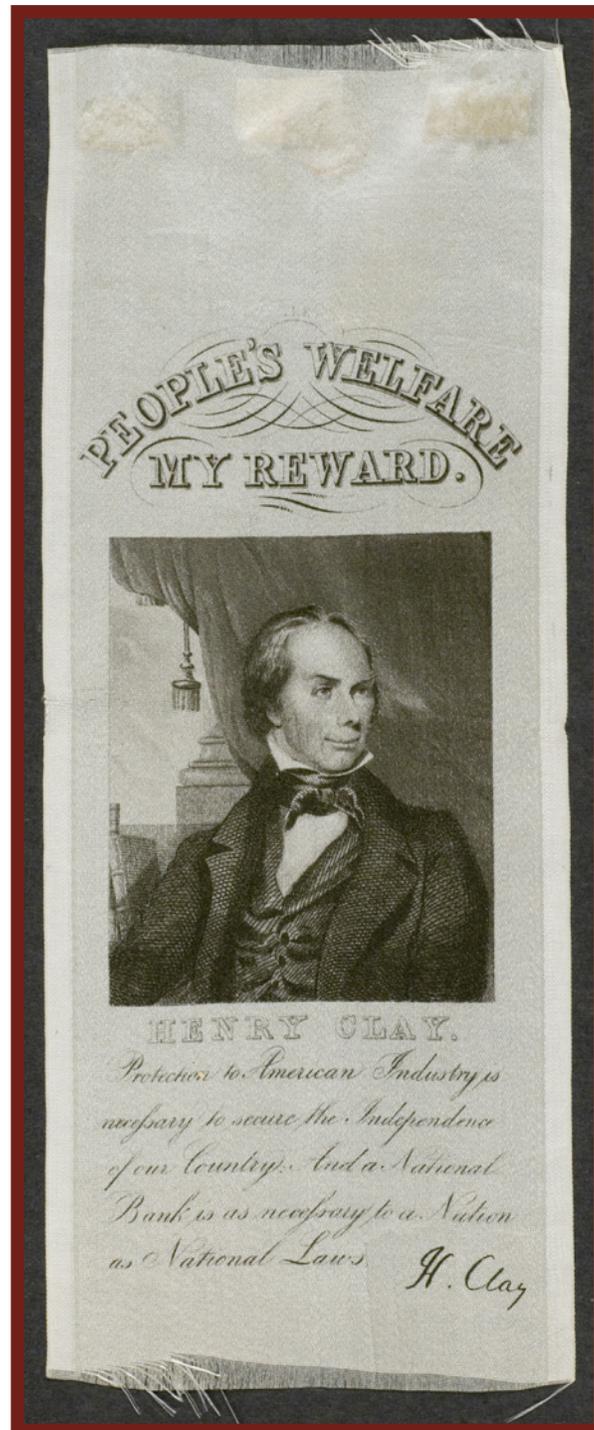
Indiana's influence on Abraham Lincoln has long divided historians. What separates them, according to Mark E. Neely, Jr., are two opposing interpretations: the "dung-hill" and "chin fly" theses. Proponents of the dunghill thesis say that Indiana was primitive and backward, a dunghill, which Lincoln surmounted because of his native talents. Chin fly adherents admit the Indiana frontier was primitive, but argue it offered the delights of rural life and strengthened the growing youth physically and mentally. In Neely's view, the dunghill thesis is better supported by Lincoln's recollections of his Indiana childhood.

Moreover, Lincoln's Indiana youth even explains his political loyalties. Why become a Whig in a predominantly Democratic state, as were both Indiana and Illinois? Lincoln's law partner, William Herndon, said that Lincoln's ambition was "a little engine that knew no rest." But Lincoln's ambitions did not triumph over his principles. Had he been willing to become a Democrat, like most of his family, he might have had more political experience than just one term in Congress by the time he became a national political figure. Lincoln was a Whig, Neely contends, because the Whigs "offered a program to change the West, to improve the defects of the environment of Lincoln's youth."

The Whig platform, which was embodied in the American System of Lincoln's political idol, Henry Clay, included a protective tariff for manufactures, a national bank, and government funding for internal improvements.

But Lincoln was never a strong voice

on the tariff issue, which tended to pit manufacturing parts of Illinois and Indiana against the agricultural southern parts of those states. As a



Henry Clay campaign ribbon 71.2009.082.0206

presidential candidate, he advocated a protective tariff to win the electoral votes of Pennsylvania. His position that it was wasteful to import what could be produced at home was a

long-standing nationalist argument for tariffs. Once elected, he deferred to Congress's judgment on the protectionist Morrill Tariff.

Lincoln fought much harder for a state bank in Illinois. Such a bank would be useful to finance internal improvements and stimulate the economy, as was the case in Indiana, where many Hoosiers supported banks as providing the capital necessary for manufacturing, agriculture, and commerce to flourish. As long as banks did not become "moneyed aristocracies" that aided the wealthy to enrich themselves at the poor's expense, banks could promote economic opportunity. An Illinois man accused the state bank of favoritism, claiming that it waived interest payments for favored debtors. At the same time, Lincoln got himself appointed to the legislative committee investigating the bank so that he could protect the state bank from Democratic attacks. It was to prevent a vote forcing the bank to resume specie payments, which would have bankrupted the institution, that Lincoln and fellow Whigs jumped out the statehouse window to break a quorum. During the depression of the late 1830s, specie payments were suspended by the Indiana state bank, which also was accused of favoritism in its loan-making and also survived an investigation of its practices. But the Indiana bank had bipartisan support and did not face the life-or-death struggle of the Illinois bank.

Banks were tools to finance internal improvements, an issue particularly dear to Lincoln's heart. As Neely puts it, "If [Lincoln] ever stared moodily at the Sangamon River, as modern

motion pictures sometimes portray him, he was probably thinking of turning it into a barge canal." In 1837, Lincoln led the state legislature in passing a large internal improvements bill. Illinois allocated \$10 million for canals, roads, and railroads. A year earlier, Indiana had already passed its own Mammoth Internal Improvements Bill, also for \$10 million. Both states incurred large debts when the economy crashed after the Panic of 1837 and were left with unfinished, unprofitable improvements.

Lincoln's politics finally moved him from the minority into the majority when slavery expansion became the dominant political issue. In the 1850s, Northerners struggled to keep the "Slave Power" from dominating the territories. Even so, Indiana and Illinois were both black law states, meaning they had legal prohibitions

against African Americans testifying against whites, marrying whites, voting, serving in the militia, and migrating into the state. Lincoln professed to share Midwestern prejudices against political and social equality between the races. He supported colonization—the program of resettling African Americans in an African colony. (Colonization was Indiana's official policy for dealing with that state's black population.) But he clearly condemned slavery as immoral and in contradiction with the Declaration of Independence. His opponents seized on this to label him a "Black Republican" who favored black equality and abolition. Certainly white Southerners agreed that Lincoln and the Republicans were a sufficient threat to slavery and white supremacy to justify secession.

Lincoln's roots in black law states probably enabled him to understand that Northerners needed to be guided towards accepting expanded black rights. He insisted that emancipation was a military necessity and issued the Emancipation Proclamation in accordance with his authority as commander in chief. And by the end of his life, Lincoln was advocating black suffrage for some black men, the educated and soldiers. He died before it could be seen whether he would go as far as more radi-

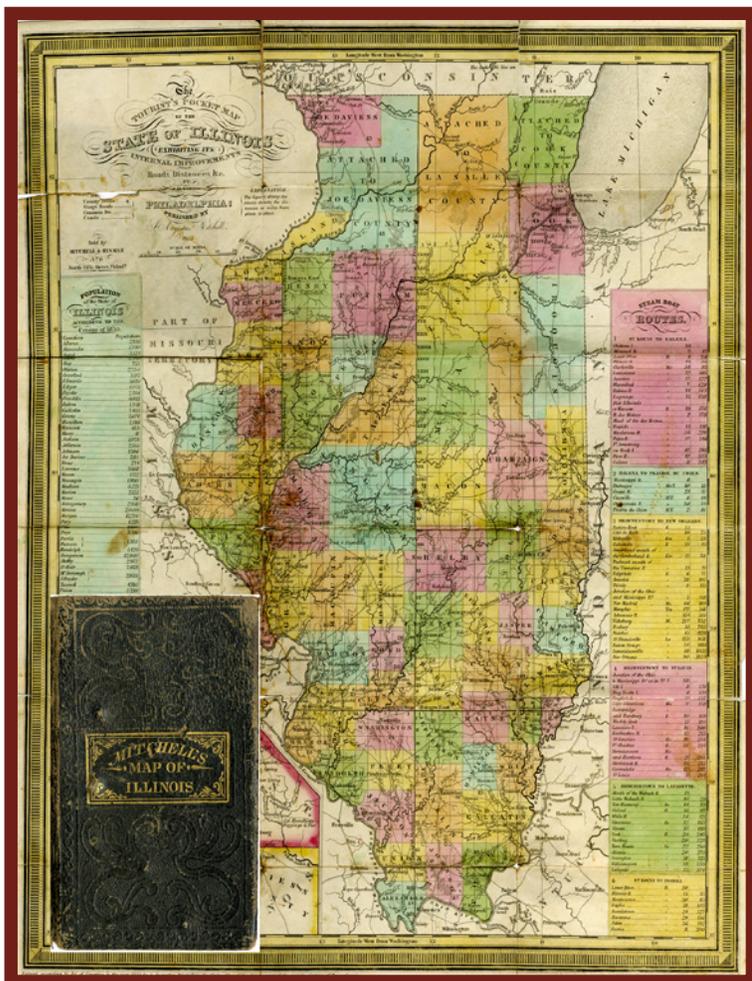
cal Republicans who advocated—and eventually got—universal male suffrage, regardless of race; black citizenship; and constitutional provisions for equal rights.

Democrats feared, correctly, that expanded black rights would overturn Midwestern black laws. But many Midwesterners had accepted that slavery, as the cause of the war, had to be ended and that blacks, as a loyal southern population, had to be empowered in order to end the reign of the Slave Power.

Indiana, in perhaps ironic ways, promoted Lincoln's success. The Hoosier state gave the young politician a model to reject, and thereby helped form his political policies. And it was in Indiana that Lincoln gained a deep understanding of racism, which allowed him to gently push the North towards making the promises of the Declaration of Independence real for all Americans, regardless of race.

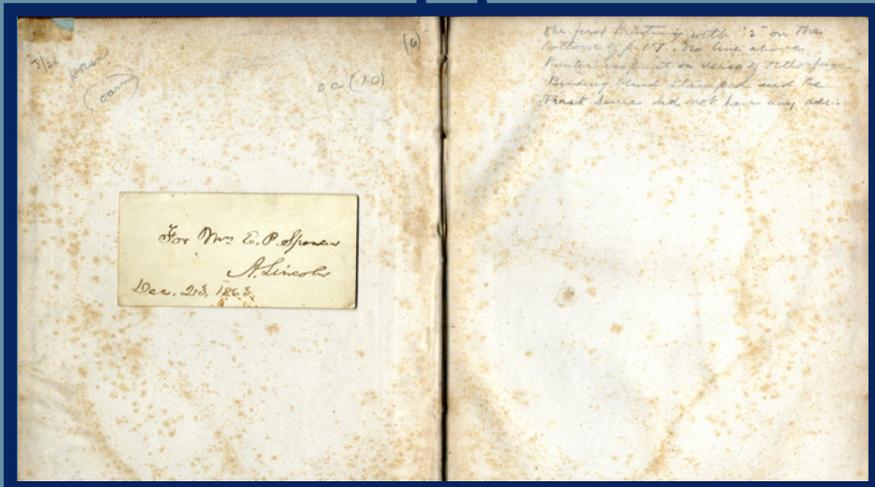
Sources: Donald F. Carmony, *Indiana, 1816-1850: The Pioneer Era* (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Bureau, 1998); David Herbert Donald, *Lincoln* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995); Nicole Etcheson, *The Emerging Midwest: Upland Southerners and the Political Culture of the Old Northwest, 1787-1861* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996); Mark E. Neely, Jr., *Escape from the Frontier: Lincoln's Peculiar Relationship with Indiana* (Fort Wayne: Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, n.d.).

Nicole Etcheson is the Alexander M. Bracken Professor of History at Ball State University. This material was presented at the Lincoln Symposium at the Allen County Public Library, Fort Wayne, Indiana, in November 2016.



The Tourist's Pocket Map of the State of Illinois, 1836
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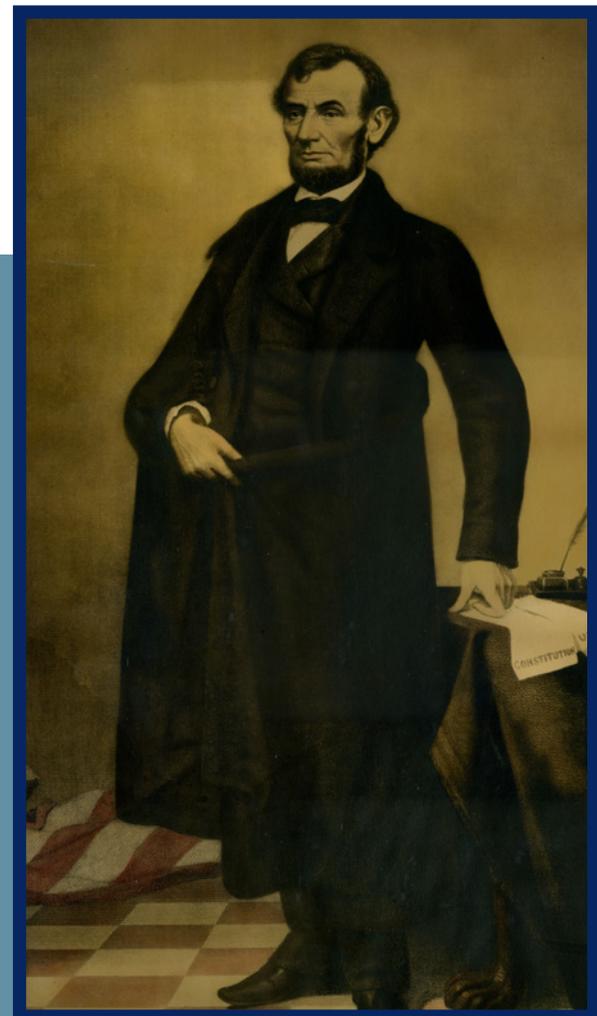
Williams Collection of Lincolniana Donated to Mississippi State



This copy of the first printing of *Political Debates between Hon. Abraham Lincoln and Hon. Stephen A. Douglas* (Cincinnati: Follett Foster, 1860) has an inscribed card attached to the flyleaf. Although Lincoln lost the U. S. senatorial race to incumbent Douglas in 1858, he was proud of his performance. He collected stenographic transcripts for publication as a book. The *Debates* sold over 30,000 copies and established Lincoln's political reputation nationally, enhancing his chances for nomination as the Republican Party's presidential candidate in 1860.

Frank and Virginia Williams have donated their magnificent private collection of Lincolniana to Mississippi State University. In addition, they have established an endowment which will provide for curation of the collection and also fund an annual Frank and Virginia Williams Lecture on Lincoln and Civil War Studies at the University.

The Frank J. and Virginia Williams Collection contains over 30,000 items, including artifacts, original manuscripts, popular prints, photographs, artwork, the Claude Simmons Collection, statues, broadsides, philately, collectibles and miniatures, numismatics, and more than 12,000 published volumes that are separated into two collections, the Lincoln Book and Pamphlet Collection and the Civil War/Collateral Book and Pamphlet Collection.



William Pate created this mezzotint engraving of the 16th president by using the background and body from Alexander Ritchie's 1852 engraving of John C. Calhoun and replacing Calhoun's head with Abraham Lincoln's. Judge Williams notes that this portrait, which was displayed in his 6th-grade classroom, was the inspiration for his 60-year study of Lincoln and the Civil War and the Frank J. and Virginia Williams Collection.



This is a bronze replica of the beardless life mask of Abraham Lincoln created by sculptor Leonard Volk in 1860. He created casts of Lincoln's hand as well. Volk used the face mask to create full busts of Lincoln, and other sculptors and artists have used this mask for their own work.

Lincoln LORE

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