

LINCOLN LORE

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THE PRESIDENT ENROUTE TO GETTYSBURG

The highest point of interest during the anniversary season of the Gettysburg address this year seems to center about a railroad station known as Hanover Junction, Pennsylvania about 30 miles from where Abraham Lincoln made his famous speech. The discovery of some photographs of people at the old depot located there, supposed to have been made on the day Lincoln was passing through the junction on the way to the dedication, have raised the question as to whether or not the likeness of the President can be identified in the groups portrayed. The attention given by the press to the discovery of the photographs has emphasized how little we know about the episodes which occurred while the President was enroute on November 18, 1863 to the scene of the dedication at Gettysburg.

The train conveying the party left Washington about noon and travelled over three different railroads: the Baltimore and Ohio to Baltimore; the Northern Central to Hanover Junction; and the Western Maryland to Gettysburg. The train equipment upon leaving Washington consisted of an engine and four coaches. At Baltimore a baggage car was added in which lunch was served. It was a six hours run from Washington to Gettysburg and the party is supposed to have arrived about six o'clock that evening, or as reports have it, about dusk.

The special train from Harrisburg on which Governor Curtin and a large number of celebrities were travelling failed to connect with the Lincoln special at Hanover Junction as planned and was so late in arriving that the Washington train proceeded on to Gettysburg without waiting for it.

Andrew Carnegie, then an official of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, was scheduled to meet Mr. Lincoln at the White House and accompany him as the railroad's representative. Carnegie in later years claimed he was on the train. Those who comprised the party to Gettysburg, as far as we can ascertain, besides Lincoln and Carnegie, are here set forth.

Cabinet Members: Secretary of State, Wm. H. Seward; Secretary of the Interior, John P. Usher; and Postmaster General, Francis P. Blair.

President's Secretaries: John G. Nicolay and John Hay.

Special escort for President: General James Fry and possibly others.

French Embassy: Minister M. Mercier and Admiral Renaud.

Italian Embassy: Minister Chevalier Bertinatti, Secretary Signor Cora, Chevalier Isola and Lieutenant Martinez.

Canadian Government: Hon. William McDougal.

Marine Corps: Col. George W. Burton and Capt. Alan Ramsay.

Marine Band: Lieut. Henry C. Cochran in charge.

First Regiment of the Invalid Corps: Escorts, number and names of personnel not available.

Guard of Honor: For duty in military procession at Gettysburg.

Personal guests: Capt. H. A. Wise and his wife, a daughter of Edward Everett; and Wayne Mac Veagh, attorney from Chester County, Penn. who was accompanied by a son of Secretary Stanton.

At Baltimore the special train took on other passengers for Gettysburg:

Military personnel—General Robert C. Schenck and staff including Lieut. Col. J. W. Scully. Members of General W. W. Morris' staff including General E. W. Andrews.

Second United States Artillery Band—names not available.

The tradition of widest circulation associated with the trip—that Lincoln wrote the famous address on the train—has long since been discarded as a piece of folklore. John Hay, Lincoln's secretary who was with him on the train has affirmed: "There is neither record, evidence, nor well-founded tradition that Mr. Lincoln did any writing, or made any notes, on the journey between Washington and Gettysburg. The train consisted of four passenger coaches, and either composition or writing would have been extremely troublesome amid all the movements, the noise, the conversation, the greetings, and the questionings which ordinary courtesy required him to undergo in these surroundings; but still worse would have been the rockings and joltings of the train, rendering writing virtually impossible."

It is reported that at several places Lincoln spoke a few words of greeting but as far as we can learn none of these have been preserved. There is a widely circulated tradition that at one stop a little girl made a presentation of "Flowers for the President." Lincoln is said to have kissed her and remarked, "You're a sweet little rosebud yourself. I hope your life will open into perpetual beauty and goodness."

The Hanover Junction stop of the Lincoln special has become of chief interest because of the picture now unearthed. Russell W. Bowman, a teacher in the Washington schools, who is a former citizen of Seven Valleys, a town near the Junction, discovered in the National Archives some photographs which were erroneously labeled Hanover Junction, Virginia. He immediately recognized the station in the pictures as the one near his own home in Pennsylvania. This correction immediately presented the possibility that one of the persons in the pictures might be Abraham Lincoln, although there has been no photograph heretofore associated with him during the Gettysburg trip.

There are at least three different views in the series said to have been made by some of Matthew Brady's assistants. One picture, where there are a dozen or more people standing about the depot, seems to feature a group of three men in which there is a tall man in a stovepipe hat carrying an umbrella. This is the person which Mr. Bowman feels is Abraham Lincoln.

A second picture taken on the same occasion shows Mr. Bowman's supposed Mr. Lincoln standing by himself in a rather obscure position while at the extreme other side of the picture is a tall man also wearing a stovepipe hat and apparently reading a manuscript. He possibly looks more like Lincoln than his rival. The facial characteristics of both are too dim to make positive identifications.

A third picture shows clearly the sign "Hanover Junction Station" placed over the entrance which positively locates the site. The group in this view is of an entirely different personnel, four women being present and also several soldiers in uniform, most of whom are carrying canes. There does not seem to be any individual among them that would qualify for a likeness of the President.

One of the pictures shows a train with an engine and but two coaches which appears to be headed for Gettysburg but standing on the track approaching the Junction from Harrisburg. Attention has been called to the fact that the figures which have been designated as Lincoln are not tall enough, and further evidence against the probability of any of the pictures being Lincoln is the lateness of the hour on which the train arrived, prohibiting the making of photographs. It is also argued that the failure to feature any individual in the group arrangements as the President counts very much against the presence of Lincoln in any of the scenes.